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The Confessions of the Madison Henderson Gang

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The Confessions of the Madison Henderson Gang

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by

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Advisor: Thomas Buchanan, Ph.D.

In 1841, Adam B. Chambers, the editor of *The Missouri Republican*, published a pamphlet containing the texts of his interviews with four African Americans convicted of bank robbery and murder. Because these narratives cover the lives of three free men of color and one quasi-free slave, they present a view of the antebellum African American experience that has been understudied. The existing canon of African American narratives and secondary research focuses on slaves. While few studies have examined the lives of free blacks, most of those have focused on the African American elite. This project brings to light the lives and attitudes of African Americans who had little choice but to follow a life of crime as their method of resisting the restrictions of white society.

This project includes research into the motivations of Chambers, the reliability of his transcription, and explores themes found within the narratives. Researching Chambers' motivations found that, despite his goal of producing a text fashioned after

other criminal confessions, he had reasons to provide accounts at least as reliable as widely accepted slave narratives. An exploration of the construction of the text shows that the voices of Chambers' informants create a subtext that competes effectively with Chambers' attempt to mold their stories as confessional literature and succeeds in telling their stories on their own terms. The themes found in the text demonstrate a radically different worldview in which these men portray themselves as heroic tricksters using crime to resist white authority and use the term "rascal" to claim fear and respect by flaunting their success in crime. This project sought to bring to light this worldview by making these narratives available for the study and discussion of a neglected aspect of American history.

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Preface to Confessions

From the Missouri Republican of April 19th, 1841.

> We have never before had occasion to record such a complication of crimes in a single transaction, as was presented to our appalled citizens on the night of Saturday last. About one o'clock the alarm of fire was given by the flames bursting out of the windows and various parts of the large stone store on the corner of Pine an Water sts.; the front on Water street occupied by Messrs. Simonds & Morrison, and the rear by Mr. Pettus as a banking house, formerly Collier & Pettus. At the time of the discovery, it was evident that the building had been fired in several parts, and the flames had made such progress that it was impossible to save either the house or any of its contents.
>
> That it was the work of an incendiary was soon apparent. Several gentlemen who arrived early, after some difficulty forced open the door of the banking house, and through the smoke discovered a body lying on the floor near the stove. The body was taken out before the flames reached it, and found to be that of Mr. Jacob Weaver, a young man, a clerk in the store of Messrs. Von Phul & McGill, who usually slept in the room immediately in the rear of Mr. Pettus' banking room, with Mr. Jesse Baker, the clerk of Messrs. Simonds & Morrison. Mr. Weaver was found in the dress he had worn during the day, but his head dreadfully mangled. He had been shot through the head, the ball entering above the left eye, and so near had the weapon been to him, that his face and left hand were blackened with the powder, and the little finger nearly cut off, apparently by the ball. His head was also cut open in several places, the wounds appearing to have been made with a bowie knife or hatchet.

With these two paragraphs, the editor of the *St. Louis Republican*, Adam B. Chambers, began reporting the 1841 capture, conviction and punishment of four African-American men who had murdered two white men in the process of robbing a bank. Although Chambers' articles created an explosion of interest about the perpetrators of these crimes throughout the Mississippi River system, Chambers published a pamphlet containing interviews with the criminals that further increased the racial tensions in 1841

from St. Louis to New Orleans. Covering the entire lives of the four men, Chambers' pamphlet completely overshadows the crimes he reported with its historical importance because it presents a vastly different view of African-American life than is normally given by traditional history. Presenting a scholarly edition of Chambers' pamphlet fills gaps in the historical record and brings to light new aspects of antebellum African-American history.

The 1841 crime spree began when Madison Henderson, a slave, and his three free black accomplices; James W. Seward, Amos Alfred Warrick, and Charles Brown,* received information that the St. Louis counting house belonging to the firm of Collier & Pettus had received a shipment of currency that day. These four men set out to steal that money. Henderson approached the bank to ask the clerk, Mr. Jesse Baker, to verify the authenticity of a banknote. Although the bank was officially closed, Baker agreed to let Henderson in so that he could examine the bill. As Baker turned away from Henderson examining the bill more closely, Henderson struck him senseless with a crowbar then summoned his three waiting accomplices. The night ended with Jesse Baker and Jacob Weaver, Baker's roommate, beaten to death, the building engulfed in flames and the four men on the run with only a few hundred dollars in their pockets. The news of the robbery, murder, and arson inflamed the white population of St. Louis prompting city officials to offer a large reward for information leading to the capture of the culprits and almost pushing the death of President Harrison out of the headlines of the local newspapers.[1] One month later, St. Louis authorities had caught, tried, and convicted the

* For convenience, Henderson, Seward, Warrick, and Brown will be called the Madison Henderson Gang or the Henderson Gang although they were not highly organized or known by this name in 1841.

four culprits. Following their execution on July 9, 1841, the four men's preserved heads were on public display in the front window of a local store. [2]

Prior to the Henderson Gang's execution, Adam Chambers gained the cooperation of the city jailer, George Melody, and received permission to interview the four men in their jail cell while they awaited their execution.[3] Remembering the criminal confession pamphlets that had been popular in the East during his youth,[4] Chambers set out to produce his own pamphlet containing the confessions of these four notorious criminals. Chambers' interest went beyond the details of the bank robbery into their entire lives and criminal careers relating the events that led them to such violent actions. The pamphlet contained revelations that heightened Southern white fears concerning free blacks and unsupervised slaves. When the publicity storm finally subsided, Chambers' pamphlet had been sold up and down the Mississippi River.[5]

Despite the popularity of Chambers' publication in 1841, the confessions of the Madison Henderson gang need to be evaluated for their value in understanding antebellum America. Slave narratives continue to be analyzed and debated for their accuracy and historical value. The issue revolves around how much the well-intentioned people, who aided the ex-slave in getting their message to the public, altered the ex-slave's story. A closely related issue focuses on whether the slave narrator changed their story to fit what the abolitionists wanted. Likewise, the narratives presented here need to be evaluated as to the faithfulness of Chambers' transcription and the truthfulness of the stories the men told to Chambers. The veracity of the transcription depends upon the reliability of Chambers. Chambers' reliability depends, in turn, on his biases, political

ideology, and professional ethics. Although the profits from the sale of these men's stories provided Chambers' primary motivation, Chambers believed in a variety of causes, some that might have induced him to exaggerate the negative aspects of the condemned men's lives, but others that would force him to be as accurate as possible.

Born and raised in Pennsylvania, Adam Chambers[6] migrated to Missouri, bought the newspaper, *The Missouri Republican*, and became a well-respected citizen of St. Louis. Chambers became an ardent and highly influential supporter of the Whig party and its political goals. The Whigs focused primarily on the establishment of a National Bank, protective tariffs, and the development of domestic resources and infrastructure, which they called "internal improvements." Most Northern Whigs viewed slavery as a drag on the national economy and believed that slavery would give way to more progressive forms of labor as the industrial base of the country matured. Coming from the North, Chambers shared the belief that slavery would die out without interference from outside sources and that the abolition movement represented an unwarranted attack on the rights of each state to determine their own laws and political agenda. Likewise, for Whigs, the Federal Government's purpose was to handle foreign affairs and to negotiate conflicts between individual states, not get involved with the internal politics of the individual state.* Having the Federal Government or citizens of another state attempting to influence Missouri politics was anathema to Chambers and his political cronies.[7] Chambers' political views show him to be neither an active supporter of slavery nor an abolitionist.

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* This view was shared with other groups such as the Democratic Party.

Chambers published vehement attacks on abolition, while also actively supporting the American Colonization Society. His support for the American Colonization Society had led to accusations that Chambers supported abolition because most of the members of the Society were Northerners who tied colonization to the ending of slavery.[8] Like other Southern supporters of colonization, the basis for Chambers' support of the American Colonization Society came from his belief that blacks needed to be under white supervision and could not live peacefully with whites, and, therefore, that free blacks should be returned to Africa through the establishment of colonies.[9] While Chambers announced the Colonization Society's meetings and printed their speeches in his paper, he vehemently attacked anyone who supported abolition in any form.[10] With his interest in the American Colonization Society, the argument could be made that Chambers might have been tempted to edit the confessions to highlight the condemned men's criminal natures. In fact, Chambers probably did publish these confessions to demonstrate that blacks could not live in white society without supervision, but his professional ethics and reputation argue against the intentional falsification of the confessions.

As editor of the *Missouri Republican,* Chambers prided himself on accurately reporting the facts of a story.[11] Like most editors in his day, Chambers often mixed commentary with the basic facts of the story in the same article. At the same time, he frequently criticized other papers for misreporting the facts and for publishing stories without credible sources.[12] The editors of the *Alton Argus*, an abolitionist newspaper in Ohio, had a running feud with Chambers, not only over slavery, but also over the accuracy of each other's reporting.[13] Chambers knew that rival editors as well as his

political opponents would heavily scrutinize his pamphlet. While Chambers' interests may have led him to highlight the criminal nature of the Madison Henderson Gang, he had ample motivation to accurately report the stories told to him.

The methodology used by white editors can also unintentionally alter the text and meaning of slave narratives. In *To Tell a Free Story*, William L. Andrews concludes that autobiographies written by African Americans themselves provide the most authentic accounts because the authors control the entire text. Andrews claims that white editors altered the language, tone, and sometimes even the sentiments of African Americans, leaving the narrator little or no control over the text. Yet, Andrews concedes that the editor who "delimits his role explicitly" produced more authentic texts than an editor who does not explain his methodology at all. While not as accurate as those accounts written by the African American themselves, the text produced by editors who explain their methodology more faithfully reflect "the narrator's thought in action."[14] Evidence for the faithfulness of Chambers' transcription was provided by Chambers himself when he included a brief description of the methods he used in transcribing the stories told to him. In this description, he claims that he attempted to eliminate deliberate falsehoods by asking the same questions in different contexts, did not allow his subjects to know what the others had said, and gave the four men opportunities for revising and correcting the text.

In the same description, Chambers admits that he "took liberties" with the openings and conclusions of the transcribed texts. Although he claims that those passages contain the convicted men's sentiments, Chambers was attempting to shape the

text into the traditional form of criminal confessions, which portrays the criminal as contrite and apologetic for his actions. Chambers believed that blacks possessed natural tendencies, which would lead African-Americans into a life of crime and vice without white supervision. By portraying his subjects as apologetic, Chambers focused his readers' attention on the inability of free blacks to control their criminal tendencies and coexist with white society. In the rest of the text, however, the four narrators seem to resist Chambers' confessional framework and retain enough control to fashion their own subtext that declared their humanity and explained their reasons for choosing a life of crime as stemming from their oppression.

Historian Christina Accomando explores this conflict between African-American narrators and white editors. She uses the idea of framing to analyze how white editors of slave narratives depict slaves and how slaves turned the concept of framing to their own advantage in order to combat the negative images used by white society to portray African Americans.[15] The same process can be seen at work in Chambers' pamphlet. When Chambers' four informants found themselves confronted with a prominent editor wanting their life histories, they told their stories on their own terms, which contradicted the framework that Chambers wanted to use. Chambers' interest in selling a criminal confession pamphlet conflicted with the four men's desire to attack the discrimination and restrictions they saw as the root causes of their violence. Creating a subtext that contradicts Chambers' framework, these men reframed their stories in terms that were not appealing to whites from either the North or the South. Making a similar point in *To Tell a Free Story*, Andrews praises J. D. Green's *Narrative* as "a ground-breaking, precedent

defying work" due to the way in which Green, an ex-slave, relates his story without catering to what was acceptable to white society. For example, Green tells that he victimized both whites and blacks with trickery in order to achieve his goals. This made Northern white society uncomfortable because they felt that blacks should support and help each other instead of manipulating each other for personal gain, to avoid punishment, or merely to avenge an insult. By taking advantage of both whites and blacks, Green ignored the racial barriers with which white society was comfortable.[16]

In much the same manner, the four men convicted of the St. Louis robbery and murders framed their accounts in ways that attacked white preconceptions and increased white fears, but nevertheless told what these men saw as the truth. Henderson attacks white prejudice by claiming that crime afforded him with the only way he could fully use his natural talents and when deprived of his family by greedy whites, he saw those natural talents as his only way to get back what he lost. Seward espoused a philosophy that rejected honest labor as a means for African-Americans to earn a living. He felt that whites could take away the hard earned gains of African-Americans at any time without justification or legal authority. Both Henderson and Seward provoked fears of white men by boasting about the white women with whom they had sexual liaisons. Warrick presented his motive for his crimes as the result of constantly having to fight against the greed and dishonesty of the sea captains who took advantage of his African heritage to cheat him of his wages. Brown told the most consciously fashioned story, although the most problematic, because he seems to have invented a connection for himself to the Ohio Abolition Society and, that hotbed of abolitionist sentiment, Oberlin College.

While Brown's apparent fabrication seems at odds with William L. Andrews' second goal of black autobiography, to be truth tellers, he used fiction to tell a broader truth. Brown's account warns white Americans of the growing consciousness of the injustice of slavery and unequal treatment of free blacks within the free black community and that some free blacks are willing to take it upon themselves to act, even with violence. Despite Chambers' efforts to control the texts of the narratives, these men told their stories their own way and with their own message.

