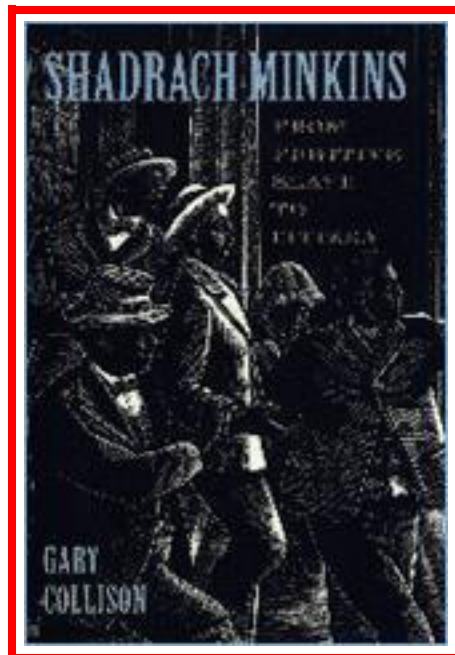


SHERWOOD,

FREDERICK,

“SHADRACH” JENKINS / WILKINS / MINKINS



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HDT

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1814



The federal Congress granted Daniel Boone a tract of Missouri land.



In about this year [Shadrach](#) ([Frederick Jenkins](#)) was born as a slave assigned the name “Sherwood,” in Norfolk, Virginia.

It was also in about this year in Kentucky, that William Wells Brown was born at Lexington, the son of



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Elizabeth, a slave field laborer, and one George Higgins, a white relative of her owner said to be a son of Daniel Boone. He was the youngest of seven children. He was simply the slave William, and a freedom name such as “Wells Brown” was in the very distant, unimaginable future. Later, when the owner of this family got himself into a financial difficulty, he first sold off the mother with the other six of her children: “I suppose my master was restrained from selling me by the fact that I was a near relative of his.” Later this kind master would again encounter financial strain, and reluctantly vend even the slave who was his blood relation.

I was born in Lexington, Kentucky. The man who stole me as soon as I was born, recorded the births of all the infants which he claimed to be born his property, in a book which he kept for that purpose. My mother’s name was Elizabeth. She had seven children, viz.: Solomon, Leander, Benjamin, Joseph, Millford, Elizabeth, and myself. No two of us were children of the same father. My father’s name, as I learned from my mother, was George Higgins. He was a white man, a relative of my master, and connected with some of the first families in Kentucky.

My master owned about forty slaves, twenty-five of whom were field hands. He removed from Kentucky to Missouri when I was quite young, and settled thirty or forty miles above St. Charles, on the Missouri, where, in addition to his practice as a physician, he carried on milling, merchandizing and farming. He had a large farm, the principal productions of which were tobacco and hemp. The slave cabins were situated on the back part of the farm, with the house of the overseer, whose name was Grove Cook, in their midst. He had the entire charge of the farm, and having no family, was allowed a woman to keep house for him, whose business it was to deal out the provisions for the hands.

A woman was also kept at the quarters to do the cooking for the field hands, who were summoned to their unrequited toil every morning, at four o’clock, by the ringing of a bell, hung on a post near the house of the overseer. They were allowed half an hour to eat their breakfast, and get to the field. At half past four a horn was blown by the overseer, which was the signal to commence work; and every one that was not on the spot at the time, had to receive ten lashes from the negro-whip, with which the overseer always went armed. The handle was about three feet long, with the butt-end filled with lead, and the lash, six or seven feet in length, made of cow-hide, with platted wire on the end of it. This whip was put in requisition very frequently and freely, and a small offence on the part of a slave furnished an occasion for its use. During the time that Mr. Cook was overseer, I was a house servant – a situation preferable to that of a field hand, as I was better fed, better clothed, and not obliged to rise at the ringing of the bell, but about half an hour after. I have often laid and heard the crack of the whip, and the screams of the slave. My mother was a field hand, and one morning was ten or fifteen minutes behind the others in getting into the field. As soon as she reached the spot where they were at work, the overseer commenced whipping her. She cried, “Oh! pray – Oh! pray – Oh! pray” – these are generally the words of slaves, when imploring mercy at the hands of their oppressors. I heard her voice, and knew it, and jumped out of my bunk, and went to the door. Though the field was some distance from the house, I could hear every crack of the whip, and every groan and cry of my poor mother. I remained at the door, not daring to venture any further. The cold chills ran over me, and I wept aloud. After giving her ten lashes, the sound of the whip ceased, and I returned to my bed, and found no consolation but in my tears. Experience has taught me that nothing can be more heart-rending than for one to see a dear and beloved mother or sister tortured, and to hear their cries, and not be able to render them assistance. But such is the position which an American slave occupies.



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My master, being a politician, soon found those who were ready to put him into office, for the favors he could render them; and a few years after his arrival in Missouri he was elected to a seat in the legislature. In his absence from home everything was left in charge of Mr. Cook, the overseer, and he soon became more tyrannical and cruel. Among the slaves on the plantation was one by the name of Randall. He was a man about six feet high, and well-proportioned, and known as a man of great strength and power. He was considered the most valuable and able-bodied slave on the plantation; but no matter how good or useful a slave may be, he seldom escapes the lash. But it was not so with Randall. He had been on the plantation since my earliest recollection, and I had never known of his being flogged. No thanks were due to the master or overseer for this. I have often heard him declare that no white man should ever whip him – that he would die first.

Cook, from the time that he came upon the plantation, had frequently declared that he could and would flog any nigger that was put into the field to work under him. My master had repeatedly told him not to attempt to whip Randall, but he was determined to try it. As soon as he was left sole dictator, he thought the time had come to put his threats into execution. He soon began to find fault with Randall, and threatened to whip him if he did not do better. One day he gave him a very hard task – more than he could possibly do; and at night, the task not being performed, he told Randall that he should remember him the next morning. On the following morning, after the hands had taken breakfast, Cook called out to Randall, and told him that he intended to whip him; and ordered him to cross his hands and be tied. Randall asked why he wished to whip him. He answered, because he had not finished his task the day before. Randall said that the task was too great, or he should have done it. Cook said it made no difference – he should whip him. Randall stood silent for a moment, and then said, “Mr. Cook, I have always tried to please you since you have been on the plantation, and I find you are determined not to be satisfied with my work, let me do as well as I may. No man has laid hands on me, to whip me, for the last ten years, and I have long since come to the conclusion not to be whipped by any man living.” Cook, finding by Randall’s determined look and gestures, that he would resist, called three of the hands from their work, and commanded them to seize Randall, and tie him. The hands stood still; – they knew Randall – and they also knew him to be a powerful man, and were afraid to grapple with him. As soon as Cook had ordered the men to seize him, Randall turned to them, and said – “Boys, you all know me; you know that I can handle any three of you, and the man that lays hands on me shall die. This white man can’t whip me himself, and therefore he has called you to help him.” The overseer was unable to prevail upon them to seize and secure Randall, and finally ordered them all to go to their work together.

Nothing was said to Randall by the overseer for more than a week. One morning, however, while the hands were at work in the field, he came into it, accompanied by three friends of his, Thompson, Woodbridge and Jones. They came up to where Randall was at work, and Cook ordered him to leave his work, and go with them to the barn. He refused to go; whereupon he was attacked by the overseer and his companions, when he turned upon them, and laid them, one after another, prostrate on the ground. Woodbridge drew out his pistol, and fired at him, and brought him to the ground by a pistol ball. The others rushed upon him with their clubs, and beat him over the head and face, until they succeeded in tying him. He was then taken to the barn, and tied to a beam. Cook gave him over one hundred lashes with a heavy cow-hide, had him washed with salt and water, and left him tied during the day. The next day he was untied, and taken to a blacksmith’s shop, and had a ball and chain attached to his leg. He was compelled to labor in the field, and perform the same amount of work that the other hands did. When his master returned home, he was much pleased to find that Randall had been subdued in his absence.



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1849

July 23, Monday: When the last stronghold of [German](#) democratic-revolutionaries, Baden's Rastatt fortress, fell before Prussian troops, the [March revolution](#) was over. The only step that remained was for the Prussians to execute most of those associated with the leftist army.

The Venetian government issued food ration cards.

The New York Protection Insurance Company of Rome, New York, was chartered.

The Negro Man [Shadrach](#) and Negro Woman Hester and her children Jim and Imogene, property of Martha Hutchins and Edward DeCormis, were auctioned to the highest bidder at noon in front of the Norfolk, Virginia courthouse.

SALES THIS DAY.

PURSUANT to an advertisement affixed to the door of the Court House of the city of Norfolk,

WILL BE SOLD,

At Public Auction, before the Court House, at 12 o'clock, on **MONDAY**, the 23d inst.,

Negro Man Shadrach and Negro Woman Hester and her children Jim and Imogene, by virtue of a writ of fieri facias against the goods and chattels of Martha Hutchings and Edward DeCormis, at suit of Joseph Cowperthwaite, assignee of the President, Directors & Co. of the Bank of the United States.

WM. B. LAMB, Serg't.
(Beacon copy.)

1849

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[James Russell Lowell](#) wrote from Elmwood (above) to [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) in regard to his suspicion of a [Waldo Emerson](#) blacklist against the attendance of [Frederick Douglass](#) at the dinner meetings of the Town and Country Club in downtown Boston:



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MY DEAR FRIEND,

I agree with you entirely as to the importance of getting Frederick D. quietly into the T. and C. Club. I intended to have paid his entrance fee when I paid my own, but had not the money at that time. But I will see that it is done before the 1st October. I was surprised, I confess, that there should have been any opposition to so entirely desirable a member. Especially was I astonished at the quarter from which it came, for, if I am not mistaken, Emerson would have blackballed him, had it been put to the vote.

I cannot help thinking that the presence of a man cast in so large a mould as D. certainly is, & with such a fine tropical exuberance of mental & physical development, will do a great deal in ridding many worthy persons of a very unworthy prejudice. I am quite sure that I, for one, am an unfit companion for people too good to associate with him. Our American chromatic scale is a very complicated affair.

You will be glad to hear that God has sent us another little daughter – outwardly perfect. She was born just a week ago today, & both mother [Maria Lowell] & child are prospering.

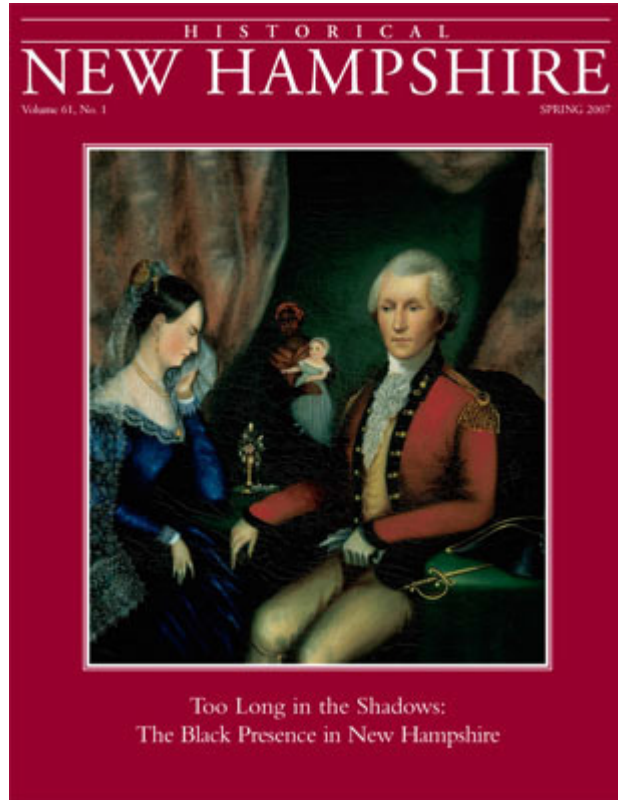
As soon as Maria is up again, I am to fulfil my long delayed purpose of paying Levi [Lincoln Thaxter] a visit at the Shoals. I shall hope to see you as I pass through Newburyport.

I remain affectionately yours
J.R. LOWELL.

**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**

1850

D.G. Lamont painted “Count Rumford’s Farewell,” a work that we can now view in a different mode from the mode in which it was painted (in the rear of this [New Hampshire](#) painting is Dinah, the family’s slave).



Escaping from Virginia, 36-year-old [Shadrach](#) ([Frederick Jenkins](#)) made his way to [Boston](#).



The [negrero](#) *Martha*, of [New-York](#), was captured while about to embark 1,800 [slaves](#). The captain would be allowed to make bail, and would therefore be able to escape punishment for this capital crime of piracy (A.H. Foote, AFRICA AND THE AMERICAN FLAG, pages 285-92).

The [negrero](#) *Lucy Ann*, of [Boston](#), was captured by the British navy while carrying 547 [slaves](#) (SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 31st Congress, 1st session XIV Number 66, pages 1-10 ff).

The American [negrero](#) *Navarre*, trading to Brazil, was searched and then seized by a British cruiser (SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 31st Congress, 1st session XIV Number 66, pages 1-10 ff).

It was in about this year that the American [negreros](#) *Louisa Beaton*, *Pilot*, *Chatsworth*, *Meteor*, *R. de Zaldo*, *Chester*, etc. were boarded and searched by British patrol vessels (SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 31st Congress, 1st session XIV Number 66, *passim*).

It is worth mentioning that during the previous decade some 15,000 enslaved Africans from seized [negrero](#) cargos had been rerouted, by way of mid-Atlantic [St. Helena](#), by blockade ships of the British navy.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: A somewhat more sincere and determined



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effort to enforce the slave-trade laws now followed; and yet it is a significant fact that not until Lincoln's administration did a slave-trader suffer death for violating the laws of the United States. The participation of Americans in the trade continued, declining somewhat between 1825 and 1830, and then reviving, until it reached its highest activity between 1840 and 1860. The development of a vast internal slave-trade, and the consequent rise in the South of vested interests strongly opposed to slave smuggling, led to a falling off in the illicit introduction of Negroes after 1825, until the fifties; nevertheless, smuggling never entirely ceased, and large numbers were thus added to the plantations of the Gulf States.

Monroe had various constitutional scruples as to the execution of the Act of 1819;¹ but, as Congress took no action, he at last put a fair interpretation on his powers, and appointed Samuel Bacon as an agent in Africa to form a settlement for recaptured Africans. Gradually the agency thus formed became merged with that of the Colonization Society on Cape Mesurado; and from this union [Liberia](#) was finally evolved.²

Meantime, during the years 1818 to 1820, the activity of the slave-traders was prodigious. General James Tallmadge declared in the House, February 15, 1819: "Our laws are already highly penal against their introduction, and yet, it is a well known fact, that about fourteen thousand slaves have been brought into our country this last year."³ In the same year Middleton of South Carolina and Wright of Virginia estimated illicit introduction at 13,000 and 15,000 respectively.⁴ Judge Story, in charging a jury, took occasion to say: "We have but too many proofs from unquestionable sources, that it [the slave-trade] is still carried on with all the implacable rapacity of former times. Avarice has grown more subtle in its evasions, and watches and seizes its prey with an appetite quickened rather than suppressed by its guilty vigils. American citizens are steeped to their very mouths (I can hardly use too bold a figure) in this stream of iniquity."⁵ The following year, 1820, brought some significant statements from various members of Congress. Said Smith of South Carolina: "Pharaoh was, for his temerity, drowned in the Red Sea, in pursuing them [the Israelites] contrary to God's express will; but our Northern friends have not been afraid even of that, in their zeal to furnish the Southern States with Africans. They are better seamen than Pharaoh, and calculate by that means to elude the vigilance of Heaven; which they seem to disregard, if they can but elude the violated laws of their country."⁶ As late as May he saw little hope of suppressing the traffic.⁷ Sergeant of Pennsylvania declared: "It is notorious that, in spite of the utmost vigilance that can be employed, African negroes are clandestinely brought in and sold as slaves."⁸ Plumer of New

1. Attorney-General Wirt advised him, October, 1819, that no part of the appropriation could be used to purchase land in Africa or tools for the Negroes, or as salary for the agent: OPINIONS OF ATTORNEYS-GENERAL, I. 314-7. Monroe laid the case before Congress in a special message Dec. 20, 1819 (HOUSE JOURNAL, 16th Congress 1st session, page 57); but no action was taken there.

2. Cf. Kendall's Report, August, 1830: SENATE DOCUMENT, 21st Congress 2d session, I. No. 1, pages 211-8; also see below, Chapter X.

3. Speech in the House of Representatives, Feb. 15, 1819, page 18; published in Boston, 1849.

4. Jay, INQUIRY INTO AMERICAN COLONIZATION (1838), page 59, note.

5. Quoted in Friends' FACTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE SLAVE TRADE (ed. 1841), pages 7-8.

6. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, pages 270-1.

7. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 698.

8. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 1207.



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Hampshire stated that "of the unhappy beings, thus in violation of all laws transported to our shores, and thrown by force into the mass of our black population, scarcely one in a hundred is ever detected by the officers of the General Government, in a part of the country, where, if we are to believe the statement of Governor Rabun, 'an officer who would perform his duty, by attempting to enforce the law [against the slave trade] is, by many, considered as an officious meddler, and treated with derision and contempt;' ... I have been told by a gentleman, who has attended particularly to this subject, that ten thousand slaves were in one year smuggled into the United States; and that, even for the last year, we must count the number not by hundreds, but by thousands."⁹ In 1821 a committee of Congress characterized prevailing methods as those "of the grossest fraud that could be practised to deceive the officers of government."¹⁰ Another committee, in 1822, after a careful examination of the subject, declare that they "find it impossible to measure with precision the effect produced upon the American branch of the slave trade by the laws above mentioned, and the seizures under them. They are unable to state, whether those American merchants, the American capital and seamen which heretofore aided in this traffic, have abandoned it altogether, or have sought shelter under the flags of other nations." They then state the suspicious circumstance that, with the disappearance of the American flag from the traffic, "the trade, notwithstanding, increases annually, under the flags of other nations." They complain of the spasmodic efforts of the executive. They say that the first United States cruiser arrived on the African coast in March, 1820, and remained a "few weeks;" that since then four others had in two years made five visits in all; but "since the middle of last November, the commencement of the healthy season on that coast, no vessel has been, nor, as your committee is informed, is, under orders for that service."¹¹ The United States African agent, Ayres, reported in 1823: "I was informed by an American officer who had been on the coast in 1820, that he had boarded 20 American vessels in one morning, lying in the port of Gallinas, and fitted for the reception of slaves. It is a lamentable fact, that most of the harbours, between the Senegal and the line, were visited by an equal number of American vessels, and for the sole purpose of carrying away slaves. Although for some years the coast had been occasionally visited by our cruisers, their short stay and seldom appearance had made but slight impression on those traders, rendered hardy by repetition of crime, and avaricious by excessive gain. They were enabled by a regular system to gain intelligence of any cruiser being on the coast."¹² Even such spasmodic efforts bore abundant fruit, and indicated what vigorous measures might have accomplished. Between May, 1818, and November, 1821, nearly six hundred Africans were recaptured and eleven American slavers taken.¹³ Such measures gradually changed the character of the trade, and opened the international phase of the question. American slavers cleared

9. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 1433.

10. Referring particularly to the case of the slaver "Plattsburg." Cf. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, page 10.

11. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, page 2. The President had in his message spoken in exhilarating tones of the success of the government in suppressing the trade. The House Committee appointed in pursuance of this passage made the above report. Their conclusions are confirmed by British reports: PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1822, Vol. XXII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, III. page 44. So, too, in 1823, Ashmun, the African agent, reports that thousands of slaves are being abducted.

12. Ayres to the Secretary of the Navy, Feb. 24, 1823; reprinted in FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 31.



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for foreign ports, there took a foreign flag and papers, and then sailed boldly past American cruisers, although their real character was often well known. More stringent clearance laws and consular instructions might have greatly reduced this practice; but nothing was ever done, and gradually the laws became in large measure powerless to deal with the bulk of the illicit trade. In 1820, September 16, a British officer, in his official report, declares that, in spite of United States laws, "American vessels, American subjects, and American capital, are unquestionably engaged in the trade, though under other colours and in disguise."¹⁴ The United States ship "Cyane" at one time reported ten captures within a few days, adding: "Although they are evidently owned by Americans, they are so completely covered by Spanish papers that it is impossible to condemn them."¹⁵ The governor of Sierra Leone reported the rivers Nunez and Pongas full of renegade European and American slave-traders;¹⁶ the trade was said to be carried on "to an extent that almost staggers belief."¹⁷ Down to 1824 or 1825, reports from all quarters prove this activity in slave-trading.

The execution of the laws within the country exhibits grave defects and even criminal negligence. Attorney-General Wirt finds it necessary to assure collectors, in 1819, that "it is against public policy to dispense with prosecutions for violation of the law to prohibit the Slave trade."¹⁸ One district attorney writes: "It appears to be almost impossible to enforce the laws of the United States against offenders after the negroes have been landed in the state."¹⁹ Again, it is asserted that "when vessels engaged in the slave trade have been detained by the American cruisers, and sent into the slave-holding states, there appears at once a difficulty in securing the freedom to these captives which the laws of the United States have decreed for them."²⁰ In some cases, one man would smuggle in the Africans and hide them in the woods; then his partner would "rob" him, and so all trace be lost.²¹ Perhaps 350 Africans were officially reported as brought in contrary to law from 1818 to 1820: the absurdity of this figure is apparent.²² A circular letter to the marshals, in 1821, brought reports of only a few well-known cases, like that of the "General Ramirez;" the marshal of Louisiana had "no information."²³

There appears to be little positive evidence of a large illicit importation into the country for a decade after 1825. It is hardly possible, however, considering the activity in the trade, that slaves were not largely imported. Indeed, when we note how the laws were continually broken in other respects, absence of

13. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, pages 5-6. The slavers were the "Ramirez," "Endymion," "Esperanza," "Plattsburg," "Science," "Alexander," "Eugene," "Mathilde," "Daphne," "Eliza," and "La Pensée." In these 573 Africans were taken. The naval officers were greatly handicapped by the size of the ships, etc. (cf. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), pages 33-41). They nevertheless acted with great zeal.

14. PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1821, Vol. XXIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, page 76. The names and description of a dozen or more American slavers are given: PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1821, Vol. XXIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, pages 18-21.

15. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, pages 15-20.

16. HOUSE DOCUMENT, 18th Congress 1st session, VI. No. 119, page 13.

17. PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1823, Vol. XVIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, pages 10-11.

18. OPINIONS OF ATTORNEYS-GENERAL, V. 717.

19. R.W. Habersham to the Secretary of the Navy, August, 1821; reprinted in FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 47.

20. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 42.

21. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 43.

22. Cf. above, pages 126-7.

23. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 42.



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evidence of petty smuggling becomes presumptive evidence that collusive or tacit understanding of officers and citizens allowed the trade to some extent.²⁴ Finally, it must be noted that during all this time scarcely a man suffered for participating in the trade, beyond the loss of the Africans and, more rarely, of his ship. Red-handed slavers, caught in the act and convicted, were too often, like *La Coste* of South Carolina, the subjects of executive clemency.²⁵ In certain cases there were those who even had the effrontery to ask Congress to cancel their own laws. For instance, in 1819 a Venezuelan privateer, secretly fitted out and manned by Americans in Baltimore, succeeded in capturing several American, Portuguese, and Spanish slavers, and appropriating the slaves; being finally wrecked herself, she transferred her crew and slaves to one of her prizes, the "Antelope," which was eventually captured by a United States cruiser and the 280 Africans sent to Georgia. After much litigation, the United States Supreme Court ordered those captured from Spaniards to be surrendered, and the others to be returned to Africa. By some mysterious process, only 139 Africans now remained, 100 of whom were sent to Africa. The Spanish claimants of the remaining thirty-nine sold them to a certain Mr. Wilde, who gave bond to transport them out of the country. Finally, in December, 1827, there came an innocent petition to Congress to *cancel this bond*.²⁶ A bill to that effect passed and was approved, May 2, 1828,²⁷ and in consequence these Africans remained as slaves in Georgia.