Henderson, Seward, and Warrick directly tie their descent into crime to their position in and treatment by American society, effectively negating William L. Andrews' dismissal of criminal confession literature because "none traced his [the criminal's] sociopathic behavior back to his alien condition in American society or his prior treatment as a slave."[17] In Henderson's view, his descent into crime was caused by the loss of his family, the suppression of his natural talents, as well as the influence of his first master who initiated Henderson into criminal activity. Seward pointed directly at the economic liability of being black in America for his choice of careers. Unscrupulous sea captains and the inability to take them to court pushed Warrick into violence. Brown, with his claim of being an abolitionist agent, makes it clear that slavery gave him the motivation to participate in illicit activities.

For these men, however, crime took on a completely different connotation. Historian Tera W. Hunter describes the practice of "pan-toting" as the taking of table scraps and dry goods by black servant women. They felt that this was owed to them because they had helped produced the wealth of the master without receiving

compensation.[18] Most employers regarded pan-toting as theft, but others used it to justify lower wages. For the black workers pan-toting was not theft, but a strategy to combat greedy or abusive employers. The concept of pan-toting expanded to laundry women keeping the clothes for delinquent payments and then spread into the tobacco industry as workers stole cigarettes and chewing tobacco if they were not well treated.[19] Although much of the work on pan-toting focuses on the post-emancipation era, the four men in these accounts professed similar attitudes toward their crimes. Henderson became more active in criminal endeavors after being thwarted in his desire to live more freely. From an early age, Seward did not believe that honest work would gain any security and so turned to crime in retaliation for the crimes he perceived being committed by whites against blacks.

Beyond just criminal activity, these men also strongly identified themselves with the heroic trickster found in African oral tradition.[20] The trickster image leads to one of the major themes within the confessions. Once again turning to *To Tell a Free Story*, Andrews uses the trickster image to explain J. D. Green's actions, but that those actions also caused discomfort to his abolitionist readers when he turned his trickery against his fellow slaves. Northern abolitionists preferred slave narrators who "modestly declined to claim heroic status for themselves regardless of their fugitive exploits." However, Andrews points out "Green was the first to make so much of his nonheroic, even antiheroic past."[21] Andrews does not understand why Green embraced his antiheroic actions, but this part of the *Narrative* seems intended for a different audience than the rest of the work. In those passages focusing on his trickery, Green is speaking to his fellow

African Americans and demonstrating his power as a trickster. In most trickster legends, the trickster is a being to be respected and feared which is how Green wanted to be viewed by his peers. This line of reasoning is the same for the four narrators of Chambers' pamphlet. These men prided themselves on the respect they garnered from their activities, but also wanted to inspire fear of their power. Each fashioned an identity that stood in direct opposition to the rest of society. They found ways to minimize the effects of white repression and operated in the gaps within white society. Henderson manipulated both white assumptions of black intelligence and literacy and the loose business practices of the day to defraud businesses of merchandise. Seward also exploited white assumptions about black illiteracy as well as the hodgepodge system of banking in the United States by forging documents and passing counterfeit money. Finally, Warrick used his strength and cunning to force his captains to treat him fairly as he traveled far and wide working on a variety of ships.

These men identified themselves as tricksters using the term "rascal," which denoted not only criminal behavior, but a whole set of behaviors.[22] Henderson and Seward boast about the fine clothes they wore and Henderson about his fame for lending money to other African Americans. By displaying their wealth in such a manner, they enhanced their own reputations as "rascals" which gave them a certain celebrity within their communities. In order to gain respect, they indirectly flaunted their income from criminal activity to both the black and the white communities by wearing flashy clothing, loaning money to friends, and living well above the means available to most African Americans. The evolution toward rascalism began early for each of these men.

Throughout their youths, they were faced with deception and trickery on the part of white slave owners. Henderson, owned as a youth by a man who habitually swindled slave owners and stole their slaves, learned his lessons well and soon began proposing to his master his own schemes for defrauding others. When his master felt that Henderson had been with him long enough, he sold Henderson to a New Orleans merchant. Henderson continued his rascality by defrauding merchants and committing burglaries with a pair of notorious criminals. Seward, under the influence of a relative, saw that many white men flourished through dishonest means and that those African Americans who labored honestly never seemed to get ahead. Never comfortable with physical labor, Seward doubted the efficacy of honest labor and adopted a philosophy of dishonesty. Using his education, Seward began forging letters of credit and eventually joined a gang of counterfeiters.[23]

Although the concept of rascalism has received scant attention, its ideals have been passed down through the generations of young African Americans and have spread to other ethnic groups. One historian, Patrick Rael, claims that the activism of the African American elite in the North set a number of precedents for later civil rights activists.[24] "Rascals" like Henderson and Seward also set precedents for later resistance through criminal mentality. In the Jazz Age, Zoot suits demonstrated wealth beyond what was normally possible for blacks or Hispanics. Again, in the late sixties and early seventies, flamboyant clothing and the use of criminal activity became a dangerous image facing white society in a time of economic hardships. Even today, the hip-hop generation

echoes the "rascal" mentality by flashing expensive clothing and celebrating criminal behavior.[25]

The focus on the mindset behind the crimes committed by the Madison Henderson Gang makes Chambers' pamphlet a unique source for the antebellum African-American experience. According to the landmark work of Eugene D. Genovese, whites believed that "all blacks stole by nature."[26] Because of this sentiment, most editors of slave narratives that mention crime at all do not delve any further into the motivation behind the crime. Abolitionist editors shied away from subjects who became too involved in criminal behavior for fear of providing evidence to those who already believed African-Americans were fundamentally dishonest. In narratives from other African-Americans convicted of crimes, the subtext put forward by the black narrator was suppressed. For example, Nat Turner, the leader of the famous slave rebellion in 1831, tried to tell his story so that he appeared as an "avenging 'prophet.'" His court appointed attorney and amanuensis, Thomas Gray, portrays Turner as suffering from religious dementia and a "gloomy fanatic."[27] On the other hand, Chambers wanted to report the reasons for the crimes of Henderson and the others and by doing so revealed the subtext of his narrators.

The significance of these accounts compares favorably to the majority of slave narratives because they demonstrate a high degree of detail that suggests that Chambers allowed the convicted men's voices to be heard. Because of this detail, Chambers' biases and political beliefs do not pervade the text to the same degree found in other slave narratives. Chambers seems content to follow the form of criminal confessions allowing

the stories of the convicted criminals to prove his case without greatly altering them. Chambers was putting his professional reputation as a newspaper editor at risk by publishing these stories, while many abolitionist editors remained anonymous or did not have professional reputations to damage. The stories told in abolitionist sponsored narratives rarely questioned broader social problems other than slavery, while the accounts published by Chambers contains passages that are highly critical of the American class structure. The voices of the convicted men clearly speak through Chambers' text except possibly where Chambers himself admits to "taking liberties" with the text. The authenticity of the text, combined with the rarity of first-hand accounts from free blacks, and the recurrence of themes within the Henderson Gang's narratives in later eras make these confessions an important new source of information for antebellum American history.

Using new sources in the study of African-American history can dispel popular misconceptions. For the general public, the pre-Civil War history of African Americans automatically elicits the image of plantation slaves working in fields of cotton as whip-carrying overseers watch their every move. The overseers, pushing and prodding the slaves to harvest the cotton faster, seemed eager to find the smallest excuse to whip the slaves. These images entered the modern American consciousness through popular entertainment most famously represented by the film *Gone with the Wind* and the television miniseries Alex Haley's *Roots*. All these images share the perception that antebellum slaves lived predominately in rural areas, worked primarily in an agricultural setting, and rarely escaped the watchful eye of the master and his overseers. However,

even a cursory examination of slave narratives show these popular conceptions of slavery as depicting only a limited view of the African-American experience.

The historical record of antebellum America is littered with the narratives of runaway slaves. The most famous of these include Frederick Douglas, Harriet Jacobs, Solomon Northrup, Olaudah Equiano, and Harriet Tubman. This list barely scratches the surface of the available accounts written or told by former slaves. Almost all slave narratives have one common feature; white abolitionists edited, transcribed, or published them. The abolitionists chose to publish only accounts of ex-slaves who had what they deemed the proper moral character and who had survived the most abusive aspects of slavery. Examining the above narratives chronologically demonstrates how the abolitionists chose ex-slaves whose stories broadened their propaganda campaign against slavery. First published in 1789, Olaudah Equiano's narrative recounts the horrors of the middle passage, which enables the abolitionist movement to attack the international slave trade. Although Harriet Tubman's story became well-known because of her numerous rescue missions to free slaves from the South working with the Underground Railroad, her life story was not published until 1856. The epitome of the "heroic" ex-slave, Harriet Tubman, demonstrated that blacks were capable of great courage and concern for their fellow slaves, combating the pro-slavery portrayals of slaves as selfish and greedy or lazy and cowardly.[28]

Eventually published in several versions, Frederick Douglas' narrative coalesced out of Douglas's work as a lecturer for the abolitionist movement beginning in 1841. Douglas's story contained all the classic themes the abolitionists wanted. Demonstrably

a very intelligent man, Douglas experienced horrific beatings at the hands of a farmer to whom his owner hired him out and witnessed family members sold to owners of distant plantations. Learning to read against the laws and the wishes of his master, Douglas used his intelligence to outsmart his owners and escape to the North.[29]

The danger of allowing slavery to remain in existence is shown by Solomon Northrup's tale of being tricked and kidnapped into slavery despite his status as a free man and living in New York State. Northrup spent twelve years on a Louisiana plantation where slaves worked sunup to sundown and whipped if they failed to work hard enough. After managing to get a letter to friends in New York, Northrup returned to freedom when his case was heard in a New York court. Although published at the onset of the Civil War and too late to have much propaganda use, Harriet Jacobs' account of the sexual abuse she endured from her master and his friends brought to light how, even without whipping, slavery was a brutal and despicable institution.[30]

The accounts of escaped slaves such as Frederick Douglas and Harriet Tubman expand our understanding of the conditions slaves lived under and introduce the idea that slaves resisted the dominance of their masters in a variety of ways. However, a close examination of the process that produced these narratives shows that the northern abolitionists who sponsored these accounts used great care in choosing which escaped slave was worthy enough to receive their sponsorship. Northern abolitionists wanted the narratives they published to be above reproach and therefore searched out those "heroic" ex-slaves to provide positive examples of free blacks to white society. Although the abolitionists recognized that the circumstances of a slave's life might require some petty

thievery to supplement their meager food supply, to provide small comforts for their families, or breaking the law by learning to read, the greatest crime committed by the ex-slaves they sponsored was stealing themselves from their masters. Escaped slaves who had committed violent acts or embarked on a criminal enterprise not absolutely necessary to their survival or escape did not find much of a welcome in the world of the abolitionists. [31]

Despite the limitations of slave narratives, the availability of a large number of slave narratives has produced a vast array of secondary literature analyzing the historical significance of these accounts. In *The Slave Narrative: Its Place in American History*, Marlon Wilson Starling states that the purpose of his book is to provide a bibliography of extant narratives with an analysis of their authenticity and, as the subtitle claims, their place in the historical record. In *To Tell a Free Story: The First Century of Afro-American Biography, 1761-1865*, William L. Andrews argues that the purpose of African American autobiography in its first century was to "'tell a free story' as well as to talk about freedom as a theme and a goal in life." Andrews examines the question of how freely African Americans could tell their stories and makes the case that, in the early years, slave narrators had little control over the final text and message in the early years of the slave narrative movement. However, Andrews claims that, by the beginning of the Civil War, the ex-slave narrators had taken enough control over the process to tell their stories freely. Yet curiously, in his book claiming to focus on African American biography, very little, if any, consideration is given to the voices of free blacks. [32]

Unfortunately, first-hand accounts by free blacks do not exist in great numbers and those that do exist primarily focus on the lives of the African American elite. In one of the few narratives from a free black, Cyprian Clamorgan provides a glimpse into the lives of a relatively small but well-established elite free black community.[33] Most of what is known about the lives of free blacks must be pieced together from non-narrative primary sources. For example, James and Lois Horton's uses a wide variety of primary sources to describe the social history of a small group of landowning free blacks living in the North.[34] Even authors of secondary works like Patrick Rael who examines the beginnings of black activism and identity, focuses on the African American elite.[35] All these works concentrate on the lives of African Americans who possessed enough wealth to survive and thrive in the face of white hostility and legal restrictions. Although some wealthy free blacks followed the example of successful whites of the period and wrote memoirs as well as leaving evidence of their existence in local records, few studies, and even fewer first-hand accounts, exist which cover the lives of less fortunate free blacks.