On the whole, it is plain that, although in the period from 1807 to 1820 Congress laid down broad lines of legislation sufficient, save in some details, to suppress the African slave trade to America, yet the execution of these laws was criminally lax. Moreover, by the facility with which slavers could disguise their identity, it was possible for them to escape even a

24. A few accounts of captures here and there would make the matter less suspicious; these, however, do not occur. How large this suspected illicit traffic was, it is of course impossible to say; there is no reason why it may not have reached many hundreds per year.

25. Cf. editorial in *Niles's Register*, XXII. 114. Cf. also the following instances of pardons: —

PRESIDENT JEFFERSON: March 1, 1808, Phillip M. Topham, convicted for "carrying on an illegal slave-trade" (pardoned twice). PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 146, 148-9.

PRESIDENT MADISON: July 29, 1809, 15 vessels arrived at New Orleans from Cuba, with 666 white persons and 683 negroes. Every penalty incurred under the Act of 1807 was remitted. (Note: "Several other pardons of this nature were granted.") PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 179.

November 8, 1809, John Hopkins and Lewis Le Roy, convicted for importing a slave. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 184-5.

February 12, 1810, William Sewall, convicted for importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 194, 235, 240.

May 5, 1812, William Babbit, convicted for importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 248.

PRESIDENT MONROE: June 11, 1822, Thomas Shields, convicted for bringing slaves into New Orleans. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 15.

August 24, 1822, J.F. Smith, sentenced to five years' imprisonment and \$3000 fine; served twenty-five months and was then pardoned. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 22.

July 23, 1823, certain parties liable to penalties for introducing slaves into Alabama. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 63.

August 15, 1823, owners of schooner "Mary," convicted of importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 66.

PRESIDENT J.Q. ADAMS: March 4, 1826, Robert Perry; his ship was forfeited for slave-trading. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 140.

January 17, 1827, Jesse Perry; forfeited ship, and was convicted for introducing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 158.

February 13, 1827, Zenas Winston; incurred penalties for slave-trading. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 161. The four following cases are similar to that of Winston: —

February 24, 1827, John Tucker and William Morbon. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 162.

March 25, 1828, Joseph Badger. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 192.

February 19, 1829, L.R. Wallace. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 215.

PRESIDENT JACKSON: Five cases. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 225, 270, 301, 393, 440.

The above cases were taken from manuscript copies of the Washington records, made by Mr. W.C. Endicott, Jr., and kindly loaned me.

26. See SENATE JOURNAL, 20th Congress 1st session, pages 60, 66, 340, 341, 343, 348, 352, 355; HOUSE JOURNAL, 20th Congress 1st session, pages 59, 76, 123, 134, 156, 169, 173, 279, 634, 641, 646, 647, 688, 692.



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vigorous enforcement of our laws. This situation could properly be met only by energetic and sincere international co-operation....²⁸

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: The long and open agitation for the reopening of the slave-trade, together with the fact that the South had been more or less familiar with violations of the laws since 1808, led to such a remarkable increase of illicit traffic and actual importations in the decade 1850-1860, that the movement may almost be termed a reopening of the slave-trade. In the foreign slave-trade our own officers continue to report "how shamefully our flag has been used;"²⁹ and British officers write "that at least one half of the successful part of the slave trade is carried on under the American flag," and this because "the number of American cruisers on the station is so small, in proportion to the immense extent of the slave-dealing coast."³⁰ The fitting out of slavers became a flourishing business in the United States, and centred at New York City. "Few of our readers," writes a periodical of the day, "are aware of the extent to which this infernal traffic is carried on, by vessels clearing from New York, and in close alliance with our legitimate trade; and that down-town merchants of wealth and respectability are extensively engaged in buying and selling African Negroes, and have been, with comparatively little interruption, for an indefinite number of years."³¹ Another periodical says: "The number of persons engaged in the slave-trade, and the amount of capital embarked in it, exceed our powers of calculation. The city of New York has been until of late [1862] the principal port of the world for this infamous commerce; although the cities of Portland and Boston are only second to her in that distinction. Slave dealers added largely to the wealth of our commercial metropolis; they contributed liberally to the treasuries of political organizations, and their bank accounts were largely depleted to carry elections in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut."³² During eighteen months of the years 1859-1860 eighty-five slavers are reported to have been fitted out in New York harbor,³³ and these alone transported from 30,000 to 60,000 slaves annually.³⁴ The United States deputy marshal of that district declared in 1856 that the business of fitting out slavers "was never prosecuted with greater energy than at present. The occasional interposition of the legal authorities exercises no apparent influence for its suppression. It is seldom that one or more vessels cannot be designated at the wharves, respecting which there is evidence that she is either in or has been concerned in the Traffic."³⁵

27. STATUTES AT LARGE, VI. 376.

28. Among interesting minor proceedings in this period were two Senate bills to register slaves so as to prevent illegal importation. They were both dropped in the House; a House proposition to the same effect also came to nothing: SENATE JOURNAL, 15th Congress 1st session, pages 147, 152, 157, 165, 170, 188, 201, 203, 232, 237; 15th Congress 2d session, pages 63, 74, 77, 202, 207, 285, 291, 297; HOUSE JOURNAL, 15th Congress 1st session, page 332; 15th Congress 2d session, pages 303, 305, 316; 16th Congress 1st session, page 150. Another proposition was contained in the Meigs resolution presented to the House, Feb. 5, 1820, which proposed to devote the public lands to the suppression of the slave-trade. This was ruled out of order. It was presented again and laid on the table in 1821: HOUSE JOURNAL, 16th Congress 1st session, pages 196, 200, 227; 16th Congress 2d session, page 238.

29. Gregory to the Secretary of the Navy, June 8, 1850: SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 31 Congress, 1st session, XIV. No. 66, page 2. Cf. SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 31 Congress, 2d session, II. No. 6.

30. Cumming to Commodore Fanshawe, Feb. 22, 1850: SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 31 Congress, 1st session, XIV. No. 66, page 8.

31. New York Journal of Commerce, 1857; quoted in 24TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 56.

32. "The Slave-Trade in New York," in the Continental Monthly, January, 1862, page 87.

33. New York Evening Post; quoted in Lalor, CYCLOPÆDIA, III. 733.

34. Lalor, CYCLOPÆDIA, III. 733; quoted from a New York paper.



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On the coast of Africa "it is a well-known fact that most of the Slave ships which visit the river are sent from New York and New Orleans."³⁶

The absence of United States war-ships at the Brazilian station enabled American smugglers to run in cargoes, in spite of the prohibitory law. One cargo of five hundred slaves was landed in 1852, and the Correio Mercantil regrets "that it was the flag of the United States which covered this act of piracy, sustained by citizens of that great nation."³⁷ When the Brazil trade declined, the illicit Cuban trade greatly increased, and the British consul reported: "Almost all the slave expeditions for some time past have been fitted out in the United States, chiefly at New York."³⁸

35. FRIENDS' APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE COLOURED RACES (1858), Appendix, page 41; quoted from the Journal of Commerce.

36. 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, pages 53-4; quoted from the African correspondent of the Boston Journal. From April, 1857, to May, 1858, twenty-one of twenty-two slavers which were seized by British cruisers proved to be American, from New York, Boston, and New Orleans. Cf. 25TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 122. De Bow estimated in 1856 that forty slavers cleared annually from Eastern harbors, clearing yearly \$17,000,000: De Bow's Review, XXII. 430-1.

37. SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 33d Congress, 1st session, VIII. No. 47, page 13.

38. HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 34th Congress, 1st session, XII. No. 105, page 38.



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1851

January: A waiter called [Shadrach](#) ([Frederick Jenkins](#)) at a popular [Boston](#) coffeehouse, the Cornhill Coffee-house, was kidnapped under the new federal Fugitive Slave Law. His kidnapers, *aka* “United States Marshals,” were holding him in the Boston jailhouse, in order to bring him before an unindicted co-conspirator, *aka* “Federal Commissioner.” Shadrach, of course, as a kidnap victim, would not be permitted to testify on his own behalf or have access to council, or have a trial by jury of his white peers in downtown Boston, although we suppose he should have been more grateful than he in fact was, that his kidnapers merely kept him in chains rather than binding and gagging him, or drugging him. In all probability his lot would have been to be sent south to slavery, because that could happen solely on the word of one white man who would testify to this unindicted co-conspirator that Shadrach was a piece of someone’s property, that had **escaped**. However, as it came down, black Bostonians defied Christ’s injunction not to resist evil, and marched into the courthouse, and kidnapped Shadrach right back. Some nonviolence adherents, such as [Abby Kelley Foster](#), would never become reconciled to these direct tactics, preferring to

throw my body in the way of the kidnapers and risk my life if need be.

There was a massacre of foreigners, including Americans, at Jaffa, Turkey. The US Mediterranean Squadron would be ordered to make a demonstration along the Turkish (Levant) coast.

[US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS](#)

**THE AGE OF REASON WAS A PIPE DREAM, OR AT BEST A PROJECT.
ACTUALLY, HUMANS HAVE ALMOST NO CLUE WHAT THEY ARE DOING,
WHILE CREDITING THEIR OWN LIES ABOUT WHY THEY ARE DOING IT.**



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February 15, Saturday: Evelina E. Vannevar Slack wrote concerning family matters from Chelsea, Massachusetts to Charles Wesley Slack in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Slack's father added a note to this letter.

[Frederick Jenkins](#) (or Wilkins or Minkins, depending on what source you accept) known generally as "[Shadrach](#)," a [Boston](#) waiter who was a fugitive from Georgia, had been detained by slave-catchers. [Henry Williams](#), who had escaped from Virginia and whom [Henry Thoreau](#) assisted, was a friend of Jenkins. [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) represented Shadrach in court. Chief Justice Shaw ruled for the rights of the slave catchers but a group of Boston's indignant black citizens then swept into the hearing room through one door and out through another, taking him along within the press of their crowd. [Daniel Webster](#) of course fulminated that such a rescue from the US criminal system was "strictly speaking, a case of treason."



UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

After Jenkins was thus rescued, Francis Edwin Bigelow, the Concord blacksmith who according to Horace Rice Hosmer "had **strong negro features** for a white man," and his wife Ann Bigelow, concealed him for one night until he could be escorted to the home of Jonathan Drake and Frances Drake in Leominster (for a few days) and then Fitchburg and into Vermont and on up across the [Canada](#) border (in this they were assisted by the Brooks family next door, and there is a story that Nathan Brooks helped outfit the fugitive with one of his hats). This offense against property and legitimate ownership, and New England's guilty complicity in it, caused conservatives in Boston to become concerned about social unrest and determined to use brutality to prevent it. A well-known abolitionist, [Elizur Wright, Jr.](#), would be charged with this crime, and would be defended by lawyer Dana. When Wright saw the blacksmith Bigelow sitting in the jury box, he immediately intuited that his trial was going to go all right — for on Shadrach's way toward safety he had been put up overnight at the Bigelow home! Dana's work in these "Rescue Trials" would continue into 1852.



February 15, Saturday: Fatal is the discovery that our friend is fallible —that he has prejudices. He is then only prejudiced in our favor. What is the value of his esteem who does not justly esteem another? Alas! Alas! When my friend begins to deal in confessions —breaks silence —makes a theme of friendship —(which then is always something past) and descends to merely human relations As long as there is a spark of love remaining cherish that alone —only *that* can be kindled into a flame. I thought that friendship —that love was still possible between —I thought that we had not withdrawn very far asunder— But now that my friend rashly thoughtlessly —prophanely speaks *recognizing* the distance between us —that distance seems infinitely increased. Of our friends we do not incline to speak to complain to others —we would not disturb the foundations of confidence that may still be. Why should we not still continue to live with the intensity & rapidity of infants. Is not the world —are not the heavens as unfathomed as ever? Have we exhausted any joy —any sentiment? The author of Festus well exclaims

"Could we but think with the intensity
We love with, we might do great things, I think."

FESTUS; A POEM

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY



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April 3, Thursday: Thomas Simms (Sims)'s arrest. The United States Commissioner in [Boston](#), George Ticknor Curtis, ordered that that teenage runaway, who had been living and working in Boston, be sent back to his owner in Georgia (who was, possibly, also his father), who in all likelihood would torture him and might well murder him by due process of law.



Sims was a man seriously addicted to his pleasures, a drinker and habitué of the Ann Street bordellos. He had been something of a hard case: he carried a knife, and when arrested had cut Asa Butman pretty severely in the leg.... The abolitionists put it out that Sims had died from the whipping he got when he arrived back in Savannah that spring of 1851. But it wasn't true.

According to Leonard W. Levy's *THE LAW OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND CHIEF JUSTICE SHAW* (Oxford, 1957), it had become

notorious that no fugitive slave had ever been returned from Boston. Webster Whigs were dismayed that the whole state of Massachusetts was known as the cradle of "mad Abolitionism." It had become a matter of pride, not alone in the South, that a fugitive should be seized in Boston and taken back to slavery. Then, on Thursday evening, April 3, 1851—before the excitement of the [Shadrach](#) [[Frederick Jenkins](#)] case had subsided—the city government of Boston was presented with an opportunity to make good on its promises of loyally enforcing the Fugitive Slave Act: Thomas Sims was taken into custody as a fugitive slave belonging to Mr. James Potter, a rice planter of Chatham

The Sunday Boston [Globe](#) for February 9, 1997 featured a review of Gary Collison's book *SHADRACH MINKINS: FROM FUGITIVE SLAVE TO CITIZEN*, with two handsome woodcuts and a photo of an ad for the sale of Shadrach:³⁹

A man came from Norfolk VA to Boston with documents attesting to the fact that a waiter at Taft's Cornhill Coffee House, Frederick Wilkins AKA [Shadrach](#), was an escaped slave. The Commissioner of the US Circuit Court, George Ticknor Curtis, by politics a "Cotton Whig," issued a warrant for the arrest of said runaway, who was seized as he unsuspectingly served the breakfast of US Deputy Marshall Patrick Riley. After hustling the waiter through back streets to the courthouse, Riley notified City Marshal Francis Tukey and Mayor Bigelow that he had "got a nigger."

Brad Dean summarizes: "In September 1850 the United States Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law, which granted slaveholders the right to seize runaway slaves anywhere in the U.S. and carry them back to the South. The first attempt at rendition in February 1851 failed when abolitionists rescued a runaway called [Shadrach](#) ([Frederick Jenkins](#)) from his captors in [Boston](#) and sent him on to safety in [Canada](#). Less than two months later, however, another runaway, Thomas Simms (Sims), was seized in Boston, but on that occasion local, state, and federal troops ensured that Sims's owners were able to carry him back to Georgia. [Henry](#)

39. So, what was a "Cotton Whig"?—Ronald Bailey, in considering the extended economic impact of the slave economy on industrialization in New England, has proposed that we employ a new term, the "slave(ry) trade," so that we can refer not simply to the trade in slaves, between nations and inside our nation, but to the entire national economy that we built directly or tangentially around slave labor and its produce. This can be, he suggests, a useful shorthand which will remind us of the complex economic linkages wrought by slaveholding. New England textile mill owners and planter interests in the South and the Caribbean maintained a steady commerce of raw goods and finished supplies. The selfinterests of these groups were sometimes so close that the distinction between them broke down; individuals or families could become industrial capitalists as well as plantation owners. Bailey has cited, in detail, economic relationships between New England merchants and Caribbean plantation owners which personalize the economic relationship between northern industry and the slave plantations. Rowland Gibson Hazard, a [Rhode Island](#) manufacturer of negro cloth, was able somehow to support abolitionist principles while also producing products which directly implicated him in, to use Bailey's phrase, the slave(ry) trade. Somehow such people were able to experience a shift in their moral values without fundamentally reassessing the consequences of their own economic activities. As a result, they could embrace antislavery sentiments, but not sufficiently to cease all economic participation in the slave(ry) trade, and not sufficiently to become ardent abolitionists. "Why," Stachiw asks, "didn't they expand their perceptions of moral principles to encompass the full consequences of their actions?" (One explanation that has been proffered is that their opposition to abolitionism drew less from their moral stand against it than from their opposition to what they saw as the threat to their status, as local elites, that was being presented by upstart immediatists.)

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[Thoreau](#) and hundreds of thousands of others in the North were outraged by the Fugitive Slave Law and the Sims rendition, which seemed to them flagrant violations by the federal government of the rights guaranteed to states under the US Constitution. As a consequence of these and similar actions by the federal government, the Nullification movement, which posited that a state had a right to nullify laws mandated by the federal government, garnered more serious attention in the North than it had before been accorded. Two key events immediately preceded and helped set the stage for the meeting sponsored by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society on July 4th, 1854. On May 24th, [Anthony Burns](#), a fugitive slave working in a Boston clothing store, was arrested and slated to be shipped back to Virginia. Abolitionists protested at Faneuil Hall, and the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) [of Boston's Vigilance Committee] led a failed attempt to rescue Burns from the Boston jail."



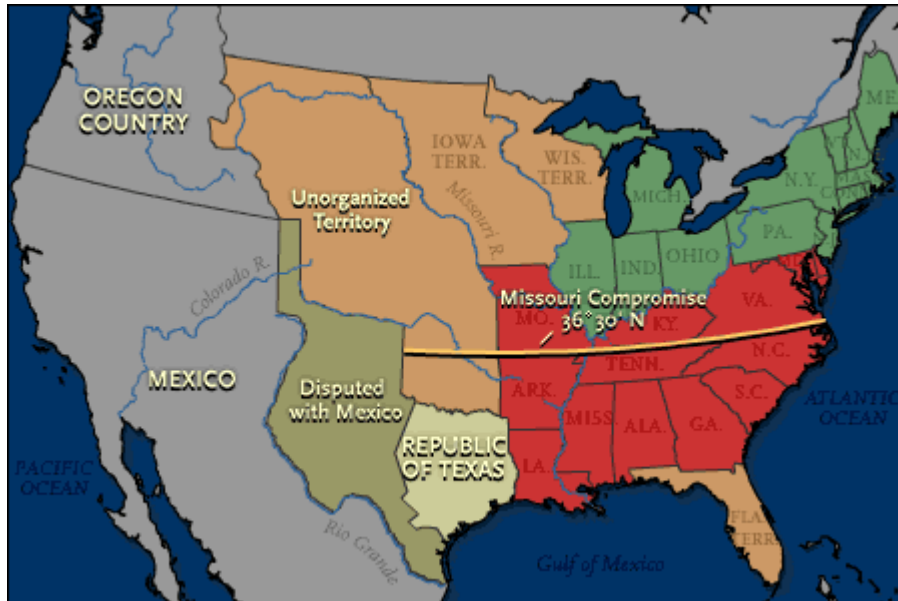
[Anthony Burns](#)

**was given a new suit for the occasion
and was escorted under heavy guard by the militia
to a revenue cutter which returned him to slavery.
(It is estimated that it cost our government some \$100,000
to make him a slave again.)**

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Brad Dean continues: “The second key event was the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which became law on May 30. One provision of the Act was the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, an action that removed the explicit prohibition of slavery in the northern reaches of the Louisiana Purchase.



[Thoreau](#) was incensed over the Burns affair. On May 29th, he began a long, scathing journal entry with these two sentences, the second of which would echo again in “SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS”: “These days it is left to one Mr. Loring to say whether a citizen of Massachusetts is a slave or not. Does any one think that Justice or God awaits Mr. Loring’s decision?”⁴⁰ The arrangements by which [Thoreau](#) joined [William Lloyd Garrison](#), [Wendell Phillips](#), and the others on the podium at Framingham are not known. The absence of his name from announcements of the event suggests that he was a last-minute addition, but we do not know whether he was asked to speak or sought the opportunity. In view of his aroused emotions at the moment and of his apparent difficulty getting Concordians to talk about the North rather than the South, it is certainly possible that the announced rally struck him as an ideal forum to get things off his chest. Minimal time to prepare was not really a problem because on the issue of slavery and Massachusetts his long-stewing thought and rhetoric had already reached the boiling point. Indeed, in writing SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS”, he essentially mined his still fresh journal entries on Burns and earlier passages on the Thomas Simms (Sims) case.”

October 1, Wednesday: On this very day on which, in Concord, Massachusetts, [Henry Thoreau](#) was forwarding an American man named [Henry Williams](#) along his way to [Canada](#) and freedom, Federal marshals from Rochester, Auburn, Syracuse, and Canandaigua, accompanied by local policemen, were taking into their custody an American in Buffalo and an American in Syracuse, [New York](#) who had been alleged to be, similarly, escaped pieces of some white man’s property. At about noon the deputies of US Marshal Henry W. Allen entered the cabinet shop of Charles F. Williston in Syracuse and took into their custody a barrel maker who called himself Jerry, also known as William Henry (Jerry McHenry), upon a warrant from US Commissioner Joseph F. Sabine based upon a complaint from a citizen of the state of Missouri named John McReynolds. McReynolds had sworn before officers of the US federal government that this Jerry or William Henry or McHenry belonged to him (and it is a lucky thing that no American man of property had thought to send these factors off after the Lady Moon as one of his misplaced possessions, as it is clear that such factors could be induced to believe anything no matter how preposterous). The barrel-maker was being told that the charge against him was theft, until, that is, he was in manacles. Then he was informed that he had been taken under the Fugitive Slave Law. He put up substantial resistance but was subdued. Word spread and every

40. THE JOURNAL OF HENRY D. THOREAU, ed. Bradford Torrey and Francis Henry Allen, 14 volumes. Boston MA: Houghton, Mifflin, 1906, 6:313.

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church-bell in the city began to toll, with of course the exception of the one in the Episcopalian steeple.



The Reverend Samuel Joseph May and a group of his parishioners and delegates of the Liberty Party went to the office of the commissioner and, evidently upon a prearranged signal, McHenry, in slave restraints, threw

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himself across Commissioner Sabine's desk, scattering the papers and weapons upon it. The crowd of men in



the room pressed the marshals present against the wall while they hoisted McHenry above their heads and rushed him out of the building. Unfortunately, on their way down the stairs they dropped him and he was badly injured and rendered unconscious. While he was regaining consciousness and being helped into a carriage on Water Street, the deputies recaptured him and took him to the police station. He was so terrified at this point that he could not be calmed. For the remainder of that day rioters roamed the streets of the city and the police station was stoned, and then that night at about 7PM or 8PM a mob estimated by some at 3,000 and by some at 10,000 stormed the building. One man, Peter Hornbeck, a mulatto who was by trade a butcher, was using his meat cleaver on a window casement, while a deputy was being decked by a stone and then beaten by a white man with a club. Marshall Allen, considering that he had already done his part, made an exit from a back



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door and James Lear, the factor for the slavemaster McReynolds of Missouri, figuring discretion to be the better part of valor, hid out in an adjoining building. Marshall Fitch, after some blows and perhaps a pistol shot, jumped out a second-floor window, and McHenry was saved.

The Reverend Samuel Ringgold Ward was putting out a newspaper in Syracuse, but after reading in the newspapers of the Christiana riot of that summer, and its consequences, he and Mrs. Ward had already decided that they would take their children and flee to Canada when way opened, rather than remain in jeopardy in the United States of America. At this point, in consequence of his involvement in this “Jerry rescue,” it would become necessary for him to abandon this newspaper occupation forthwith, and for the Ward family to flee immediately to their refuge in Canada.



Residing then at Syracuse, we went home [after reading in the newspapers of the riot at Christiana and its sad consequences], arriving on Wednesday, the first day of October. We found the whole town in commotion and excitement. We soon learned the cause. A poor Mulatto man, named Jerry, at the suit of his own father had been arrested under the Fugitive Law, had been before the Negro-catcher’s court, had escaped, had been pursued and retaken, and was now being conveyed to prison. I went to the prison, and, in company with that true sterling friend of the slave, the Reverend Samuel J. May, was permitted to go in and see the man. He had fetters on his ankles, and manacles on his wrists. I had never before, since my recollection, seen a chained slave. He was a short, thick-set, strongly built man, half white though slave born. His temperament was ardent, and he was most wonderfully excited. Though chained, he could not stand still; and in that narrow room, motioning as well as he could with his chained, manacled hands, and pacing up and down as well as his fetters would allow, fevered and almost frenzied with excitement, he implored us who were looking on, in such strains of fervid eloquence as I never heard before nor since from the lips of man, to break his chains, and give him that liberty which the [Declaration of Independence](#) assumed to be the birthright of every man, and which, according to the law of love, was our duty towards a suffering brother.