Ira Berlin provides the first major and most comprehensive examination of the entire population of Southern free blacks.[36] Berlin's research included the lives of both free blacks and quasi-free slaves because both groups possessed significant amounts of autonomy, often living and working far from white supervision. The highly intertwined lives of free blacks and quasi-free slaves forced Berlin to study these two groups together. Berlin's title betrays his conclusion that most free blacks and quasi-free slaves actually lived lives little better, and sometimes worse, than did plantation slaves. Berlin's effort to broaden the scope of research on free blacks has been furthered by the

publication of several more recent studies. In one such study, Judith Kelleher Schafer primarily concentrates on slaves and manumission, but the second half of her work shows the difficulties free blacks faced in defending themselves from re-enslavement or from the requirement that free blacks must leave Louisiana once manumitted. By combing through Louisiana court records, Schafer shows that the availability of manumission and recourse to the court system was limited only to those African Americans who could find whites to testify that they were "of good character."[37] This, and other problems, did not engender much faith in the white court system by a large percentage of blacks. Those without sympathetic masters or well-placed friends had little opportunity for freedom or justice. David S. Cecelski and W. Jeffery Bolster provide two recent works of maritime history that contain substantial information about free blacks.[38] Both of these works investigate the lives of African American sailors and, separately, uncover the same fact, that the majority of the sailors working on American ships were either slaves or free blacks. African American sailors enjoyed a great deal of freedom and used their mobility to spread abolitionist ideas, acted as an informal communication system, and helped slaves escape their masters. Southern ports reacted to these actions by refusing to allow black sailors to leave their ships when docked. These new studies are beginning to alter the perception of African American life in the pre-Civil War era, but new primary sources, such as the narratives published by A. B. Chambers, need to be re-published to further our understanding of antebellum America.

America's myopic vision of slavery and the over-reliance on abolitionist-produced slave narratives has left a significant portion of African American history

understudied and under-appreciated. Slaves worked in a wide range of industries ranging from mills and factories to highly skilled crafts such as carpentry and bricklaying, unlike in the North where white craftsman dominated many of these same occupations.* Highly-skilled slaves often worked away from white supervision, especially when involved in transportation. The plantations, the mainstay of the Southern economy, relied on supplies brought to them on riverboats captained by African slaves or hauled overland by slaves. Given a relatively large amount of autonomy, a growing number of slaves could find their own jobs, negotiate their own wages, and even keep a portion of those wages as long as they delivered the majority to their masters. Quasi-free slaves gained a significant amount of control over their own lives and some even became wealthy enough to buy their freedom. Yet, as quasi-free slaves took more liberties and began accumulating property, their place within the Southern slave culture became increasingly ambiguous and anything they gained could easily be lost. Because material goods or wages obtained by the quasi-free slaves and, of course, their lives and bodies legally belonged to their masters, the masters could renege on their promises or change their minds whenever it suited them. Quasi-free slaves also faced greater danger from their employers. Employers did not have capital invested in the slaves they hired and could expose the slaves to unsafe conditions without financial risk. The greater freedom allowed quasi-free slaves was truly a double-edged sword.[39]

Likewise, free people of color faced larger challenges as well as opportunities because of their free status. The Southern free black population first appeared in large

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* The term "quasi-free" will be used to describe slaves with a considerable amount of autonomy following Ira Berlin's use of the term.

numbers during the American Revolution and, by the turn of the 19th century, had grown so large that Southern states began renewing or enacting black codes aimed at controlling the free black population. Black codes placed legal restrictions on where free blacks could work, live, and travel, while also attempting to proscribe certain social interactions. The lure of jobs, freedom, and security caused many free blacks, as well as quasi-free slaves, to migrate to the nearest city. The size of the local urban black population provided cover for a number of activities, both legal and illegal, even for runaway slaves. As the urban black populations grew ever larger, local authorities periodically attempted to reduce the numbers of blacks living in their city without white supervision. Some cities initiated a system that forced all free blacks to register with the city government. If caught without their registration papers, free blacks faced a prison sentence, being sent out of the state, and, sometimes, re-enslaved.[40] Eventually every right that African Americans had previously gained was lost except the right to own property and even property rights were tenuous when free blacks had to continually defend their freedom from encroachment or re-enslavement. As Berlin writes, "the maturation of the Southern slave system left little room for free Negroes."[41]

The continual struggle to maintain their freedom, even just to survive, forced the members of the Madison Henderson Gang African Americans to choose between several difficult options. They could stay in the South and keep struggling against, or accommodating themselves to, the white power structure. Alternatively, they could leave the South, but even in the North, they still faced white prejudice and the risk of being kidnapped into slavery. The safer choice was to emigrate from the United States to

Canada or the African colonies. Leaving meant abandoning the only country they knew and deserting any family left behind. Even though it opened them to attack on both a physical and economic level, Henderson, Seward, Warrick, and Brown independently chose to remain in the South. This required them to find places that would allow them enough freedom to gather the wealth they felt they needed to combat the encroachments of white society.

The recently acquired land that became the State of Louisiana offered a unique opportunity for freedom. Both the French and Spanish colonial systems manumitted slaves more easily enabling New Orleans' free black population to increase in size and develop a tradition of active participation in the city's affairs. The size of the free black population in Louisiana raised fears of a large-scale rebellion and made control extremely difficult. Although other ports along the gulf coast also experienced influxes of free blacks from the Caribbean, none of them experienced the entrenchment of a free black class as much as Louisiana. Therefore, New Orleans became a haven of freedom in the South. Louisiana authorities did attempt restricting African American rights, but compared to other cities in the Lower South, New Orleans offered the possibility for greater freedom for African Americans than most other Southern cities.[42]

New Orleans' geographical location at the mouth of the Mississippi added to the potential for freedom. Both David S. Cecelski and W. Jeffery Bolster demonstrate that maritime trade allowed a greater measure of freedom to seafaring African Americans than those who were land-based. With the advent of the steamboat, the navigable river systems of the west offered just as many opportunities as the seagoing trade for

increasing the mobility and freedom to African Americans. The steamboat trade not only spurred the economic growth along the rivers, but also provided employment to free blacks and slaves. Black river workers predominately lived in urban centers creating a relatively large percentage of the free black workforce in western cities. To a great extent, the freedom and mobility provided by the Mississippi River resulted from the communities of transient river workers in New Orleans and St. Louis. The "widespread, loosely organized, lawless underworld that connected the levee district of western river cities" allowed Henderson and his accomplices to commit a variety of crimes without being detected.[43] They avoided detection by losing themselves in the throngs of African-Americans working on the river.

The community of river workers that drew Henderson, Warrick, and Brown to New Orleans also attracted all four members of the Madison Henderson Gang to St. Louis. Positioned at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, St. Louis boomed with the expansion of the steamboat trade. Situated to take advantage of the trade on the Missouri, Illinois, Des Moines, Ohio as well as the Mississippi Rivers, St. Louis experienced phenomenal growth as the population grew 1500 percent in two decades.[44] Both Northerners and Southerners arrived in St. Louis, as did a large number of German and Irish immigrants. As mercantile, agricultural, and industrial interests vied for dominance in the political and economic scene, St. Louis faced an identity crisis. The city's leaders were unsure whether St. Louis was a Western city with ties to the North, or a Southern city with ties to the slave-owning interests.[45] The political leaders of Missouri did agree on one thing, that they did not want a large influx of free blacks. Missouri law

restricted the ability of transient free blacks from settling in the state by requiring substantial bonds and licenses. Despite these measures, St. Louis developed a large population of free black river workers.[46] Like New Orleans, St. Louis became a hub of business and trade, which lead it to become a hub of African American activity.

Most often urban blacks, black sailors, and African-American river workers resisted the restrictive measures of the white power structure through small acts of defiance such as work slow-downs or hiding those living in the state illegally. At times, the free blacks found the threat to their freedom strong enough to galvanize them into large-scale rebellions. Gabriel's Rebellion typifies this type of resistance where free blacks frustrated over their legal limitations felt that their freedom was threatened banded together to rise up against white society.[47] Similar motives inspired Henderson and his accomplices into criminal activities as a more individualistic form of resistance. These four men found their participation in crime an effective way to strike back at white society. Chambers' pamphlet provides a glimpse into the minds of the four criminals or, from another point of view, the minds of the freedom fighters. In contrast to the generally accepted view of black resistance that comes from the "heroic" slave escaping bondage by fleeing to the North, these men's narratives presented here depicts a small group of African-American who fought against an oppressive system in the only way they knew, with crime.

Madison Henderson knew crime from an early age. In his narrative, Henderson describes how his first master used him to convince slaves to runaway. Henderson's job was to convince slaves that his master bought slaves in order to free them in the North.

In reality, the runaway slaves were transported to another region of the South for sale. Henderson blamed this early exposure to crime for corrupting his natural intelligence by turning it to conceiving of new crimes. After being with his master for several years, Henderson proposed a new scheme that posed less danger to his master. His proposal called for his master to sell Henderson then travel a day's journey away. Henderson would act as the perfect slave, then, in a week's time, he would runaway rejoining his master so that they could resell Henderson to another victim. When Henderson's master decided it was prudent that he sell Henderson for real, Henderson's crimes escalated into thievery and in St. Louis into murder.

Seward's criminal activity exploited white society through another highly chaotic feature of antebellum American life. By forging letters of credit and later by passing counterfeit money, Seward preyed on American banks. At the start of the Civil War, there were 1500 state-chartered banks issuing currency in the United States. If used near the bank that issued it, the currency was traded at face value. However, the farther the currency was carried away from the issuing bank the less it was worth. Passing counterfeit currency provided Seward with a good living as long as he maintained his connections to the counterfeiting ring. When he lost contact with the ring, he returned to forgery and then, after he met Henderson, he turned to robbery.

Unlike Seward, Warrick's account relates the dangers facing people of color trying to earn an honest living. He begins his account by telling how he was tricked and sold as a slave by a white judge and his daughter despite his free status. After he was sent to New Orleans where he proved his status as a free man, Warrick tried to make a

living as a sailor. On numerous occasions, the captains on the ships he sails attempt to steal his wages and he is forced to resort to violence to retrieve them. When a New Orleans merchant attempted to claim that he owned him, Warrick took revenge by stealing from the merchant. Finally, he joins the crew of a riverboat bound for St. Louis where he becomes reacquainted with Henderson joining him in petty thievery.

Brown presents the most consciously fashioned and problematic narrative of the four. He apparently recanted his claims to be an agent of the Ohio Abolition Society shortly before his hanging. Brown's retraction was only reported by the Reverend Bullard of the First Presbyterian Church.[48] Finding out exactly who got the correct story is extremely difficult if not impossible. What can be deciphered from Brown's narrative is that he wanted it known that he helped numerous slaves to escape to the North. While doing so, he was not above making a profit by selling goods stolen by the slaves he helped.

For the men interviewed by Chambers, the drive for wealth became paramount in their lives. With financial stability came the opportunity to own land, become part of a community, and generally control their own lives. Both Henderson and Brown expressed the desire to settle down once they had amassed enough money. Henderson, the only slave in the group, had the opportunity to escape into Canada when he traveled as far north as Chicago. Instead, he made a conscious decision to return to the familiar territory of St. Louis and continue living there as a slave. Henderson and Seward also contemplated starting a business transporting vegetables up the river to St. Louis, but again lacked the capital to get started. Faced with severe limitations place on them as

men of color, the quasi-free slave and the three freeborn men were forced to defend their freedom throughout their lives. Increasingly frustrated in their attempts to provide for themselves and their families, these men became deeply angry and more determined to overcome the discrimination and legal restrictions of white society. In the minds of these four men, only wealth could shield them from the repression confronting them. Each man had pursued wealth through a series of criminal endeavors, but had never before resorted to outright violence. However, as their frustration and anger increased, so too did their willingness to resort to more radical and violent methods of gaining wealth. Their stories made Chambers' pamphlet enormously popular and horrified white populations up and down the Mississippi. The uproar sparked by the pamphlet led to the tightening of the very restrictions that these men resented, to increased controls on free blacks and against the ability of owners to allow their slaves to hire their own time throughout the west.

Thus, the confessions of Henderson, Seward, Warrick, and Brown provide a vastly different view of what it meant to be an African American in the 1800's than most of the traditional canon of African American narratives of the same era. Most of the traditional narratives focus on the flight from slavery and the extant accounts of free blacks come predominately from the elite. The tale of these four convicted men represents African Americans who strove to make a place for themselves within the world they knew and, finding their way blocked, adopted illicit methods to gather the financial resources to fight repression. William L. Andrews writes that blacks battled the "generic divisiveness" in their autobiographies applied by whites onto blacks.[49] African-

Americans used their autobiographies to talk back to a white society that devalued and dehumanized them. Not only do these four men use the opportunity afforded them by Chambers' interviews to talk back, but they do so in a way that few abolitionist-sponsored texts do. Their message contains an implied threat to white society. In different forms, each man alleges that white repression of blacks produced them as criminals and that if they had been allowed to develop and use their talents in productive ways, they would not have been forced into criminal behavior. In their confessions these men tried to show that their basic humanity was repressed, denied, and trampled on by the restrictions of white society. They merely found an alternative method of expressing their humanity and improving their lives. Although Chambers' work was highly influential in his time, interest eventually waned and the story faded from memory. William L. Andrews speculated that J. D. Green's account "has been forgotten or ignored" because he falls outside the normal categories used for African American literature.[50] The same reasoning applies to the narratives of Henderson, Seward, Warrick, and Brown. Today, only a couple copies of Chambers' original pamphlet still survive, but this unique glimpse into the lives of pre-Civil War African Americans must not be lost or forgotten.

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[1] *St. Louis Republican*, April 19,1841.
[2] *New Orleans Picayune*, July 20, 1841.
[3] Thomas Buchanan, *Black Life on the Mississippi*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 126-130.
[4] Mary Seematter, "Trials and Confessions: Race and Justice in Antebellum St. Louis," *Gateway Heritage*, Fall 1991, 44. And Buchanan, *Black Life on the Mississippi*, 127.
[5] *Natchez Free Trader* (Mississippi), August 2, 1841; *Galena Gazette*, July 17, 1841; *New Orleans Picayune*, July 25, 1841. Cited in "Trials and Confessions: Race and Justice in Antebellum St. Louis" by Mary E. Seematter, *Gateway Heritage* Fall 1991.
[6] Biographical information on Chambers from *Missouri Republican*, May 25, 1854.