I cannot recall the ipsissima verba of his eloquent pleading. As far as I can revive his sentences in my memory, he exclaimed – “Gentlemen, behold me, and these chains! Why am I bound thus, in a free country? Am I not a man like yourselves? Do you not suppose I feel as other men feel? Oh, gentlemen, what have I done to deserve this cruel treatment? I was at my work, like an honest industrious man. I was trying to act the part of a good citizen; but they came upon me, and accused me of crime. I knew I was innocent; but I felt it my duty to go before the court, to declare and to prove my innocence. For that reason I let that little Marshal, I think you call him, put handcuffs on me. You know, gentlemen, handcuffs don’t hurt an innocent man! But after

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they put the irons on me, they told me they were taking me as a runaway slave! Didn't I tell you I was innocent? They confessed I was. If I had known what they were about, do you think I should have let that little ordinary man put irons on me? No, indeed! I have told you how deceitfully they took me. When I saw a good chance, I thought it was not wrong to break away from them. I watched my opportunity: I dashed out of the door; I ran like a man running for his freedom; but they overtook me, and brought me back, and here I am like a wild beast, chained and caged.

"Gentlemen, is this a free country? Why did my fathers fight the British, if one of their poor sons is to be treated in this way? I beseech you, gentlemen, as you love your own liberty, break these chains of mine; yes, and break the chains that bind my brethren in the South, too. Does not the Bible say, "Break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free"? Don't you believe the Bible? I can't read it as some of you can, but I believe what it says, and I ask you, gentlemen, to do for me what that book commands. Suppose that any one of you were in my position. What would you wish me to do? I beg of you, gentlemen, to do for me what you would wish, were you where I am. Are not all men born free and equal? How is it, then, that I must wear these chains? Give me, O give me, gentlemen, that freedom which you say belongs to all men, and it is all I ask. Will you who are fathers, and brothers, see a man dragged in chains to the slavery of Tennessee, which I know is worse than death itself? In the name of our common nature – in the name of the Declaration of Independence – in the name of that law in the Bible which says, "do as you would be done by" – in the name of God, our common Father – do break these chains, and give me the freedom which is mine because I am a man, and an American."

What a sight! and what sounds! A slave, in a free Northern city chained as no felon would be chained, with the blood of Anglo-Saxons in his veins. Still, a slave; the son of a wealthy planter in Tennessee, and still a slave; arrested by a United States officer and several assistants, who were sworn to support the glorious Federal Constitution, serving under the freest government under the sun, the land of liberty, the refuge for the oppressed of all the world! And for what was he arrested? What was his crime? A love of that liberty which we all declared to be every man's inalienable right! And this slave was quoting the Declaration of Independence in chains! He was not the subject of some Czar, some,

"Turbaned Turk or fiery Russ:"

no, he was an American by birth, and a slave as well; so said the chains upon him: and on his lips were liberty's and religion's great watchwords! I never saw extremes so meet. I never saw how hollow a mockery was our talk about liberty, and our professions of Christianity. I never felt how really we were all subject to the slave power; I never felt before the depth of degradation there is in being a professed freeman of the Northern States. Daniel Webster had, a few months before, predicted the execution of the Fugitive Law in that very town. The people laughed him to scorn. We now felt, however, how much better he knew the depths to which Northern men can sink than we did. While these thoughts were galloping through our brains, this manacled son of a white man proceeded with his oration in his chains, and we felt dumb and powerless. A great crowd



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gathered about the door; and after looking on and drinking in as much of the scene as my excitable nature would allow, I turned to go away, and at that moment the crowd demanded a speech of me. I spoke. I ceased; but I never felt the littleness of my always little speeches, as I did at that moment. Jerry had made the speech of the occasion, and all I could say was but tame and spiritless in comparison with his

“Words that breathed and thoughts that burned.”

The substance of what I said is as follows: – “Fellow citizens! we are here in most extraordinary circumstances. We are witnessing such a sight as, I pray, we may never look upon again. A man in chains, in Syracuse! Not a felon, yet in chains! On trial, is this man, not for life, but for liberty. He is arrested and held under a law made by “Us the People” – pursuant, we pretend, to a clause in the constitution. That constitution was made “to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.” Here is a man one of “ourselves”; and the colour he bears shows that he belongs not altogether to my race, but that he is one of the “posterity” of those who framed and adopted our Federal constitution. So far are we from “securing” to him the “blessings of liberty,” that we have arrested him, confined him, and chained him, on purpose to inflict upon him the curses of slavery.

“They say he is a slave. What a term to apply to an American! How does this sound beneath the pole of liberty and the flag of freedom? What a contradiction to our “Declaration of Independence”! But suppose he be a slave: is New York the State to recognize and treat him as such? Is Syracuse the city of the Empire State in which the deeds which make this a day unfortunately memorable, should be perpetuated? If he be not a slave, then, he is the most outraged man we ever saw.

“What did our fathers gain by the seven years’ struggle with Great Britain, if, in what are called Free States, we have our fellow citizens, our useful mechanics and skilful artisans, chained and enslaved? How do foreign nations regard us, when knowing that it is not yet three short months since we were celebrating the Declaration of Independence, and to-day we are giving the most palpable denial to every word therein declared? “But I am told that this is a legal transaction. That it is wrong and unwise to speak against a judicial proceeding, not yet completed: I admit it all. I make no pretensions to speak wisely. I have heard a speech from Jerry. I feel for him, as for a brother; and under that feeling, I may not speak quite so soberly as I ought. “Oppression maketh a wise man mad.” I feel oppressed in a twofold sense. Yonder is my brother, in chains. Those chains press upon my limbs. I feel his sufferings, and participate his anguish. I feel, and we may all feel, oppressed in another sense. Here are certainly five-and-twenty hundred of us, wild with excitement in behalf of our chained brother, before our eyes, and we are utterly powerless to help him! We hear his strong, thrilling appeals, until our hearts sicken and our heads ache; but there is none among us that has the legal power to lift a hand in his defence, or for his deliverance. Of what advantage is it that we are free? What value is there in our freedom, while our hands are thus tied?

“Fellow citizens, whatever may be the result of these proceedings – whether our brother leaves the court, a declared

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freeman or a chained slave – upon us, the voters of New York State, to a very great extent, rests the responsibility of this Fugitive Slave Law. It is for us to say whether this enactment shall continue to stain our statute books, or be swept away into merited oblivion. It is for us to say whether the men who made it, and those who execute it before our faces, shall receive our votes, or shall by those votes be indignantly rebuked. Tell me, ye sturdy working men of Onondago, shall your votes be consecrated to the latter, or prostituted to the former? Do you swear fealty to freedom this day? Do you promise, so help you God! so to vote, as that your sanction never more shall be given to laws which empower persons to hunt, chain, and cage, MEN, in our midst? (cries of "yes, yes.") Thank you, fellow citizens, in the name of our brother in prison! thank you for your bold, manly promise! May we all abide by it, until deeds of darkness like the one we now lament shall no longer mar our institutions and blacken our history."

But the crowd felt rightly. They saw Gerrit Smith and me go off arm in arm to hold a consultation, and, two and two, they followed us. Glorious mob! unlike that of 1834, they felt for the poor slave, and they wished his freedom. Accordingly, at nine o'clock that evening, while the court was in session trying Jerry for more than his life, for his liberty, the mob without threw stones into the window, one of which came so near to the judge that, in undignified haste, he suddenly rose and adjourned the courts. In an hour from that time, the mob, through certain stalwart fellows whom the Government have never had the pleasure of catching, broke open the door and the side of the building where Jerry was, put out the lights, took him out in triumph, and bore him away where the slave-catchers never after saw him. The Marshal of the United States, who had him in custody, was so frightened that he fled in female attire: brave man! According to the Fugitive Law, he had to pay Jerry's master one thousand dollars; for so the law expressly ordains.

An assistant Marshal, who was aiding this one, fired a pistol when entrée was first made. He injured no one, but a stout stick struck his arm and broke it. Escaping out of a window soon after, he broke the same arm again, poor man! These two were not like a Marshal in Troy, in the same State, who, rather than capture a slave, resigned his office.

The papers in the interest of the Government, in publishing an account of this affair, connected my name with it in a most prominent manner. The Marshal with broken arm was especially commended to my tender regard. The Government, under the advice of Daniel Webster (whose Christianity, I find, is highly lauded in this country; it was always a res non in his own), ordered all the parties, directly or indirectly engaged in the rescuing of Jerry, to be put on trial for treason! For it was the doctrine of Mr. Webster and Mr. Fillmore, that opposition to the Slave Law was "treason, and drew after it all the consequences of treason." I knew enough to understand that one of the "consequences drawn after treason" is a hempen rope. I had already become hopeless of doing more in my native country; I had already determined to go to Canada. Now, however, matters became urgent. I could die; but was it duty? I could not remain in that country without repeating my connection with or participating in such an affair as I was then guilty of. If I did my duty by my fellow men, in that country, I must go to

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prison, perhaps; certainly, if the Government had their way, to the gallows. If I did not, I must go to perdition. Betwixt the two, my election was made. But then, what must become of my family, both as to their bread in my then circumstances, and as to their liberty in such a country? Recollecting that I had already my wife's consent (without which I could not take any important step of the sort) to go to Canada, I concluded that I must go immediately. I went; and a month or two after, my family followed: since which time we have each and severally been, con amore, the most loyal and grateful of British subjects.

Jerry lived at Kingston, Canada, until the latter part of 1853, when he died, a free man, by virtue of living in British soil. The courts would not entertain the charge of treason against those accused in this case, from its manifest absurdity. They did hold, however, that they had broken the Fugitive Law, and must be tried for that. Luckily, but one person who was accused was ever convicted. He died before the court, in its mercilessness, could wreak its full vengeance upon him. He was innocent; I know.

When the accused were summoned to Auburn, twenty-six miles from Syracuse, to attend trial, the Railway Company provided carriages for the accused and their wives, gratis. Returning from Auburn, several of those ladies were in the large carriage into which the Government prosecutor entered. They unanimously requested his departure. They afterwards made up a purse of thirty pieces of silver, of the smallest coin of the country, and presented to him – wages of iniquity and treachery. The chains (which I helped to file off) of Jerry were packed in a neat mahogany box, and sent to President Fillmore. The Hon. W. Seward voluntarily became bail for the accused. He has been Governor of his native State. He is now one of its senators. This, however, is his highest honour. So he esteems it.

In conclusion I beg to say, that the passage of the Nebraska Bill, and the outrages following it under sanction of the Government in Kansas, but confirms the opinion I formed four years ago, as to the impossibility – by any means now extant, and they are as wise as human ingenuity can invent – of reforming that country. The Government is too much at the mercy of 62,000 slaveholders; the people are too well content to let things remain as they are – the Churches, generally, cling with too great tenacity to their time-honoured pollutions to admit of any prospect of reformation at present, while the gloomiest future seems to overhang the country. The only hopeful spot in the American horizon is the growing, advancing attitude of the black people. From the whites, as a whole, I see no hopes. In the blacks I see some precious vigorous germs springing from seeds formerly sown, watered by many cries and tears, nourished by many prayers – the seed-sowing of Richard Allen and John Gloucester, Thomas Sipkins, Peter Williams, George Hogarth, Samuel Todd and William Hamilton, James Forten and Theodore Sedgewick Wright, among the departed; of Jehiel C. Beeman, Samuel E. Cornish, James William Charles Pennington, Christopher Rush, William Whipper, Timothy Eato, M.M. Clarke, Stephen Smith, and others, among the older living; the latter of whom have been permitted to outlive the darkness of a past and see the light enjoyed by the present generation.

God grant that right may prevail, and that all things shall further his glory!



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...