[7] For a more in-depth discussion of Whig ideology see John Vollmer Mering, *The Whig Party in Missouri*, (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1967).
[8] Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 103-105.
[9] William G. Shade, "Though We Are Not Slaves, We Are Not Free," in *Upon These Shores* edited by William R. Scott and William G. Shade, (New York: Routledge, 2000), 130.
[10] *St. Louis Republican*, July 29, 1839, August 7, 1839, August 13, 1839.
[11] *St. Louis Republican*, July 1, 1839.
[12] For examples see *St. Louis Republican*, July 11, 1938, July 2, 1839, October 16, 1840.
[13] *St. Louis Republican*, January, 12, 1938, January 31, 1938, February 2, 1938,
[14] William L.Andrews, *To Tell a Free Story: The First Century of Afro-American Autobiography, 1760-1865*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 20-21.
[15] For a full discussion of framing see Christina Accomando, *A Regulation of Robbers*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001).
[16] Andrews, 266. For a full discussion on Green's *Narrative* see Andrews pp. 205-214.
[17] Andrews, 42-43.
[18] Tera Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 60-61.
[19] Robin D. G. Kelley, "Shiftless of the World Unite!" in *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Classes* (New York, 1994), 18-21.
[20] For a more complete discussion of the trickster image and the Madison Henderson Gang see Thomas C. Buchanan in *Black Life on the Missouri.*
[21] Andrews, 276.
[22] Rascality was typically a masculine form of black resistance. For a discussion of the types of female resistance see Stephanie M. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women & Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South*, (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).
[23] Buchanan, 132-134.
[24] Patrick Rael, *Black Identity and Protest in the Antebellum North*, (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 298.
[25] For a more complete discussion see *Race Rebels* by D. G. Kelley.
[26] Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), 599.
[27] Andrews, 72-73.
[28] Marion Wilson Starling, *The Slave Narrative: Its Place in American History*, (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1988), 246-247.
[29] Andrews, 167-168 and 214-224.
[30] Starling, 171-173.
[31] Christina Accomando, *A Regulation of Robbers*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001), 21-22.
[32] Andrews, xi.
[33] Cyprian Clamorgan, *The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis. The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis*, Edited with an Introduction by Julie Winch, (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1999).
[34] James Oliver and Lois E. Horton, *In the Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest Among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860*, (New York. Oxford University Press 1997).
[35] Patrick Rael, *Black Identity & Black Protest in the Antebellum North*, (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
[36] Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters.*
[37] Judith Kelleher Schafer, *Becoming Free, Remaining Free: Manumission and Enslavement in New Orleans, 1846-1862*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 43.
[38] David Cecelski, *The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), and W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

[39] For a more complete study of quasi-free slaves and free blacks, see Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).
[40] Berlin, 327-332.
[41] Berlin, 135.
[42] Berlin, Chapter 4
[43] Buchanan, 126.
[44] James Neale Primm, *Lion of the Valley*, (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998), 148.
[45] Cyprian Clamorgan, *The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis*, edited with an introduction by Julie Winch, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 5.
[46] Clamorgan, 7.
[47] Douglas Egerton, *Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 & 1802*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), x.
[48] *St. Louis Republican*, July 10, 1841.
[49] Andrews, 23.
[50] Andrews, 265.

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The writer of the following confessions begs leave to remark,[1] that they were severally given voluntarily & without inducement or restraint; & that nothing has been inserted but what was expressed by the convicts, in a cell separate and apart from each other and from all persons. No one prisoner knew what the other had confessed to. This will in some measure account for the discrepencies which appear in the confessions. In all cases it was the purpose of the writer to get the truth, and with that view he, at every sitting not only endeavored to impress upon them the solemnity of their situation, but also the fearful consequences of uttering a falsehood. He further endeavored by repeated questions, by recurring again and again to different and disconnected parts of their narrations, to sift, as far as practicable the correctness of their stories. He cannot say that his efforts have been entirely successful; but wherever he could find anything in their statements or their manner of relating them to justify a belief that they were untrue, he endeavored to exclude them from the confession. His effort has been to take down their confessions as far as practicable in *their own words*, and with this view he has avoided every thing like embellishment and all attempt to dilate. The opening and conclusions are theirs in sentiment and nearly the only parts in which the writer has assumed any liberty in the employment of language. Desiring that so far as the writer was concerned, the confessions might be faithful narrations of their lives he has been compelled to admit of subjects and expressions which delicacy and his own feelings prompted him to exclude. But being part of their stories, of the truth of which he had no reason to doubt and in some instances too much cause to believe, he did not feel at liberty to

[1] In transferring the text of these confessions into a word processing program, only the spacing has been changed. Any misspellings, errors, or irregular punctuation were transcribed as they appear in the original pamphlet published by A. B. Chambers.

omit them. In the names of persons and places many errors have doubtless been committed, as in some cases the pronunciation was such as conveyed no correct idea of the real name.

Each confession has been read several time in the presence of the jailor and other respectable persons, to the prisoner making it, and all corrections made which from time to time the prisoner's recollection suggested, until his full and entire assent was given to every part.

In conclusion the writer begs leave to remark, the in suppressing names as he has, in some cases, he has been actuated by a desire not to injure any one upon the testimony of persons of color and in the condition of these convicts. He does not pretend to endorse the truth of any part of their statements, but only to say, that the foregoing is a true report of *their* several confessions.

A.B. Chambers

George H. C. Melody, Jailor

Confession of Madison

I, Madison Henderson, a slave owned by Samuel G. Blanchard, of New Orleans, in full view of the awful death which awaits me, being sensible that I am sentenced to die on the 9th day of July next, and having made, as I trust and honestly hope, my peace with my God, through the merits of his only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and knowing that I can only enter the kingdom prepared for the blessed by a full and free confession, before God, of my past iniquities, and a reliance upon his divine mercy and forgiveness, and being willing, as the only reparation I can make to that God and the community, whose laws I have so oft and repeatedly violated, as well as to do what I can to restrain others from the commission of like offences, have made this my full and voluntary confession, and may that God, into whose presence I must soon come, judge me as I state truly.

With me, as with all others, Vice has been progressive, and the crimes of my commission were not the mere promptings of a wicked and depraved heart, but, solely, to obtain the means of gratifying depraved and wicked appetites. With money I bought, what to me was once pleasure; and I early learned, that to obtain it by any means, if not discovered, was fair and right.

I was born, as well as I can recollect, the slave of Mr. Asa Brockman, a son of John Brockman, who resided some miles in the country from Orange Court House, Va. The precise year of my birth, I do not know, my mother was a slave of John Brockman, the father of Asa Brockman, by the name of Rose. My father was called James Henderson and belonged to Mrs. Franky Henderson, a widow woman. When I was about 12 or 15 years of age (I suppose I must have been about this age, as, by what I know of

my birth, I think I am now 34 or 35 years old,) I was sold by my master at Orange Court House, to a negro trader by the name of James Blakey. Mr. Blakey, I understood to be one of the partners in a company of traders, whose names, so far as I know them, were Mr. Blakey, Samuel Alsop, Mr. Ballard, and James Franklin. I remained about six weeks at Orange Court House, when a number of negroes having been collected, we were moved forward on the road to Richmond, to Mr. Alsop's one of the partners I have named: here we remained about a week. From Alsop's the gang were conveyed to Richmond, and lodged in the negro jail of Mr. Ballard. Here we remained about a week, and on Sunday morning, at day light, we were put on board a steam boat and carried to a vessel lying in the stream at Norfolk, ready to receive us, and to take us to New Orleans. The Negroes were put under the charge of ____ _____. We were a month or more going to New Orleans. During the trip round I was taken by ____ as his body servant, and waited upon him very attentively. During this time he seemed to have formed an attachment for me, and when we arrived in the south I remained in his service. This service has been my ruin; for it was whilst in his employ, and under his tutorage that I learnt the first rudiments of those crimes which have brought me, in the meridian of life, with all my hopes still and blooming, to a premature and dishonorable grave. Though he was to me, in all that world calls goodness, ever good and kind; yet the very kindness he bestowed upon me and the purposes in which he employed me, have filled the bitter cup of my ruin. He introduced me into the broad road to ruin, and taught me the bitter tastes of the rewards of crime.

In my service with this man, I early manifested whatever talents I possessed. I had courage, and, for my opportunities, as much judgment as most negroes; I early discovered, that to obey him implicitly, execute his orders literally, and watch carefully his interests, were the best means to secure his favor, and procure for myself whatever indulgence I desired. In this way I succeeded in gaining his confidence, and very soon after our landing he gave me many proofs of the confidence he reposed in my fidelity, circumspection and zeal.

This man was the chief of a company of negro traders, and the principal person in carrying them south. His operations in selling and occasionally in buying extended to all the southern parts. New Orleans, Natchez, Vicksburg and Mobile, were the principal markets for sale. His purchases were made in nearly all the cities and towns in Virginia, Maryland and the Carolinas, and in these I accompanied him, and assisted in his operations at all the following places, viz: Charleston, S. C., Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Norfolk, Spotsylvania, C. H., Orange C. H., Fredricksburg, Culpepper C. H., Louisa C. H., and Green Springs. We went to these places to buy, and if the negroes whom we wished to purchase, were unwilling to be sold, it was my duty to overcome their objections, and by false tales of what my master would do for them, or the purposes for which they were wanted, induce them to agree to be sold. But the most important part of my duty was to coax off, and harbor negroes: in other words, to aid in stealing them. As the sequel will show, this required a good deal of courage and skill, and was generally accomplished by representing my master as from a free state, generally from Philadelphia, and that his purpose in getting them to run off was to set them free; that he

would take them to Canada, or some other place out of the reach of their masters. To the men I represented that they would become rich and own plenty of property—to the woman and girls, I held out the prospect of marrying rich white men, and of living in style and splendor. In these offices, I believe I became quite an adept, and, with the aid of my master, seldom failed in our purposes.

My first attempt in stealing negroes was in the City of Baltimore, where I returned with _____, after he had disposed of the cargo I went round with _____. The circumstances were about these: he frequently purchased negroes of a man called Ose Brockman in Baltimore. When we went to Baltimore he had several on hand. My master bought from him two men called William and Henry. Four others we stole, viz: James, John, George and Ned. This was accomplished in this way: My master and myself represented to them, that we would convey them off to a free state and make them free; that he would propose to purchase two, to give them an excuse for running away, through fear of being sold for the south; that, when the two were sold, they should run off in my charge, and I would place them where they would be safe until he came for them. On the appointed night, I took my master's horses and the four negroes, carried them to a house, some distance in the country, as directed, and then delivered them to a man, who hid them away, whilst I returned and was with my master before daylight. I don't recollect the man's name to whom I gave them, or the precise distance it was from Baltimore, but I know it was on the road which we afterwards took in going to Fredricksburg. When my master had finished his purchases, he went to Fredricksburg, and took these four negroes

in the drove, having changed their clothes, and induced them to say nothing, for if they did, he would not be able to get them out of the slave states to a free state.

We went to Fredricksburg and put up at a tavern, kept be a man named Hamilton Williams. We staid about a week at the tavern; in which time, my master and myself frequently visited the negro quarters of a man named Thomas Johnston. We made our arrangements with two of the negroes to run away. Johnston was unwilling to sell any of his negroes, although he was in a press for money at the time. One day my master went to Johnston, and proposed, in the presence of the negroes, to buy some of them. This was by arrangement with those who were to run away. Johnston did not agree to sell; and that night I took Johnston's negro man Davey on a horse and conveyed him to a house to which my master had directed me, some few miles from Fredericksburg. The running away of Davey was ascribed to his fear of being sold to the south. In a few days, I took away Johnston's man Moses, and carried him to the same house. This time I staid and got my breakfast and came back to Fredericksburg in the day time, but Johnston did not discover my absence. Whilst this was going on my master pretended a willingness to buy the two remaining boys, Willis and Tom, but was apparently rather indifferent. When the second boy ran off, Johnston got frightened—thought all his slaves would run away. My master offered him a thousand dollars for the two, which after taking a night to think upon it, he agreed to take.

After the bill of sale was executed for Willis and Tom, my master said to Johnston, that did not offer a sufficiently high reward; that 30 or 40 dollars was not enough to get them taken up; that he should offer at least $100 or $150 a piece. Johnston

said he was not able to pay so much. My master asked him how much he would take for the two as they ran. Johnston studied a while and asked him to make an offer. My master said he would give $125 a piece. If he got them, well and good; if not, the loss should be his. Johnston reflected some time and finally agreed to take it, and the bill of sale was made out. In a day or two afterwards, I was sent out, I took the two negroes, Davey and Moses, and conveyed them to an unoccupied house and hid them: here they were taken shortly afterwards, by a man who was secured for the purpose, and carried back to Johnston's house, Johnston interogated them as to where they had been, and why they ran off. They replied, that they had been in the woods and were afraid of being sold to the negro traders. This was the story I had instructed them to tell. Johnston then told them, that if they had not run off he would not have sold them, but now they were sold; and they were to be carried away.

From Fredericksburg we went some miles into the country, to a very wealthy farmer by the name of Baxter. He had a large number of negroes, about 150, was very wealthy and lived in a very large and elegant house. He had several very handsome daughters, and four of the handsomest yellow girls I ever saw. When we stopped at Baxter's, we went first to the negro quarters, where my master enquired the owner's name and asked many other questions; the name he put on a piece of paper, and put into his pocket. After talking some time to the negroes we went to the house. Here we staid upwards of two weeks, during which time my master was very attentive to Baxter's daughters, frequently riding out with them, and often taking one of them out in his own carriage. My master occupied a room on the first floor and the family slept up stairs, in

another part of the house. From the window of his room we could get out on the ground. The yellow girls slept in the basement of the building; my master and myself were very finely dressed, each wearing a gold watch, and money plenty, and we were not long in gaining the affections of the girls. My master cohabited every night with some one of them, and I with another. He proposed to them to run off, but they at first were unwilling to leave theirs master and mistress, and still more opposed to leaving their mother, who was owned by a gentleman, a few miles off, in the neighborhood. Finally my master proposed, that if they would go with him he would make one of them his wife, and if they got safely away, he would come back and get their mother. Baxter had several negroes which he wished to sell, Mrs. B., did not like them, for they sometimes stole things. My master, professed to be very indifferent about buying—said he was about to quit the business, and that negroes brought nothing in New Orleans.

On the Friday night before we left, my master got up, went to the stable, where we harnessed up his horse and borouche—a very fleet and spirited horse. The yellow girls, having packed up most of their clothing, (and they had a great many fine dresses,) left the hall door open in the basement, and stole out to where my master was. He took them into his borouche—drove them through Fredricksburg—carried them to the same house I had carried the others, and returned before daylight. On his return, I rubbed his horse dry, cleaned the borouche, and got every thing by daylight to look as if it had not been disturbed. In the morning he was in bed as if nothing had occurred; but there was a great fuss about the girls, and search for several days was made in all directions. At first

it was thought they had gone to their mothers; but not a negro on the plantation knew any thing about their going.

We remained a few days longer, during which time Mrs. Baxter and the girls, and Mr. Baxter himself, became very much dissatisfied with several of the slaves, as they thought they had induced the girls to run away. Baxter urged my master to buy, but he professed not to wish to do so—said he was going home, and could not make a trip this season. Finally, to oblige Mr. Baxter, he agreed to purchase a few, and took a man named Joe Turner; a woman, pretty old, named Rosa; a little, young woman named Letty; and a man named Jesse. He tried hard to buy a man which Baxter had, and offered $1000 for him, but he would not sell him. We took these negroes and went to the house where the girls were. Here we staid a day or more, during which time the girls did not see those we had purchased; for the girls were kept up stairs and treated as ladies, my master staying most of the time with them, whilst the others were kept down stairs, and had another yard. I also took all the liberties I desired with the girls or any of the negroes, except my master's favorites.

During this time, he frequently counselled and advised me as to what I should do, and would lecture me as the best manner of addressing either negro men or women. With the latter, he was a perfect adept, and appeared nowise offended at any indulgence which I took, always supplying me with money enough to pay for my gratifications.

From this negro depot, we went to Petersburgh, to the house of George Lynch. I understood he was a judge, a man of considerable wealth, and of very studious habits—so much so that he frequently became partially deranged. He had a great many negroes, but

knew the names of very few of them. A trusty negro man attended to all his business on the farm, kept an account of the negroes that were born, or died, &c. and communicated from time to time to the judge. My master staid several days at Mr. Lynch's, and frequently got the Judge to walk though his negro quarters with him. On that [?] occasions, my master would propose buying some of his slaves, but Lynch refused. He had a son and daughter, and said that he had enough for them without selling, and at his death his slaves should be set free and sent to Liberia. Notwithstanding this, we succeeded in getting nine of them to agree to run off—six men and three women. I can only remember the names of three of them. One was called John Strong, another Dorey, and another Edward Ash. The negroes left one night, and lay secreted for a day or so; when we left, went to where they were and took them to the depot below Fredericksburgh. Mr. Lynch, when told of it, did not know the names of the negroes. They were all young; and his negro overseer could do no more than make a search in the neighborhood. We remained one day at the depot, during which time the clothes were changed, their other clothes put into bags, and on the day following, the whole drove set out for Richmond. When we reached there, they all were lodged in Mr. Ballard's jail, and no one saw them afterwards until we left for New Orleans. In this instance, the trip to New Orleans was made by land.

There were a number of negroes in the jail when we arrived at Richmond, procured by the other partners, and the whole drove, when we started, amounted to between 80 and 100. Nothing occurred of much moment on the trip. Once a man demanded of my master to see his bill of sale of a certain negro. He appeared very

indignant, at what he said was an insult, and spoke of the long time he had been engaged in the business. The man apologized, and then my master showed him a bill of sale, apparently properly executed; but it was one that *his clerk* had made out.

We staid a long time at New Orleans and on the coast, disposing of the negroes, and a considerable time after they were sold out. In New Orleans, a negro trader by the name of Woolfolk appeared to be interested with my master, and was much with him; and when he was not there Mr. Wright, another trader, was. One or the other was generally there. During the time we staid in New Orleans, my master would frequently talk to me upon all subjects, and especially about the trade, and the necessity of resorting to these tricks to make it profitable. He took much pains to advise me how to manage, and frequently trusted me, for days and nights, with the custody of large sums of money. I have had several thousands in my charge at a time. He used frequently to urge me to keep a look out for men who had money, and required me to let him know.

He told me repeatedly to indulge with the women as much as I pleased, and whenever I wanted money to come to him, but upon no account to take up with any one, at least not so far as to let her gain my confidence. On this point he appeared very anxious, and frequently talked to me about it. At this time I was in the practice of buying all the newspapers, and taking them to his room, where he would read to me any thing that was in them about runaway negroes, and all accounts of the robberies, murders, &c.

On one occasion, he caught me talking with a girl he kept, and suspected me of having intercourse with her. He was very angry, and for the first time threatened to whip me, but did not. The next day he talked to me again about it; said he was in liquor the

night before; told me again that I must not interfere with him, but must obey his orders implicitly. I retorted upon him, and complained of his accusing me with what I had not been guilty of, and told him how faithfully I had served him. A few days afterwards he told me to get my things washed up, and ready to go to the east. Upon this occasion, I took the liberty of remonstrating against the stealing of negroes, and told him that I had understood that if they caught us we would have to go to the penitentiary for life or be hung, and that no amount of money would save us. He replied that he had intended for some time to quit it, and believed he would, I told him I had a plan by which he could make more money, and no body could be hurt for it but me. He wanted to know what it was, but I would not tell him until we got to the east. After some time we left and went to Washington City. We went the southern route through Charleston, S. C.

At Washington, we formed a plan, for my master to sell me as often as he could, and I would run off afterwards, and go back to him. To carry out this scheme, he was to recommend me whenever an opportunity offered. We stopped at the same house with the Hon. Henry Clay, who, at that time had no servant of his own with him. He had as a servant a free yellow man, to whom he seemed much attached. We staid at the Hotel some time, my master spending many evenings with Mr. Clay, and by this means, as also by the yellow man, I succeeded in getting into favor with Mr. Clay. Whenever I could get the yellow man out of the way, I brushed Mr. Clays clothes, and did whatever else he desired. On one occasion my master and Mr. Clay, in company with a number of gentlemen, dined at the President's House. I went with my master, and at the table stood behind his and Mr. Clay's chair. With the enconiums which my master passed upon me

and the attention I manifested to Mr. Clay, it was not long before he offered to buy me; at first my master was not willing to sell, but finally, as a mere matter of favor to Mr. Clay, whom he professed to adore, he agreed to part with me for $1300, and I was accordingly sold; I do not know whether Mr. Clay paid the whole sum in cash or not. A day or two afterwards my master went to Baltimore, where he was to wait for me, I staid with Mr. Clay about a week, and then put out for Baltimore, where we again met.

In a short time my master and myself took the stage and went to Philadelphia where we spent two days. There my master bought horses and a barouche, and we started back into the slave States. After travelling about some time we went to Fredricksburg. At this place I was called by him John Henry. Before, I had been called by my right name, and by that name had been sold. At Fredricksburg I was again sold to a man by the name of Rarall, the owner of a large wheat and grocery store, for $1000. My master went away in his borouche and left his horse at the tavern stable. I staid with Rarall a fortnight, and on Saturday night took the horse, which I had been attending to occasionally, and joined him. He was out on the road leading to the Orange Court House, about 20 miles. From thence we started, at five o'clock on Sunday morning, and travelled about sometime through Spotsylvania and Culpeper counties, and went to Green Springs and Orange C. H. During the time my master bought several negroes, but did not steal any.

After travelling to several places we finally went down to a country place, some where, as I understood it, between Orange and Culpeper Court Houses. I am unable to fix the neighborhood with certainty for I had travelled about a good deal not always

knowing where we were, besides the place had no distinctive name that I ever heard of. In this neighborhood there lived four brothers, in the immediate vicinity of each other by the name of Ellis.—James Ellis was the wealthiest and the eldest, was married and kept a store in a brick house. His dwelling house was distant from the store about a hundred yards or more. There was on the place also a blacksmith shop near the store. In the store there was built into the wall a very large vault and this was the depository of all the money of the brothers and probably of some of the surrounding farmers. My master ascertained that there was a large amount of money in the vault, but how he procured the information I do not know. We went into the neighborhood and stopped at a strange house, a house I had never been at before or since. During the day my master was a little while at the store,—bought a few articles and I did the same: his business of negro buying appeared to be understood by the people.

On the second day we left the house where we had been staying, saying that we were going to Louisa Court House. We did not go far until we stopped in a secreted spot and remained until night. After dark we drove back to the neighborhood of Ellis' store. In the blacksmith shop a negro man usually slept, but from some cause or other he was not in the shop that night. I knew this from the fact that I went to the shop to get a bar and hammer to use in forcing the vault. My master had a skeleton key with which he unlocked the door of the store. There proved to be no person within. After considerable search in the desks and drawers we finally lit upon a key to an iron safe which stood in the store. When we opened the safe we found at first nothing but books and papers, but in one of the drawers we found a key with which after a good deal of labor we opened the

vault. Here was a rich treasure; I am unable to say how much there actually was, but I know there were several square boxes of silver, some silver plate, some gold, and a box of paper money. The silver &c. we carried out and put in my master's borouche, which stood some distance from the store. The paper he put into his pockets and leaving the door of the chest and vault open we set fire to the house in several different places, went out locked the door and made off.

My master always kept the very fleetest horses, and after a hard drive of a few hours, we were on the road to Louisa Court House. Towards day we stopped, rubbed the horses dry, and at daylight were travelling as was our custom. For my master to have large sums of money with him was nothing extraordinary, and therefore the boxes in his barouche, which had no marks on, created no surprise at any of the places where we stopped, or at Louisa C. H. when we reached there.

The Ellis', as I afterwards understood from my master, never knew how their store was destroyed. It was entirely burnt down, and some of the walls fell in. They supposed it had been opened and robbed, and set on fire, but suspected some of the blacks in the neighborhood. The vault in the wall was nothing more than a very tall iron chest set into the wall. All their books, papers, &c. were destroyed—nothing saved, as my master told me. I heard him say on one occasion, to Wolfolk in New Orleans, after our return, that the haul was worth to him about $100,000—I know that there was a great deal of money.

At Louisa Court House he bought another horse, a large one and a new pair of large strong saddle bags. The silver was put into the saddle bags, which I carried on the

large horse. The paper money he put between the padding and cloth of his coat in the breast and round the collar. Having fixed it all to our satisfaction, we left in a few days for New Orleans, by land, travelling by easy stages.

When we reached New Orleans, we met Wolfolk there, and he and my master spent considerable time together at a house near the negro fail below Esplenade street, waiting for the arrival of the drove which had been sent out from Norfolk by sea. He and Wolfolk lived pretty high whilst there, and enjoyed themselves in every thing they desired.

After the drove arrived and were prepared for market, my master took a number of them on board the steamboat North Alabama to carry to Natchez. Some time before this, he asked me if I would be willing to be sold, if he would find me a good master and give me the purchase money. I had then been with him, in all, about three years and a half. He said we had been long enough together—that I knew enough to take care of myself, and if I got into difficulty, and he was about, he would help me, either with money or any thing else. After some deliberation, I finally concluded to be sold, provided he would sell me to some man who would be indulgent, and whose business was connected with the river. I preferred being sold to a boatman, so that I might be kept on the river; but next to that, I wished to be sold to some merchant who did business with ships and boats. I thought myself sufficiently smart to make my way through the world, and get what money I needed if I staid on the river, but if sold to any one in the country, I knew I would not have so much opportunity for the exercise of my talents and might have to run off, in which event I would get into trouble and to no profit.

One day after the negroes for Natchez had been shipped on the North Alabama, Mr. Samuel G. Blanchard, my present master, came on board and informed my master that he wanted to buy a trusty servant to keep about a store. He recommended me to him very strongly, and conversed with me about it; told me he was just the kind of master that I wanted, and if I got the right side of him I could do pretty much as I pleased. After considerable bargaining and talk, Mr. Blanchard agreed to buy me and another black boy named John Brown, for $900 a piece.