I made my entrée into Canada, as a resident and a fugitive, in October, 1851, at Montreal. I had been to Queenstown, Windsor, and Kingston, as well as [Niagara Falls](#), at various times within eleven years, as a mere visitor, then little dreaming of the necessity of my going as a settler. After spending a very few days at Montreal, I ascended the St. Lawrence, to Kingston; thence by Lake Ontario to Toronto, my present residence. It is impossible to convey to an English reader anything like a just idea of the St. Lawrence River scenery in October. This is my third autumn in Europe; but never, in the British Isles, did I witness such splendour of landscape as that river presents, in autumn. The river is large and majestic – near Montreal, where the placid Ottawa empties itself, it is most magnificent. The Ottawa, as smooth as a polished mirror, opening its ample mouth to the width of a lake, gently glides into the St. Lawrence; the latter with a quiet dignity receiving the tribute of the former, as an empress would graciously accept the homage of a courtier, rolling downward towards the gulf, as if created on purpose to convey to the ocean the tributes and the trusts committed to it, and as if amply powerful to bear both the honour and the burden. But going upwards, while the St. Lawrence is large and noble enough, it frequently is compressed into a comparatively small size, and falls over cascades. The steamers, however, are accommodated with canals, which admit of the continuance of navigation with but little interruption. At times, the St. Lawrence takes the form of a wide bay, studded with tiny islets, and the latter most densely covered with foliage – which, in early autumn, after the first few touches of the hoar frost, assume the most gorgeously brilliant hues. The intensest crimson, the deepest brown, the most glowing lemon colour, with occasional intermixtures of the unchanging foliage of the evergreens, and some intermediate colours, give these islets and these bays the appearance of immense vases filled with bouquets of unspeakable beauty and of most imposing grandeur. Those who have seen the representation of the brightness and charms of North American autumnal foliage, in Mr. Friend's panorama, may feel assured that it is not in the least exaggerated or overdrawn. I doubt if a more delightful autumnal voyage can be made in North America, than that from Montreal to Kingston; nor do I think that any season presents so many and so varied attractions to the lover of the picturesque in nature, even there, as does early autumn.

The banks of the St. Lawrence are cultivated to a considerable extent; and that cultivation both bespeaks the industry and enterprise of the yeoman, and the profit of living on the great watery highway to the ocean, and near to large and populous growing towns. Beautiful fields of early-sown wheat show themselves at intervals all along our way; neat, and in some cases elegant, farm houses, in the midst of orchards or ornamental trees, and nice rustic gardens, lent not a little to the beauty and interest of the scenery: and before I knew it, I was preferring the right hand – the British – side of the St. Lawrence, and concluding that on that side things were most inviting, and trying to reason myself into the belief of this with a sort of patriotic feeling to which all my life before I had been a stranger, and concerning which I had been a sceptic. Why had I interest in the British side of the noble St. Lawrence?



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What gave me a fellow feeling with those inhabitants? Simply the fact, that that country had become to me, in a sense in which no country ever was before, my own, and those people my fellow citizens.

After a most delightful passage of two days, I arrived at Toronto. I then renewed acquaintance, formerly made, with Thomas F. Cary, Esq., one of the sincerest, most generous, practical friends I ever had the honour to call by that endearing name. The Rev. J. Roaf, whom I had formerly met in New York, took me by the hand, as he is ever ready to do in the case of the outcast. Through the kindness of this gentleman I was introduced to the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, of which the Rev. Dr. Willis was and is President. Thus Mr. Roaf laid me under a twofold obligation, which I never can cancel, and never forget – that for his personal kindness, and that for affording me the honour and pleasure of the acquaintance, ripened into friendship (if the Doctor will allow me to say so), of the Rev. Michael Willis, D.D.

By the advice of these gentlemen and their colleagues in the Anti-Slavery Committee, I began to lecture in Canada, and finally became the agent of the Canadian Anti-Slavery Society. While in this service, it was my duty to travel all over the country, giving facts touching American slavery, seeking to awaken an interest against slavery in Canada, asking aid and kindness towards such fugitives as needed help, forming auxiliary societies, seeking to show the influence correct sentiment in Canada might have upon the adjoining States, and doing all that could be done, by advice, encouragement, and any other means, to promote the development, the progress, all the best moral and material interests, of the coloured people. What I saw, and how I saw it, while thus engaged, shall be the theme of this part of this volume.

At first sight, one would scarcely allow that anti-slavery labours were needed in a free British colony: most persons think so. The remark was frequently made to me, when proposing a meeting, or when speaking of the subject. But it is to be remembered, that Canada lies immediately next the States of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan, to go no further westward. These States produce some of the boldest pro-slavery politicians, some of the guiltiest of slavery's abettors, some of the most heretical of slavery's pulpit parasites; and it is sorrowful to add, some of the most successful in their several pro-slavery pursuits, that ever disgraced a free country, or desecrated free institutions, or belied our holy religion and its Author. Their history is not only contemporaneous with the history of Northern pro-slaveryism, but part and parcel of it. It is easy to see that a large population, infected with a sympathy for the slaveholder, upon our very border, must either have a serious effect upon us, in corrupting us, or we must exert a good influence upon them, provided we be, as we should be, thoroughly and incorruptibly and actively anti-slavery. Unfortunately, the former is the fact, and not the latter.

Besides, there is a vast amount of intercourse with the adjoining States, and a great deal of traffic, and Canadians travel extensively in the States, as do the people of the States in Canada. Thus the spread of slaveholding predilections is both favoured and facilitated; and, what is more, there is abundant



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evidence that some Americans industriously use these opportunities for the purpose of giving currency to their own notions. Moreover, in various parts of Canada Yankees have settled, and for miles around them the poison of their pro-slavery influence is felt. Some of them do not scruple to make known their desire to see Canada a part of the Union, and thus brought under the control of the slave power, and made a park for slaveholders to hunt human deer in. In the time of the Rebellion these things were said without concealment; and I have known cases where Yankees, living in Canada for fifteen years, have shown themselves hostile to our Sovereign and our free institutions until they-wanted office, and then, all at once, they took the oath of allegiance!

It is not to be forgotten, on the other hand, that in the States bordering upon us are some of the most thorough out-spoken abolitionists in the American Union. Having had the honour of being one of their humblest coadjutors, I could bear testimony to their zeal and trueness; and I felt, in living so near them, I was not entirely separated from them, though in another country, so far as political relations were concerned. I knew very well, and so did the society, that co-operation and sympathy with these benevolent men and women was an object well worthy of our labours. Our fugitives passed through their hands. They conducted the [underground railway](#). The goods were consigned to us. When they reached us they ceased to be goods, and became men instanter. For that purpose they sent them; for that purpose we received them. On that account they rejoiced in the true practical freedom of our country; on that account we deemed it a mercy to be permitted to live in such a country. They wrought and rejoiced on one side of the line; we did the same on the other side of the line. We were yokefellows, why should we not recognize each other as such? We did; we do yet. They attend our annual anti-slavery gatherings, we attend theirs.

But I may as well come to some more unwelcome facts, showing the need of anti-slavery labour in Canada. I class them under two heads - 1st, Pro-slavery feeling; and, 2nd, Negro-hate.

1. I do not now speak of Yankee settlers, visitors, or travellers: enough has been said of them. I now speak of British-born subjects, who in Canada exhibit these two sentiments in a manner that no Yankee can excel. There are men and women in our midst who justify slavery, out and out. Some of these were heretofore planters in the West Indies. The victims of their former power being translated by the law of 1834 into freemen, they never can forgive Lord Grey, Lord Derby, nor the British Cabinet and the British people, for the demanding, advocacy, and passing, of that law. Their property, their power, their wealth in human beings, are all gone, or nearly so. They are almost all of them friends of slavery, or enemies of the Negro, or both. Others were slaveholders aforetime in the United States. Circumstances of one sort and another have induced them to change their residences, and they now abide in our midst, participating in our freedom, and seeming to enjoy it; but they cannot forget the "leeks and the onions" of that Egypt in which they once luxuriated as small-sized, very small, Pharaohs. They are not wont to say a great deal about it, for that is not exactly the latitude for the popularity of such sentiments; but they say enough to show who and what they are. And, "tell it not in Gath!" some of both these classes of Canadian slaveocrats are

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coloured men!

Another class were poor in former days, and, going out to seek their fortunes, alighted upon Southern plantations, where they found lucrative employment, in slave-driving; or they have contracted marriage alliances with the daughters of slaveholders, and thus become sons-in-law and brothers-in-law to slaveholders and to slavery. Such self-seeking, pelf-seeking, devotees of the institution, are always the most clamorous in its behalf. These obey this rule with all their might.

Others still – like many, too many, Englishmen – without direct or indirect, present or past, interest in slavery, have travelled in the South; and, belonging to that extremely clever class of persons who possess the extraordinary facility of going through a country with both eyes wide open, and seeing nothing but just what they wish to see, return ignorant of any evils in slavery. “Fat, sleek, well contented slaves,” were the only ones they saw. There were none but the kindest masters in any part of the country through which they travelled. They cannot distinctly remember to have heard of a slave auction, of the separation of a slave family, of a case of severe flogging, of a chained coffle gang, of murder, incest, fornication or adultery, during all the tour: in fact, they cannot believe that such things do occur! Slavery, in their eyes – sightless eyes, in chosen circumstances – is a very innocent, happy affair. True, they never wore the yoke, they never even tasted any of those sweets which they are sure were from necessity in slavery; but they know (that is, they know nothing) and are prepared to testify (albeit their testimony is good for nothing) that slavery is only bad, if bad at all, either in the exaggerated view of the abolitionists, or as the result of the exasperations of the amiable slaveholders by the intermeddling of the abolitionists. Yes, our sacred soil is polluted by the unholy tread of pro-slavery men. Fortunately, but few of them, so far as I know, are ministers of the gospel. Two bishops, one a Roman Catholic and the other an Episcopalian, have the name of it. I doubt if they are falsely charged; but still I cannot say, certainly. Some, I know, are very chary of doing anything against slavery. I know of one, an Englishman, in Hamilton (the Yankeeist town in Canada), who is especially cautious; and another, a Scotchman, “canny” to the last degree, lest he should be suspected of anti-slaveryism. And fame says – no, it was a doctor of divinity who told me – that there is at least one now in Toronto, who was once in Hamilton, who favours the pro-slavery side of the case. But the very difficulty I have in recollecting these few, after having travelled all over the colony, shows that, with us, anti-slavery is the rule, pro-slavery the exception, in our clergy-men, while in the States the converse is true. That is something. But I shall not leave this truth, so gloriously creditable to the ministry of my adopted country, to be merely inferred from the foregoing. I shall by and by have the great pleasure of asserting it in direct terms, as I do now by implication.

2. Canadian Negro-haters are the very worst of their class. I know of none so contemptible. I say this in justice to the Americans from whom I have suffered, in the States, and to whom I have very freely alluded; and in justice, too, to such Yankees as are now resident in Canada. And I beg to say, that I write no more freely than I have spoken, to the very faces of those I

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am now describing.

This feeling abounds most among the native Canadians, who, as a rule, are the lowest, the least educated, of all the white population. Like the same class in England, and like the ancestors of the Americans, they have not the training of gentlemen, are not accustomed to genteel society, and, as a consequence, know but little, next to nothing, of what are liberal enlightened views and genteel behaviour. Having no social standing such as gentlemen feel the necessity of maintaining, they suffer nothing from doing an ungentlemanly deed; and having neither a high aim nor a high standard of social behaviour, they seem to be, and in fact are, quite content to remain as they are. It is obvious, too, that such a class will maintain a poor petty jealousy towards those coming into the country who give any signs of prospering, especially if they are, from colour or what not, objects of dislike. In saying this feeling abounds most among native Canadians of the lower order, I do not mean that it is confined to them; nor do I mean to say that it is universal, without exception, even among this class – others exhibit it, and some of that class are among the freest from it. Still, its chief seat is in their bosoms. A few facts will make my meaning more clear.

In many cases, a black person travelling, whatever may be his style and however respectable his appearance, will be denied a seat at table d'hôte at a country inn, or on a steamer; and in a case or two coming under my own observation, such have been denied any sort of entertainment whatever. A gentleman of my acquaintance,⁴¹ driving a good pair of horses, and travelling at leisure, with his ladylike wife, was one night, in the winter of 1851-52, denied admittance at some dozen public taverns. His lady, being of lighter complexion than himself, on one or two occasions was admitted, and was comfortably seated by the fire, and politely treated – until her darker-skinned husband came in, and then, there was no room for either. It was a bitterly cold night; and being treated –maltreated– after this manner until nearly midnight, they were at length obliged to accept of a room in which they could sit up all night.