Mr. Blanchard came and talked to me some time before he purchased me. He enquired my history pretty close, and I answered all as I thought best suited the occasion. Among the other questions, he enquired why I had been sold. In reply, I told him that my former master was unable to raise enough on his farm in Virginia to support his family, which was about as near true as any thing I told him.

Here my intercourse with my master terminated, and from the date of my sale to Mr. Blanchard, I had no other transactions with him. He gave me, as he had promised, the $900, and upon this I lived a merry life for nearly a year afterwards. I dressed myself in the very best and brought every thing my fancy desired. Before the year was gone, however, my money was exhausted; nevertheless, I continued free from the vice of stealing or robbing for a year or more after I went to Mr. Blanchard's. My money holding out I had but little need, and besides I knew no one to assist me in any undertakings of the kind; but I did not long remain in this ignorance.

Mr. Blanchard had a clerk named James Buel. James and his father came to New Orleans from New York. The old man was adept in rascality, but was too old to do much

but plan. Old Buel had lived in New York city; and, in connexion with his brother, carried on the business of counterfeiting. They were also merchants, and both became wealthy and for a time respectable. The brother failed and applied to old Buel for aid, which he refused, when he informed on him. He was taken up tried and sentenced to the penitentiary for a long term, but on the solicitation of his mother to the Governor, was pardoned in a short time after his commitment. He then came to New Orleans, where he has been living a number of years. James is a shrewd, sensible young man and a good penman. During my first acquaintance with James, I knew little or nothing of the father. James, on repeated occasions, would talk to me very familiarly about acts of rascality, but always in such a distant manner that I did not know whether he wished to engage in any business of the kind or not. I kept pretty dark too, and was always careful what I said in reply, not letting him know what I had done, and yet willing he should understand that I was not averse to something of the kind, and had the courage to execute any plan. Things worked on this way for some time. One day when Mr. Blanchard was out , I think at dinner, Buel says to me in a careless way,

"Madison, don't you want to make some money if you could get into a good way to do it?" I replyed, "I am ready for your motion at any time."

From this we seemed to understand each other, and by agreement, I went to his father's that night. We all three and the family eat supper together; and after supper was over, the old man, James and myself, sat up nearly the whole night talking about what might be done in the way of rascality in New Orleans and on the river. They seemed a little suspicious of me, and by their conversation I thought they wanted to satisfy

themselves that I could be trusted. On my part I was as cautious as they were, and said no more than I could help. Finally, it was agreed to try a small adventure for our joint interests in the following way:

James wrote an order purporting to be from Mr. Winston, on a merchant by the name of Stanton. He was a merchant recently from New York and I think his surname was William. The order was for twenty boxes of the best New Bedford sperm candles. This order the next day I gave to a drayman who went to Stanton's, delivered the order and received the candles; I met the drayman down the street and by arrangement, which Buel had made, took the candles down to French Town and there sold them to a man called Spanish John, a Spaniard, for $9 a box; I gave the dray manextra pay and we divided the money amongst us.

Afterwards James forged an order in the name of Joseph Sanders in Poydras street on the large grocery establishment of Peters & Miller, on the Old Levee, for two casks of the best canvassed hams. This I gave to the drayman who presented the order and got the casks. I watched the drayman—took him to another place and sold the casks to a colored man named Sam, who sells meat in the market, for $50 a piece.

In a short time afterwards James forged another order in the name of Cockey & Walton, living on the New Levee between Poydras and Gravier street, on a house the name of which I do not remember, they kept however, in Magazine Street, below the corner of Poydras, for 20 boxes of candles. These we got in the same way and Buel sold them to a white man on a steam boat which was just leaving for the upper country, for $150 the lot. The purchasers name we did not learn.

We began to fear detection in this, and we stopped it for some time; in fact a considerable time elapsed before we did any thing more. After a while we began to need money and James and I concluded to make a raise by robbery.

There was a New York house adjoining my master's store, kept by two men called Williams, one I think was named William and the other Robert H. The store was kept on the first or ground floor and over head was a boarding house at which the eldest Williams boarded. There was a communication from the store to the upper story. In the store Williams had a large lot of gunny bags lying loose on the floor and piled up on one side of the house. On evening before dark, I stole softly in, whilst one of the Williams' was writing in the counting room, in the rear of the store, and hid myself in the gunny bags; having covered myself completely up, James came to the door and saw that I was entirely concealed. When supper was announced, which was after dark, Mr. Williams, who had been writing, shut and locked the doors and went up stairs, leaving his candle burning and the keys in his desk. In fact I judged he left the letter he was writing unfinished. As soon as he went out I went to the desk and got out $300, all the money I could find, and unlocked the door and went out. They, I believe, never could find out how the store was entered or how the money was taken.

This money lasted us some time. The next attempt was on the store of Mr. J. H. Fields, in Bienville street. Here we made a large haul in the following manner: Buel got around Mr. Fields' negro man and made an agreement with him to leave the middle door of the store unfastened. This negro man was entrusted with closing the doors and windows of the store before the clerks left. I did not know much of this negro man, nor

did he know that I was in the transaction, for Buel managed it all. On the night agreed upon, when the store had been left as before mentioned, I went to the store, entered and found the key of the chest in the drawer where I was directed to look for it, unlocked the chest and got some three thousand and odd dollars, some of it was New Orleans paper and some of it was in Texas money. I think there was a Texas bill or two of $500. After getting the money I left everything open and made my escape.

It may be well here to remark that in the distribution of the proceeds Buel and his father took the larger portion and I consented to it for this reason, that I esteemed James a very smart man and a kind of commander or leader.

About this time or rather after this we took into our concern a man named ___ Learned, a pretty bold and daring man, with a good deal of tact. I never knew his other name. He was an Irishman I think by descent; came last to New Orleans from Texas where as he said, he had passed as a doctor and had practised physic, at the same time carrying on the business of stealing, &c.

The first attempt we made after Learned joined us was as follows: Learned, with money we furnished him, purchased on the Levee four hogsheads of tobacco. The purchase was in another than his own name and in that name he had it inspected and advertised for sale. In a short time he made sale of it to a tobacconist whose name I do not know. He lived on a small street or alley below the Canal Bank between Gravier and Natchez streets. The tobacconist gave him for it a check on the Commercial Bank for two hundred and odd dollars, payable a few days after date. That night we all met at old man Buel's, and James altered the check to $2700. After the check was altered there was

some consultation how it should be presented on the day it was due, and as I was unable to do any other part of this scheme it was agreed that I should present it as my part. So on the day I took it to the Bank and presented it. A man took it and looked at it some time and I thought was going to pronounce it a forgery, just then he asked me who gave it to me, I replied a gentleman, he then handed it to another who looked at it a moment or so and asked me to whom I belonged, I replied Mr. Blanchard, when I said this he turned round and put it on the file where cancelled checks are put, and paid me the money. I received as my share of this $500, the residue was divided between the other three.

A few days afterwards a man from the Bank came and asked me where I had got the check and I told him a gentleman that was drinking at the Arcade with several others handed me the check and a dollar, requesting me to go down to the Bank and get the money for him. I told him I had seen the man frequently in the street since and could point him out. The same man from the Bank came several times, and on one occasion told me if I would find the man who gave me the check and point him out he would give me a hundred dollars. I promised to find him and show him, but after that I always reported that I could not find him.

Some time after this we took in another partner named David Rook. I understood that he originally live somewhere up the Mississippi, but the precise place I do not know. He claimed a relationship with the Buels.—He was a greater rascal than any of us but had not very much judgment.

Shortly after his admission we turned our attention to stealing negroes and running them to Mobile and selling them at auction. In the business of enticing the

negroes off by promises of freedom, &c., I was a first rate hand, as this was in the line of my old practices. The first negro we got I took from the door of one of the negro trader's establishments below the rail road. After talking to him a short time and promising to take him to a free state he consented to go. We put a new suit of clothes on him, slipped him on to the rail road car, just as the cars were leaving, carried him to the lake and put him on a vessel and took him to Mobile, where he was put up the next day at auction and sold. Buel and Learned did the business of carrying them to Mobile. I went once with them. We took in all, four; the three last were negroes we found in the street with irons on. In New Orleans a great many persons, and especially the French, when their negroes run away or are suspected of stealing or other misconduct put an iron collar on them and with this on they work about the streets. These negroes are easily dealt with for almost any purpose, but particularly to run away. I could have carried away any number but we found the business very hazardous and the liability of detection so great that we abandoned it.

The last negro we took, Rook carried over by himself. He was gone several days,—returned and stated that the negro, finding he had been deceived, and was to be sold determined to blow upon him, (that is, expose how he was brought away) that he (Rook) had been forced to cut and run and leave the negro. The story did not appear reasonable and the Buels fell out with him and turned him off. About a week or more after Rook was turned off from Buel's house, he came back, confessed that he had sold the negro for $670, and used the money,—said he was unable to do any thing by himself, but if they would take him in again he would steal a negro on his own hook—sell him

and pay them their share of the proceeds of the negro he had sold. As he seemed honest and penitent, they took him back, but determined to use him, not trust him.

One day Rook came to the store and asked me to go with him down to the lower Saw Mill, owned or kept by a Frenchman. James Buel urged me not to go with him but as I had nothing to do, I went. On the way down I learned from Rook that there was a negro at the Mill he wanted to steal, but the fellow was not quite willing to go, and Rook wanted my aid in getting him off. When we got nearly to the mill we met another negro belonging to the same owner and enquired where we could find the boy we wanted to see. The negro man we met suspected our purpose, and told us we could not see him until night, but if we would remain concealed in the field at night he would come to us and take us where we could see him. We remained in the field until night; but in the mean time the negro we had met told his master and they laid a plan to catch us. When night came on this negro came to us in the field and took us to a cow-house, a short distance from the owner's residence; all the avenues of escape had been closed but the door by which we went in. Around the house the owner and the men from the mill were placed with guns, the intention being when we got in to capture us. We went in and Rook commenced talking to the boy about running away. I did not like much going to the house, and kept a sharp look out.—I soon saw some of the men about the door and as soon as I saw them I broke and ran. They cried out to me to stop or they would shoot me. I however, did not obey them but ran on. One of them discharged a load of shot into my legs, but having on woollen pantaloons did not affect the skin much. I ran on and soon

placed myself beyond the reach of apprehension. Rook was captured and in time sent to the penetentiary, I believe for life or a long term.

I first saw Charles Brown, the man who has been condemned with me, in New Orleans some weeks before Gen. Jackson visited there to lay the corner stone of the monument. Brown had been on the St. Louis steamboat as a barber, but had left her. He had some way heard of me and came one day to the store. He talked to me some time, but generally kept a good way off; and as I did not know any thing about him, I was rather shy of him. During our conversations at subsequent periods he informed me that his principal business was to run away slaves, and that he was in the employ of the Abolition Society; told me how he accomplished it, and said that when the steamboat Captains would not take them on board for him, he got some white man to go on board and engaged their passage. He wanted me to run off and from his proposing this to me, as I knew a good deal about the coaxing of negroes off, I did'nt believe much in him. After some time I tried him another way, my object was to ascertain if he was a black leg. One day when he was talking to me, I asked him for the loan of $100 until the next day. This he readily lent me, and the next day I returned him a $50 bill he had lent me, and $50 in silver. He wished me to keep it longer but I declined. He told me I could have 4 or $500 whenever I wanted it. After that, became pretty intimate friends

Shortly after getting acquainted with Brown, we laid a plan for robbing old Capt. Barker, a broker in New Orleans, nearly opposite the City Hotel. We accomplished it in the following manner. Brown, a negro man called Henry Diamond, James Buel and myself went one Sunday night in the back way from Front street. Diamond and I went

and opened the window and went in, Buel and Brown watching. Brown afterwards came in with a crow bar and we forced open the iron chest. We got in all about $1500 in silver; part of it we put into a bucket and part into a box and carried it off to a room at the corner of Old Basin and Canal streets where we divided it.

The Buels and myself robbed a linen store on Chartres street; the owners name I do not know. James made a key to fit the door lock, and just at day-break, for we were afraid to attempt it before on account of the lamps on that street, we went in, took some 30 or 40 pieces of linen, and $150 in money. I took 4 pieces and the Buels the rest. One of the pieces I had made up into shirts, the others I sold to two Spaniards who kept a coffee store on the corner of Gravier and Levee streets, called Natchez and John, for $6 a piece. When old man Buel was arrested, some of this linen was found under his house with many other things, and assisted in sending him to the penitentiary.

Subsequently, we robbed a nice little linen stare on the corner of Bienville and Bourbon streets. In this there was engaged the two Buels, myself, and a black boy called Ossa Williams, who formerly belonged to Mr. Clark, who resided at the corner of Carondelet and Girard streets, and kept a store in Poydras street. Mr. Clark sold Ossa to an old Spaniard who attended the market. There were two locks on the door, but Buel unlocked both with his keys. There was a bull dog in the store; he barked a little while we were at work at the door, but when we went in he did not offer to interrupt us. This was just after the clerks had gone to supper. The old man took 3 pieces, James 5, I took 19 and Ossa 17. We gave the boy Ossa 4 pieces, I took 6 for my share, and the Buels kept the balance. I sold mine to a man living near the Catholic Church or old Calaboose.

I do not know the period, but some time after Mr. Winston had been burnt out on New Levee and had moved higher up the street, Buel made a key and robbed his store. Buel had lived with Mr. Winston before he came to Mr. Blanchard, and he knew the shape of the key. We took out about $250 in money, 4 hams, a box of tea and a pair of young men's gold spectacles, which were made a present of to old Mrs. Buel. We then locked the front door and went out at the back door, which we left unfastened.

We robbed Godfrey, Laurie & Small, living on Gravier street, on the left hand side going up, in the following manner: James, myself, and a negro boy they had hired about the store called Jones, but whose real name was York, went into the store about dusk and hid amongst a pile of corn sacks. This was on Saturday. Soon after the clerks left, we went to the counting room and forced open a drawer and found the key of the iron chest. In the chest there was but about $30 in money. We took a box containing some bank checks or notes, but they were of no value to us, at least not to me.

James and I went down to a Mr. Florence's, residing in French town, said to be a wealthy man. His house was large and contained several rooms. It was yet daylight when I stole in, the front door being open; went to a room adjoining Mr. F's bed chamber and hid myself under the bed. The bed was unoccupied. James kept watch on the other side of the street. After Mr. F. had gone to bed and got to sleep, I stole softly to the door of his chamber, which was unlocked, his pantaloons lay on a chair near the door, I took out of his pocket $850 in money, and went out without disturbing him.

There was a gentleman living in a large frame house in Julia street, whom we concluded to rob. There was with James and myself in this, a negro from Charleston,

about as smart as Charles Brown, called Buck. We had a good deal of talk about it before we tried it. Buck professed to have a great deal of experience, and James and I were anxious to see what he knew. Buck said he could go in at the window so sly as not to disturb the family, but in his attempt he failed; the man wakened and we had to make off. I then said that I could go in, and the rest did not believe it. Some time afterwards I went to an old negro man who attends the sick at Dr. Stone' Hospital, and asked him to give me something to make a man sleep so sound that I could go into his house and do what I wanted and come out without his knowing it. The old man offered to give me it, but asked me a hundred dollars for it. After a good deal of bargaining I gave him his price and he gave me something like a piece of tallow candle, about an inch long and very soft. He told me I could not light it with a match, but must light it with a coal or the end of a segar; On the night appointed, we went to the house; at the door I tried my candle and found it worked as the old man said. With a string and piece of wire I unlocked the front door. The key was in the key hole on the inside. And here I may remark that it is generally as easy or easier to unlock a door where the key is left in the key hole on the inside, than if it is not in, for with a piece of wire and a string you can make the key do what, otherwise, you might have to get a false key to do. The string is packed on the extremity of the fulcrum of the key, and by pressing the wire against that, it will force back the bolt. After unlocking the door, I stole softly into the gentleman's bed chamber, which was on the first floor; a candle was burning, which I took out of the stick and put mine in its place and then set it on a chair by the bed. I waited for some time for the effect promised by the old negro and then set the doors wide open, called Buck in; and

we took a large mahogany wardrobe which stood in the room and carried it out on the pavement. We unlocked the doors and got $700. James had been watching on the other side of the street. He came over and we three went back into the room, opened the sideboard and took a glass of wine. I went the bed and raised the musqueto bar, and saw the man and his wife both fast asleep, laying very lovingly. We took his watch and left. In a short time after I got out, the man wakened and cried thieves most stoutly. I do not know, nor do I pretend to say, that the candle produced this effect; but as to their sleeping so sound, and of our taking out the wardrobe, there is no question. The candle produced smoke which filled the room, and gave rather a disagreeable smell.

I assisted in robbing an old man who kept a large grocery store at the corner of Poydras and Tchapitoulas streets. This was done by an arrangement between me and a watchman, who beat on Tchapitoulas street. The watchman's name I don't know, but he keeps a little grog shop and grocery store down in Frenchtown, lives between Chartres and Royal streets and Rampart and St. Peters streets. His grocery store is in front and his family resides in the rear. The robbery was performed by myself, a negro boy called Toney belonging to an Irishman named Michael Mare, and a boy called John Brown who belonged to Joseph Landes. Mare's store adjoined the store we intended robbing, so we went though into Mare's back yard, climbed over the wall into the yard in rear of the grocery store and forced open the back door, which was only fastened by a hook. We took out for ourselves 8,000 Spanish segars, 2 baskets Champaign and 4 or 5 bottles of cherries. There was no money in the store. For the watchman who stood guard all the while and kept the other watch from that part of the street we took some segars, 6 boxes

No. 1 soap, 10 boxes sperm candles, 2 baskets sweet oil, a box of catsup and some demijohns of brandy. The watchman loaded his on a cart just about the time the carts commenced passing going to market and took them to his house. I took the segars we had and carried them to a Spaniard named Antonie, who kept a Coffee House opposite the New Basin, and sold them for $10 the thousand. This Antonie, now lives in Natchez. I dealt a good deal with him in stolen articles. He as well as the others we sold to, knew very well that the things were stolen but they never asked any questions.

Buel and I got acquainted with a white man who lived in a store on Granvier street, Sylvester and Capt. English I think were the owners. I never heard any other name, for this man than Jim. He is now or was lately in the employ of Capt. Harper of the jail, in the 2d Municipality, as a watchman. With this man we formed a plan to rob the store of Mr. Castilo on Gravier street, next door to my master's store. We went up through the scuttle window of my master's store on the roof, and down through the scuttle window into Castilo's store. We however, only succeeded in getting about $40. There was a bag containing about $1500 in gold which the clerk had thrown into his trunk, but we did not look there.

From the store we went down to Spanish John's in French Town, where we divided the money. That night we formed a plot for carrying on a regular business of robbing. The plan, to make more security about it as well as to be able to find places where there was money, was for Jim to get in to be a city watchman. As I was then about to leave for St. Louis, this arrangement was to be made by the time I got back, when we were to go to work. Before my return from St. Louis, however, or rather before my

master was ready to return, the Buel's were both arrested for burglary and I was left in St. Louis.

This is a history of most of the robberies I was ever engaged in that I can recollect, and embraces all of any note I ever committed in that city. I was suspected of many which I never had any hand in, and I was never suspected of the principal ones that I was engaged in. I never, during all the time, committed murder or set any house on fire, or assisted in setting any on fire, except as before stated.

Abijah Fisk, once lost 30 or 40 dollars in money and his miniature in a gold case. I was suspected and accused. I knew who had done it, but would not tell. His own boy William stole them as he had told me. He sold the miniature to a big Spaniard who sells vegetables in the market. I saw the case once afterwards.

The Grocery store of La Ville Beurre & Walton commonly called Placide & Walton, was robbed or attempted, of which I was accused but was not guilty. Henry Dimond hid himself in the store, and when the clerk went after dark to a boat with some letters, Henry tried to unlock the chest, but could not. The clerk returned for his umbrella and struck a light, when Henry trotted out past him, taking with him the key of the chest but leaving behind his shoes and hat. Some negroes standing in the boarding house door above saw him running down street and thought it was me; Placide accused me of it but on trying on the shoes and hat neither fitted me. Henry told me all about it the next morning before Placide called.

My master's store was twice robbed whilst I lived with him, but I knew nothing of it until after it was done, nor do I know certainly who did it, but I always believed the

Buel's and some of their gang did. They knew very well, that bad as I was I would not assist in injuring my master. In truth I never did knowingly wrong him to the amount of one cent, and would as soon have stolen from myself. He was ever indulgent and gave me all I wanted. I accused the Buel' of it and questioned them about it—they never confessed it but answered in such a manner as convinced me they were guilty. I told my master that I believe they did it.

I knew a great many white men, blacklegs and pickpockets, and on several occasions have assisted them by receiving a pocket book or watch which they had stolen in a crowd; but these matters so far as I ever had any hand in them were very small, and would be tedious to detail.

As the foregoing completes the detail of the principal events of my career of crime in New Orleans, it may be well to inform the reader of what disposition I made of the money which I obtained. I never gambled and I never got drunk; but I drank liquor regularly, seldom indulging beyond my usual number of glasses, one in the morning, at noon and night. I always dressed fine and took any other indulgence I desired. It would be impossible to tell all the money I spent with woman. In one case I got into a French family, passing myself off as a free man, I proposed marrying the youngest of four daughters. I courted her some time and in three weeks lavished on her and her sisters, in dress, rides, &c., &c., upwards of $300. I finally got her and her mother's consent to our marriage. I cohabited with her a month or two and left her. Similar affairs of this kind took a large share of my means.

There was a Madam La Blair, a white woman and a prostitute, with whom I spent much money, and to whom I gave a great many things. She lived in a large brick house on Burbon street, and was esteemed very wealthy. She had several servants to whom she was excessively cruel. She killed some of them by whipping and buried them in the yard. She had a yellow girl about the house with whom I got first acquainted, and to whom I gave a good many costly presents. This lead to an acquaintance with Madam herself and she made me her bed fellow for some time. Before and afterwards she slept with her coachman. I spent a great deal of money with her and gave her a great many pieces of silk, linen, &c., which I stole. She was always very good to me, and loaned me money whenever I wanted it. A mob was finally raised against her because of her treatment of her slaves and she was compelled to run off.

Some years after Mr. Blanchard purchased me, I got acquainted with a girl called Serena White, a slave of Doctor Davidson. She was a washerwoman. After a long courtship we took up together and lived together as man and wife some five or six years. After she took up with me, she left off washing and I rented a house and lived in as comfortable style as I could. I generally, had a house that cost me from $30 to $50 rent per month. I also paid hire for Serena's time. And during her pregnancy I hired servants. My friends, white and black, but there were more of the whites than blacks, came to see me frequently, and I treated them as well as I could—frequently gave dinner parties. I had two children by Serena—the first died when about a week old, the other is still living, and is named William Henderson. Serena was much attached to the Doctor and his children. One of them, a worthless fellow got a good deal of my money by loans from

her. The Doctor himself, a short time before his death, borrowed $500 of her which he was to have repaid but did not. I paid the Doctor before my second child was borne, $100, for which he was to set it free. He gave me a receipt to that effect. I left it with Serena, but after the doctor's death his children took it from her and I suppose will not free the child. In a short time they put her in jail to keep her and me from living together.

During the time I kept Serena, I had intercourse with a good many other women. I had a child by a little girl belonging to a French woman. The mistress set the child free and sent it to France with one of her children. After she set it free, I made her a present of one hundred dollars, and made many valuable presents to the child and its mother.

I seldom was without money, but my expenses were heavy, and I had but little to support them except what I made by the means I have mentioned.

I deem it but justice to my own feelings to say, that I never willingly engaged in any robbery where there was a negro slave entrusted with the custody of the property, for I could not bear to get them into trouble when I knew they had so few means of protection; and when ever any thing of the kind is done, and slaves are about, they are certain to be suspected. It is true I have been engaged in cases of the kind, but it was always because the plan had been laid by others, and there was no use of backing out. If I did not do it, some other one would.

Of the principal partners, old man Buel and Rook have been sentenced to the Penitentiary. James Buel has been arrested the second time for burglary and I presume will be found guilty. Learned has been arrested, I understood for passing counterfeit

money or counterfeiting, and it is probable will go a term of service to the State prison. They were all arrested in New Orleans after my leaving except Rook. And here am I.

Some time in July 1840, my master went east to Boston and other places and I came to St. Louis. I was to be under the control of Mr. Shaw. I remained with Mr. Shaw in all about two months working for him and I then left and shipped on board the S. B. Agnes, as a cabin boy. On board of this boat I first got acquainted with James Seward. We called him Sewell. Prime Bruce was first cook and Seward second. On the way up to St. Peters, Bruce, Seward and myself got pretty well acquainted. I staid on the boat near two months, and during the time made a trip as high up the Mississippi as St. Peters, stoping at Galena, Du Buque and other towns. One night at Galena, the boat laid up. That night Bruce, Seward and myself formed a plan to rob the store of Messrs. Campbell & Truet. When it was late enough we went up. We knew nothing of the store, hoisted the window, which had very little protection, and I went in; Bruce came in after me and Seward remained outside to watch. There was a little iron chest there, a very shackling concern, and with a bar of iron we forced open the door. We got 1260 dollars. This we divided amongst us three. This was as the boat was going up. When the boat returned to St. Louis we all left her, Seward started for Pittsburg and Bruce for Cincinnati, where he said he lived.

At the time of leaving St. Louis, I expected my master here shortly, and I left work with Mrs. Brown, a girl who had lived at Mr. Shaws, now with Mr. Paschall, to tell him if he came that I would be back in a short time and not to go until I returned. When I returned here I met him. He had been a good deal distressed at my absence. In a few

days he went down to New Orleans with the understanding that I was to come down immediately. I did go down in about four days afterwards in the Meteor. My master had nothing for me to do and I staid but a few days after which I returned to St. Louis on the S. B. Louisville. I remained about a week at Mr. Shaw's after my return, when Mrs. Shaw having returned home I left and went to the house of Leah to board. Leah is a colored washer woman, the wife of Peter Charleville, both free, living on Third Street below the National Hotel.

Here I was for the first time introduced to Edward Ennis, one day at dinner. Ennis boarded there, but slept with a girl, up near the North Market, called Isabela Wright. After I went to Leah's I bought a bed of Mr. Shaw and gave him five dollars for it. This I took into a room in Leah's house, made a present of it to her, but was to sleep on it as long as I staid there. Ennis shortly afterwards asked permission to sleep with me, when he was not with his girl, which was granted. Soon after my acquaintance with Ennis, he began to open his mind and tell of speculation we could make by robbing. At first I kept very shy of him. He proposed several things which after talking about were never attempted.