In December, 1851, a black man arrived at Hamilton. He proposed going into an omnibus, to ride up from the wharf at which he landed, to Week's Hotel. The servants on the omnibus declared it was full. This being false, and it being pointed out to them, they declared the empty seats were engaged to persons whom they were to take up on the way. After the black had been refused a passage in the omnibus, numbers of whites were freely admitted – in fact, solicited to enter it. The Negro had no means of getting up with his luggage until a kind-hearted Irishman took him in his waggon. Upon reaching Week's Hotel, he applied for lodging, but was distinctly refused a bed, solely on the ground of his colour. Such were Mr. Week's express orders.⁴²

Some six months after that, I heard of the destruction of a large amount of Week's property by fire, without shedding a single tear! Two cases like these I have not known in the States for twenty years. While these Canadian tavern-keepers have been apeing the bad character of their Yankee neighbours, they have not participated in some better influences on this subject, which the repeated droppings of the anti-slavery streamlet have

41. Mr. Peter O'Banyon.

42. The black person is the Writer.



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caused to take place on the Yankee rock of Negro-hate. In that respect Canadian is beneath and behind Yankee feeling. The instances which have come before me of such occurrences at taverns would be too numerous to mention. I will give two steamboat cases, of many. A gentleman of colour,⁴³ who graduated at King's College (now the university) at Toronto, was going to Kingston. He took a first class ticket, and was accordingly entitled to first class fare. When the dinner bell rang, he presented himself at the table. He was forbidden to sit down. He paid no attention to the prohibition, and was about sitting down, when the captain approached him menacingly, and was about to draw the chair from under him; when the black drew another chair, knocked the captain down, and then sat down and eat his dinner in peace. On their arrival at Kingston the captain complained of him for assault; and he of the captain, for interference with his rights. The Court fined-the black gentleman five pounds and the captain twenty. And here is the grand difference betwixt Yankee and Canadian Negro-hate – the former is sanctioned by the laws and the courts, the latter is not. In either of the tavern cases to which reference has been made, the parties could have had legal redress. In my own case, I went to a law office, and looked up the law upon the subject, and found it as plain as daylight; but I did not prosecute. The other steamboat case was that of a coloured woman, with her sister and three children, coming to Canada from New York State, in 1851. The brutal captain, a Scotchman, by the name of Ker, refused them a seat anywhere else save on the deck, and refused even to take money from them for a cabin passage. His lying plea was, that it would be offensive to the passengers. Every one of them distinctly denied it, and, what is more, another coloured lady, with her husband, had and enjoyed a cabin passage! Tell me not that I speak too strongly about this case. The woman is my wife, the children ours! God forgive Captain Ker! I was stating this case one night in a lecture, and afterwards learned that among my hearers were several of the relatives of this same recreant Scotchman. Glad was I that the case was told so near home.

From this date forward the Reverend Samuel Joseph May would sponsor annual “Jerry Celebrations” in an attempt to make this blow for freedom of as great significance to Americans as the Boston Tea Party (vindication of “eternal principles of Right” being considered, according to the Reverend’s idiosyncratic and perhaps even un-USer sense of values, “more valuable than tea”).

The 1st Hawaiian stamps were issued.



HENRY WILLIAMS

October 1, Wednesday: 5 P m Just put a fugitive slave who has taken the name of Henry Williams into the cars for Canada. He escaped from Stafford County Virginia to Boston last October, has been in Shadracks place at the Cornhill Coffee-house–had been corresponding through an agent with his master who is his father about buying–himself–his master asking \$600 but he having been able to raise only \$500.– heard that there were writs out for two Williamses fugitives–and was informed by his fellow servants & employer that Augerhole Burns & others of the police had called for him when he was out. Accordingly fled to Concord last night on foot–bringing a letter to our family from Mr Lovejoy of Cambridge–& another which Garrison had formerly given him on another occasion.

He lodged with us & waited in the house till funds were collected with which to forward him. Intended to despatch him at noon through to Burlington–but when I went to buy his ticket saw one at the Depot who looked & behaved so much like a Boston policeman, that I did not venture that time.

An intelligent and very well behaved man–a mullatto.

43. Peter Galego, Esq.



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There is art to be used not only in selecting wood for a withe but in using it. Birch withes are twisted, I suppose in order that the fibres may be less abruptly bent—or is it only by accident that they are twisted?

The slave said he could guide himself by many other stars than the north star whose rising & setting he knew— They steered for the north star even when it had got round and appeared to them to be in the south. They frequently followed the telegraph when there was no railroad. The slaves bring many superstitions from Africa. The fugitives sometimes superstitiously carry a turf in their hats thinking that their success depends on it.

These days when the trees have put on their autumnal tints are the gala days of the year—when the very foliage of trees is colored like a blossom— It is a proper time for a yearly festival—an agricultural show.

Candlelight To Conantum— The moon not quite half full.⁴⁴ The twilight is much shorter now than a month ago, probably as the atmosphere is clearer and there is less to reflect the light. The air is cool & the ground also feels cold under my feet as if the grass were wet with dew which is not yet the case. I go through Wheelers cornfield in the twilight, where the stalks are bleached almost white—and his tops are still stacked along the edge of the field. The moon is not far up above the southwestern horizon. Looking west at this hour the earth is an unvaried undistinguishable black in contrast with the twilight sky. It is as if you were walking in night up to your chin. There is no wind stirring. An oak tree in Hubbard's pasture stands absolutely motionless and dark against the sky. The crickets sound farther off or fainter at this season as if they had gone deeper into the sod to avoid the cold. There are no crickets heard on the alders on the causeway. The moon looks colder in the water. There is a great change between this and my last moon light walk— I experience a comfortable warmth when I approach the south side of a dry wood—which keeps off the cooler air and also retains some of the warmth of day. The voices of travellers in the road are heard afar over the fields. even to Conantum house. The moon is too far west to be seen reflected in the river at Tupelo cliff—but the stars are reflected— The river is a dark mirror with bright points feebly fluctuating— I smell the bruised horsemint which I cannot see while I sit on the brown rocks by the shore. I see the glow-worm under the damp cliff— No whippoorwills [**Whip-poor-will** *Caprimulgus vociferus*] are heard tonight—and scarcely a note of any other bird. At 8 o'clock the fogs have begun which with the shining on them look like cobwebs or thin white veils spread over the earth— They are the dreams or visions of the meadow.

The second growth of the white-pine is probably softer & more beautiful than the primitive forest ever afforded. The primitive forest is more grand with its bare mossy stems and ragged branches, but exhibits no such masses of green needles trembling in the light.

The elms are generally of a dirty or brownish yellow now

44. The almanac shows October 1st to be the night of the half-full moon.



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SHADRACH

1853

To assist in moral reform, unofficially, in this year some Boston policemen were beginning to carry pistols.

Trinity College in [Toronto](#) awarded Professor [Henry Youle Hind](#) an honorary MA. He severed his connections with the Normal School. Although he lectured in chemistry as well as in geology, it would be geology, in which he had been entirely self-educated, that would come to consume the bulk of his time. He would publish scientific papers that, when we look at them now, are not the least impressive.

During this year or the following one, in Montréal, [Shadrach Minkins](#) got married. There would be at least 2 children.

A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

SHADRACH, THE FUGITIVE: – A Montreal correspondent says of this colored fellow, whose rescue from the Boston Court house has given him such extended notoriety –

Did you ever hear of one Shadrach Minkins, the one that ran away from Boston; the very same. Yes, here he is, 172 1-2 Notre Dame street. I went with Mr R. Maxcey, a gentleman from Mississippi, to see Shadrach at Mr M.'s request. Shadrach is keeping a saloon and doing well, but says he had rather live in Boston, all other things being equal. Mr M. said of Shadrach – he is a smart fellow, but he knows too much. I would not want him among my niggers.

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1854

May 24, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) left at 4:30AM for the Cliffs, and in the afternoon went to Pedrick's meadow.

This would turn out, in Boston, to be the day of [Anthony Burns](#)'s arrest. It seems Burns, a 6-footer classifiable as an "escaped slave," had made the mistake of attempting to send a note to a brother still held in Virginia. The note had of course been intercepted by his brother's "owner," who had thus discovered where he was hiding.



He was arrested by US Marshall Asa O. Butman while working as a presser in a tailor shop on Brattle Street in Boston, and accused of running away from his owner Mr. Charles Francis Suttle.⁴⁵ [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) would lead an assault on the jail, and in the attempt to rescue Burns, a deputized truckman named [James Batchelder](#) would be killed, some say by a blunderbuss.⁴⁶



A telegram originating in [Washington DC](#), allegedly from President of the United States of America Franklin

45. At the time of the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, according to Lawrence Lader's *THE BOLD BRAHMINS* (NY: Dutton, 1961, page 140), there were some 600 "runaway slaves" living and working in the city of [Boston](#).



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Pierce,⁴⁷ sided with the kidnapers of Burns but offered a quite ambiguous sentiment,

The law must be executed.

indeed one with which all anarchists everywhere would be able **most heartily** to concur:

[Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) would be the attorney for the defense. The trial would cost more than \$40,000.⁰⁰ and would be lost. In the course of all this lawyer Dana would be assaulted at night by a hired thug.⁴⁸

Democrats had dragged cannon from the Custom House to the Common, and were there firing off salutes to the new [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#) extending the territory of American slavery, at 8PM while Anthony Burns was being taken into custody as he walked home along Brattle Street. (Caleb Page, a Boston truckman who had gone along with Butman to arrest Burns, would later be outraged when informed that he had helped in the recapture of an escaped slave — Butman had assured his hired day-deputy that he was merely assisting in the capture of a thief which technically under the law was a correct explanation as, under the law as it then existed, Burns was stealing himself and his services from their rightful owner. The next day in court there a broken bone would be seen to be protruding from his right hand, but this had not been the result of harm he had sustained while he was being taken into custody, for as a child that hand had been damaged in some machinery at a shop to which his owner had hired out his labor. Dana would describe the “scarred” right hand for the court record as “a bone stands out from the back of it, a hump an inch high, and it hangs almost useless from the wrist, a huge scar or gash covering half its surface.” I do not know whether this meant that the white bone was protruding permanently through the skin, or whether this meant that the deformed bone made a pronounced lump under the skin.)

Brad Dean summarized: “In September 1850 the United States Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law, which granted slaveholders the right to seize runaway slaves anywhere in the U.S. and carry them back to the South. The first attempt at rendition in February 1851 failed when abolitionists rescued a runaway called [Shadrach \(Frederick Jenkins\)](#) from his captors in Boston and sent him on to safety in [Canada](#). Less than two months later, however, another runaway, [Thomas Simms \(Sims\)](#), was seized in Boston, but on that occasion local, state, and federal troops ensured that Sims’s owners were able to carry him back to Georgia. Thoreau and hundreds of thousands of others in the North were outraged by the Fugitive Slave Law and the Sims rendition, which seemed to them flagrant violations by the federal government of the rights guaranteed to states under the US Constitution. As a consequence of these and similar actions by the federal government, the [Nullification](#) movement, which posited that a state had a right to nullify laws mandated by the federal government, garnered more serious attention in the North than it had before been accorded. Two key events immediately preceded and helped set the stage for the meeting sponsored by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society on July 4, 1854. On May 24, Anthony Burns, a fugitive slave working in a Boston clothing store, was arrested and slated to be shipped back to Virginia. Abolitionists protested at Faneuil Hall, and the Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson led a failed attempt to rescue Burns from the Boston jail. Burns was escorted under heavy guard by the militia to a revenue cutter, which returned him to slavery. The 2d key event was the passage of the [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#), which became law on May 30. One provision of the Act was the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, an action that removed the explicit prohibition of slavery in the northern reaches

46. [James Batchelder](#) was either shot or stabbed, either by an abolitionist on purpose or by accident or by another police agent on purpose or by accident. What we know for sure is that he quickly bled out after his femoral artery was “nearly divided.” It would be said that he had received the wages for his sin of favoring human enslavement, but it needs to be mentioned that we do not know how many children this Irish immigrant truckman had in some Boston tenement, to feed and clothe.

47. Although this telegram must have been a fraud —since President Pierce was never indicted as a co-conspirator in this kidnapping of Burns— our history books say nothing further about the source of the telegram and appear to have little interest in uncovering who it was in [Washington](#) who could have been behind such a slanderous misuse of a President’s name. —And recently, when Rodney King was attacked and abused by the “LAPD,” an armed and exceedingly dangerous group of bigoted criminals operating in the Los Angeles area, the same sort of slanderous attack was made on the good name of President George Herbert Walker Bush!

48. Hopefully, this hired thug was not in the employ of the White House plumbers.

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SHADRACH

of the Louisiana Purchase. [Thoreau](#) was incensed over the Burns affair. On May 29, he began a long, scathing



journal entry with these 2 sentences, the 2d of which would echo again in “SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS”:
“These days it is left to one Mr. Loring to say whether a citizen of Massachusetts is a slave or not. Does any one think that Justice or God awaits Mr. Loring’s decision?”⁴⁹ The arrangements by which Thoreau joined [William Lloyd Garrison](#), [Wendell Phillips](#), and the others on the podium at Framingham MA are not known. The absence of his name from announcements of the event suggests that he was a last-minute addition, but we do not know whether he was asked to speak or sought the opportunity. In view of his aroused emotions at the moment and of his apparent difficulty getting Concordians to talk about the North rather than the South, it is certainly possible that the announced rally struck him as an ideal forum to get things off his chest. Minimal time to prepare was not really a problem because on the issue of slavery and Massachusetts his long-stewing thought and rhetoric had already reached the boiling point. Indeed, in writing “Slavery in Massachusetts,” he essentially mined his still fresh journal entries on Burns and earlier passages on the Thomas Simms (Sims) case.”

49. THE JOURNAL OF HENRY D. THOREAU, ed. Bradford Torrey and Francis Henry Allen, 14 volumes. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1906, 6:313.



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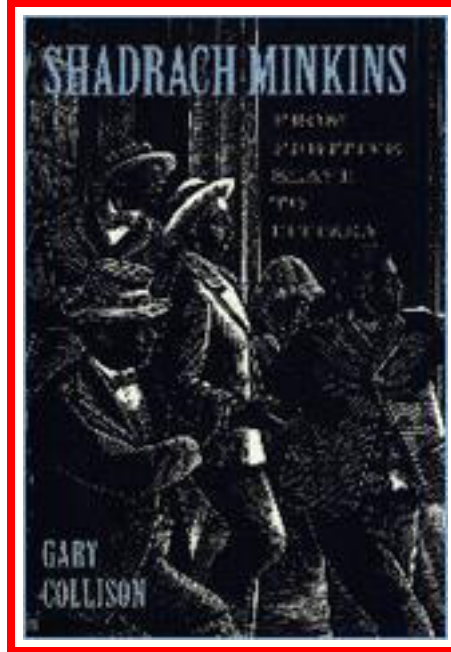
SHADRACH

1875

December 13, Monday: [Shadrach Minkins](#) died in Montréal, Canada. The body would be placed in an unmarked grave near 2 of his children.

1997

Gary L. Collison's [SHADRACH MINKINS: FROM FUGITIVE SLAVE TO CITIZEN](#) (Cambridge MA: Harvard UP).



PROLOGUE — The Boston Courthouse, February 15, 1851

PART ONE: Norfolk, Virginia

- Chapter 1: “Han’t Got No Self” Norfolk and Norfolk life ca. 1800 — Shadrach Minkins’ birth — Thomas Glenn, first owner — Norfolk in the 20s and 30s — free blacks and slaves — life at Glenn’s Eagle Tavern — effects of the Nat Turner rebellion — death of Thomas and Ann Glenn — sudden uncertainty of life for the Glenn slaves
- Chapter 2: “Sheep, Pigs, Horses, Slaves” The Glenn estate — slaves “hired out” while Glenn children grow up — sale to store owner Martha Hutchings — black life and community in the 30s and 40s — failure of Hutchings’ business — slave sales to Deep South — Shadrach Minkins sold for a second and third time — new owners and work — black and white tensions in mid-century Norfolk — black culture, opportunities, limitations, and hopes
- Chapter 3: “The Silver Trump of Freedom” 1849 visit of Daniel Webster to Norfolk — Shadrach’s decision — the typical fugitive slave described — Shadrach Minkins fits the portrait — overview of fugitive slave traffic — the “Underground Railroad” and Norfolk connections by water with Philadelphia and Boston — Norfolk efforts to halt fugitives — Norfolk black assistants — passage of the Fugitive Slave Law and its implications — dangers of flight by water — captains who collaborated, for a price — the journey — (almost) free at last

PART TWO: Boston, Massachusetts

- Chapter 4: “Cradle of Liberty”? Boston compared to Norfolk — Minkins’ arrival and early struggle in Boston — Boston barriers in housing, occupations, social life — Frederick Douglass’ Boston experiences — visitors and businessmen from Norfolk — first work — social and political



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- conservatism of Boston's elite — strengths of the black community in Boston: church, other organizations, leaders — Minkins finds work at Cornhill Coffee House — militancy of Boston's black community
- Chapter 5: "A New Reign of Terror" Effects of the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in Boston and the nation — flight to Canada — protest meetings — first cases under the new law — Hamlet case in New York — fugitive slaves in the border states and further north — panic in Boston — rumors, flight — Boston blacks meet to organize resistance — mostly white Boston Vigilance Committee formed — sketch of its members and activities — Frederick Douglass' fiery speech at the initial meeting — Whig papers ridicule black fears — history of earlier Boston cases — Webster in Boston
 - Chapter 6: "Much Excitement Prevails" First case in Boston — arrival of the claimant's agents — history of famous fugitive slave couple William and Ellen Craft — Boston's Webster-Whig federal officials act hesitantly and ineffectively — the black community and Vigilance Committee hound the claimants — Ellen Craft is safely hidden — William Craft and the black community arm themselves and wait — federal marshal Charles Devens' qualms and legal problems — stalemate — Crafts sent to England — Webster arrives (too late) to assist — first reaction in Boston and nation to the failure — Webster's friends organize "Union" meeting — lingering fears in black community — other attempts on fugitives in Boston and the North
 - Chapter 7: "A Thing... or a Man?" Arrival of Norfolk agent in Boston — possible model for Stowe's slavecatcher — warrant issued quietly — U.S. Marshal's posse surrounds the Cornhill Coffee House — delay — arrest of Minkins — defense counsels arrive — the hearing before Commissioner Curtis — Chief Justice Shaw refuses to interfere — crowds gather — city police withdraw — postponement — excitement increases
 - Chapter 8: "Plucked as a Brand from the Burning" Attack on courtroom door — invasion by small black rescue party — feeble resistance — fugitive half carried out — across Court Square and toward the black Beacon Hill neighborhood — incidents along the way — Minkins temporarily hidden — mysterious arrangements — driven from Boston by black community leaders Lewis Hayden and John J. Smith
 - Chapter 9: "Never Was a Darker Day" Exaggerated reports of 200 "rioters" — abolitionist reaction — Boston reaction, including the racist reaction of the Times — Southern reaction — moderate voices — accusations in Boston — reaction in Washington — Webster's reaction — Henry Clay and Senate confrontation — Presidential Proclamation issued — hearing resumed in Boston — first arrests of alleged rioters — conciliatory gestures from Boston officials — hearing of Charles G. Davis, defended by attorney Richard Henry Dana, Jr. — government case weak — Davis dismissed — worries of Boston's blacks — rumors of troops, arms, reinforcements — additional arrests of suspected rescuers — Lewis Hayden and Robert Morris seized — 7 men (5 black, 2 white) held over for trial — many Boston fugitives flee city — feeble Vigilance Committee efforts — federal expedition against New Bedford fugitives — Boston black leaders keep bold front — election of Charles Sumner to U.S. Senate in April — arrest and rendition of fugitive slave Thomas Sims in Boston — Webster's new optimism — remaining fugitives warned to be on guard
 - Chapter 10: "North Star II" Minkins' late night arrival in Concord on day of rescue — the Concord abolitionist group — brief rest at home of a Concord blacksmith — Thoreau — from Concord to Leominster — the "female attire" legend — trail grows faint after Leominster — to Fitchburg — to Vermont — to the Canadian line

PART THREE: Montreal, Quebec

- Chapter 11: "Please to Remember Me Kindly" Arrival in Montreal — city characterized — distribution and origin of black population across Canada — Toronto's large fugitive community — situation of the few blacks in Montreal described — a few white sympathizers identified — Minkins' thank-you' note — Montreal attitudes toward fugitive slaves — the search for work — ironies of the benefit concert by Butler's Real Ethiopian Serenaders



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- Chapter 12: A Home Far Away, 1851-1859 Harriet Beecher Stowe uses Montreal setting for Harris family home — actual difficulties and adjustments compared with Stowe's fictional account — reports of 1851 visitors who sought out Shadrach Minkins — story of S's struggles of the first 6 months — fellow fugitive Charles Williams — no further news for two years — Boston May/June 1851 trials of John Scott and Lewis Hayden for Minkins' rescue — hung juries — Robert Morris's trial — Morris acquitted — two trials of white editor Elizur Wright in 1852 — failure of Webster's presidential aspirations in June — Whig Party disintegration — Wright's acquittal (Concord blacksmith who sheltered Shadrach Minkins on jury) in same week as Webster's death — U.S. District Attorney finally gives up the cases — Minkins' Montreal restaurant in 1853 — marriage to an Irish woman — their children — fugitive slaves continue to be hunted in U.S. — Minkins' reaction to Boston cases of Thomas Sims and Anthony Burns — more fugitive slaves reach Montreal — newcomers characterized — Minkins tries other restaurants and trading, then takes up barbering — evidence of a social network among Montreal's black expatriates from the U.S. — Montreal fugitives threatened by an attempt to lure them back across the Canadian border
- Chapter 13: A Fragile Community, 1860-1866 Coming of the Civil War — Minkins moves family to Montreal's St. Antoine district — increase in black immigrants from U.S. — Montreal's black population in 1861 census characterized — loose residential clusters — some evidence of racial prejudice in Montreal — Montreal blacks participate in a meeting following John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry — hold first black community meeting — present petition (denied) to form black militia company — other group activities — first Montreal celebrations of the August 1 emancipation in the British West Indies — effects of the Civil War and Emancipation Proclamation in Montreal — core of black expatriates choose to remain in Montreal after the Civil War

EPILOGUE — aftermath of the Civil War in Norfolk, Boston, and Montreal — dwindling number of Montreal's black expatriates from antebellum years — Minkins' last years — death in 1875 — changes in Montreal by end of century — Montreal's 20th-century black community — silent connections to the days of the fugitive slave refugees — scene in the Mount Royal cemetery, June 1, 1990



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SHADRACH

2016

November 10, Thursday This was opening night for Dillon Bustin's play "Top Eye Open," about [Shadrach Minkins](#), at the Hibernian Hall in Roxbury, Massachusetts.

When the fugitive escapee Shadrach Minkins of Norfolk, Virginia was arrested in Boston in 1851, he became a test case for the new Fugitive Slave Act, between federal-government and antislavery forces. Although bold abolitionists triumphantly carried Minkins away from federal custody, it must be pointed out that he was then spirited into concealment by a well organized crowd of mostly black activists under the leadership of a fearless Lewis Hayden. Under cover of night he was taken to an address in Concord, at which Ann Bigelow, founder of the Women's Anti-Slavery Society there, risked arrest and substantial penalties to conceal Minkins and arrange his escape with the aid of her husband and a neighbor. Henry Thoreau was their conductor: "Thoreau more often than any other man in Concord" looked after the Underground Railroad's night passengers, she would recall. In that same year the Thoreau family gave refuge to Henry Williams, who had similarly fled from Virginia, but escaped the Boston police by reaching Concord on foot. The Thoreaus raised money for his journey and Henry escorted Williams to the railroad station, steered him clear of a plainclothesman and putting him safely aboard the evening train to Canada on October 1st, 1851.

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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST





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SHADRACH

Prepared: December 27, 2017



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.

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