The first proposition he made to me was for us to join and rob the grocery store of the Messrs. Jameson's on Market Street, a little above George Johnson's barber shop. Jameson shaved at that shop and Ennis had learned from him that he had money. Being afraid of Ennis I did not attempt it.

He next proposed that we should rob Col. Brant's house up near the North Market. He said that Col. Brant's negro boy had told him that his master had a large

amount of money, which was in a drawer in a bureau in the basement story, where the Col. Kept his office, and that the family slept up stairs; he had also informed him how we could get in. One night we went and examined the house but did not go in. There was a hack or carriage at the door and some company up stairs. I was opposed to robbing the house because the Colonel had slaves, who I thought would be accused; and besides I understood that there were several woman about the house.

Some time afterwards we agreed to rob the store of J. R. Scott, in a new brick building on Third street, south of the North Market, the buildings of Colonel Brant. The buildings were not quite finished. Before this, Seward had returned from Pittsburg. Ennis went and found out all about the store and told us, but on the night staid at the shop. Warrick , Seward and myself went, raised the back window and got in. I went in first and Alfred followed me, Seward watched. We got about $12 in money and took several pieces of broad cloth, some silks and domestic goods, I judge in all about $500 worth, and left. The goods we gave to Peter and Ennis to sell and they went to St. Charles to sell them. How they disposed of them I never knew as we never had a settlement.

Some short time after this Peter, Ennis and myself determined to rob the store of Mr. Gooddell & Co., on Market street, next door to the Museum. This house was not finished; there were no blinds to the back windows. Ennis who had examined the store, said there was a good deal of money there.—One night we went into the alley between the store and the Catholic Church. The man in the store blew out his candle and went to supper. I went and forced up the window sash, struck a light with a match, lit the candle

and opened the back door. Ennis then came in, Peter staid out to watch. We got between $20 and $25 in change out of the drawer. We understood he had more money in the room he slept in but we could not find the room. We took about $500 worth in silks, silk handkerchiefs, domestics, &c., Peter and Ennis carried the goods away and I remained and shut the door.

About five or six weeks afterwards we paid the same store a second visit. The back door was secured by a small bolt, which was easily forced off. We again got about $20 in money and about an equal amount in goods. These goods were all placed in the hands of Peter and Ennis to sell, and they spoke of carrying them to St. Charles, over the river, to Carondelet and Kaskaskia. Where or how they did dispose of them I do not know.

About this time, Leah was washing for guests at the National Hotel. One day she told Ennis and myself that a gentleman from the south had made her certain propositions, that when she refused to gratify him he put his money in his pocketbook and put it in his trunk—that he had a large sum. She told me his room, over Johnsons Drug store, and when he went to supper, I took the trunk and carried it to Leah's house. We opened it but there was no money in it. Ennis got a pistol with revolving barrels, a bowieknife, a set of razors all fitting one handle and some clothes &c. The gentleman had a miniature of a handsome lady in it a plain box, this Ennis destroyed. The papers Ennis throwed into the fire. I was so much disappointed in not getting the money that I would have carried the trunk back if they would have agreed to it. About this time Peter did not stay very much at Leah's for he thought Ennis was to intimate with her.

Seward, Ennis and myself robbed the grocery store of Braun & Hollander on Main street in the brick row below Walnut street on the right hand side as you go down. There was snow on the ground at the time. Ennis said he knew, but how I did not learn, that there was $5,000 in the store. When the man went to supper we went to the back door, I forced out the transom sash over the back door and got in, opened the back door and let in the others. The money was in a Liverpool patent safe which cant be opened by a crowbar; and as the key was not there we could not get into it. We got a few dollars, probably twenty five dollars in the drawer under the counter. Ennis and Seward took about 25 linen shirts and a suit of clothes from his sleeping room, and we took two boxes segars. When we were about to leave, Ennis proposed that I should stay and when the man came in kill him and get the key from him and thus get the money, but I refused. It was next proposed to burn the house, and this I opposed. The others seemed so bent on it that I made them take the plunder and leave before me for fear they would fire it. The next day Ennis read from a newspaper an advertisement of the robbery in which it was stated that there was $5000 in the safe which the robbers did not get.

After this, Warrick, Seward and myself robbed a small dry goods store on the opposite side of the street. When the man went to supper, we were in the rear of the store. We drew out the staple which holds the upper end of the bar arcoss the window. We took from the store about $25 in money and about $100 worth of goods.

During the winter and cold weather, Peter, Ennis, Warrick, Seward and myself talked frequently of robbing different stores but did not attempt any but what I have mentioned. Towards spring or the breaking up of the ice, Brown came on from

Cincinnati. When it was thought a boat could get up to Galena, Brown, Seward and myself left on the S. B. Agnes; Warrick was to have gone along but could not get ready. When we reached Fever river the ice was not out and the passengers were landed on an Island, the boat going on to Du Buque, we crossed in a skiff to the shore and went up by land to Galena. After being there a few days, I left Brown and Seward and took my passage in the stage for Chicago. I went to Chicago to see an old friend named Morris, a barber. He was absent. I saw there several blacklegs, whom, both white and colored men, I knew and they knew me; and after looking round a day or two I resolved to leave without attempting anything. Some of them asked me my business there, and I told them I was running off to Canada. I returned in the stage to Galena, and we resolved to rob the bank. When we were talking about it Brown was for killing the men in the bank, but I could see no use in it and opposed it.

There were four men slept in the bank, two up stairs, and two down. One of those up stairs was the Episcopal Clergyman. We had watched round and learnt where they all slept. On the night agreed upon we went to the rear window next the tavern, which we easily opened, no shutters on it. I went in, opened the door and let the others in. There was a man up stairs sick, at least he was frequently up and walking about, and fearing discovery from him we dare not work at the vault. Whilst we were waiting for him to get asleep, daylight broke, and we concluded that if we got the money out of the vault we could not carry it away without being seen. If we had had half an hour more time we could have got all we wanted, for the vault would have been easily opened. I went out, Brown lighted some papers and put them in the drawers and desks and set the house on

fire. We were only in the Front room and the room the vault is in. We made nothing by this attempt.

A few nights afterwards we went up on the hill to the store of Mr. Stillman, and when the man in the store left it we went in by the back window. We took 20 or $30 which was in the drawer, and left. We did not try his iron chest for we supposed he had carried his money away.

When in Galena, we mostly staid at a house kept by a man called Lewis Patton, but spent a number of days in the country.

Shortly after robbing Mr. Stillman, we took passage and came to St. Louis on the S. B. Illinois. After my return I again stopped at Leah's. A proposition was made by Ennis after our return to try the bank at Alton. He said he had lived there and knew all about it, and we could do it easily.—I refused, said I had travelled about a good deal and had made nothing, and I would go to no more little towns. I thought the best chance was in the large cities. The subject of robbing Mr. Pettus' counting house was again renewed and frequently pressed by Ennis. He urged that if we could get into Mr. P's. we could make enough to last us the balance of our lives. During these discussions, Ennis, of his own accord, got the crow-bar made, which was afterwards used.

Peter and Ennis both insisted there was a good sum of money in the store of Sinclair Taylor & Co., and one night we concluded to try it. Brown, Warrick, Seward and myself went down to the door that opens in the rear on the alley. The door was easily pushed open, being fastened only by a small bolt; we went into the counting room and in a drawer found the key of the iron safe which we unlocked; we got 40 or $50. This was

all the money we could find and when I was satisfied of that I left. Some of the rest were looking for something else but I did not stay to see what they got. I had no suspicion that they thought of firing the house; if I had suspected they intended it I would have staid and prevented it, for there was no use in it.

About this time or shortly afterwards, Peter Charleville was working for Messrs. E. & A. Tracy on the wharf, and said that Mr. Tracy had received eighteen hundred dollars, which was in the safe. The four above mentioned went that night into the rear of the store and forced off the bolt of one of the rear window shutters, and got in. We went up stairs into the counting room and laid the iron chest down on its side, looked at it a little spell, and then with the bar Ennis had made and a smaller bar, which we broke in the operation and threw away afterwards, prized off the nobs or nails. In this way we took off the bars all round the door of the chest. It is no trouble to open one of those safes that have large nobs all over them, the nails have nothing to hold to and the nobs helps you to get a purchase on them to pull them out. Peter had told us that Tracy had the key, we did no look for it—We commenced operating at half past eight, and in an hour or more had the money out. There was only $254 in the chest and a silver cup with an inscription on it. We all seated ourselves on the floor, took a basket of Champaign, over which Brown said a ceremony or prayer and we drank till we were satisfied. When I left I set the silver cup on the desk and told Brown to leave it, as it did not belong to Mr. Tracy and had been prepared as a present for some body, but Brown would not leave it.

This was the second time we had been in Tracy's store. The first time, about two weeks previous, we had no tools to work with and consequently got nothing.

In the early part of the week Mr. Pettus' house was robbed, we five, that is Brown, Warrick, Seward, Ennis and myself met, and after some consultation agreed to try Mr. Pettus on Friday night. It was no part of our plan to do more than take the money. Our intentions were to watch when the young men went to supper, go in and get the money and be off before he came back. We did not, or at least I did not know how the store was built; and from Ennis I understood that the money was kept in a safe or chest in the room next the one the young men slept in. On Friday night, we all met on the river bank, near the corner and consulted some time, and then passed up Pine st., passed the door, but there were several persons in the counting room and we gave it up.

Next day we were frequently talking about it when by ourselves, and about supertime we four and Ennis all met in Second street in front of Mr. Willi's house, between that and the Catholic Church. Ennis again urged that Mr. Pettus, was the best haul we could make. He said he had seen money carried in there the day before, lots of it. He also insisted that there was but one man slept in the store and that he kept the keys. Finally, it was proposed to go down and kill this one man and rob the store. I don't know who made the proposition, but it was made and acceded to by all, instantly. It was not over a minute after the proposition was made until we started off. Ennis did not go along for the reason that on Saturday night his absence from the shop would be noticed. Besides he had agreed to provide a place to conceal the money we might get. He had represented that the money was in square boxes or kegs and each man could bring a box away with him.—We went directly down the street, past the Church to the river bank and up Front street to the street on which the store is. Here we stopped a little while and then

went up Pine, to Main street at the corner of Mr. Charless'. We then went down to the corner on Front st. again. Here we crossed over to the north side of the street, and came up that side to the alley opposite Mr. Pettus' door. We then passed over towards the door. Before this there had been no agreement or understanding who was to kill the young man, but as we crossed over. Brown, who had the crow-bar, handed it to me and a bankbill and said: "You go in first, show him this bill and give him the first lick and we will do the rest."

The proposition staggered me a little at first, for it was the first time I ever thought of killing a man, but as I always had been the first, I did not like to hold back, and without a moments reflection I took them and went in. The young man, (I have since learned that his name was Jesse Baker) was sitting down by a small desk, near the door smoking a segar, I presented him the bank bill and asked him if it was good, and as he turned his head round towards the candle, I struck him. The blow fell upon his neck and the back part of his head ranging upwards, for he was below me. The one blow knocked him off the chair on the floor speechless. It may have broken his neck though I do not know. The chief force of the blow was on the neck and collar of his coat. I did not strike him again, but went out and gave the bar to Warrick, who was next the door—he went in and struck him twice over the head—he then came out and gave the bar to Brown and he and Seward went in together—Brown struck him several times; I do not know that Seward struck him at all. Seward and Brown then hauled the body round in front of the vault. We all then went in. I looked through the rooms and could find no money. On going into Baker's sleeping room I saw two beds and on the beds, clothing for two

persons, fresh washed, and I supposed brought that evening by the wash woman; I went back and told the boys that Ennis was mistaken, that there was two men slept there, and the other would probably be in pretty soon; I took the crow bar and tried to door of the vault, and found there was no possibility of getting in. I told the boys it was no use, and if the other man came we would have to kill him, and proposed that we should go away; Brown refused possitively, said we were in for it now and as we were in we might as well go through. I then said that I would do no more killing, that the blow I had given Baker was equivalent to killing him and I would do no more. Brown said he would do it. Warrick and Seward went out to watch. I examined Bakers body for the keys, and got out of his pocket $200, part in Illinois and part in Miners Bank notes. Brown examined the drawers and desks and got some money out of one of them, but how much I do not know. There was no attempt made to bore around the vault whilst I staid; all that was done, was an attempt to force open the door.

After a while the other young man, (Jacob Weaver,) came down the street whistling. Brown went behind the door, and I stood up against the door of the vault. Brown opened the door, and Weaver stepped in. As he stepped in, Brown threw the door to, and struck him. The first blow felled him to the floor. He struggled very little, but Brown repeated the blows, I think five or six times. I could not see them from where I stood. Warrick and Seaward then came in. I told them it was no use to stay there, we could not get into the vault, and there might be some of the acquaintances of the young men who slept with them, and we might have more to kill, and I would go home. I then took the bar from Brown, and started off, leaving the three in the store.

I went directly up to Peter's house, and when I rapped, Peter opened the door and let me in. I had the bar in my hand, and laid it down by the door. Shortly after I got to bed Ennis came and rapped, and I rose and let him in. He stripped off and got into bed. After he laid down he asked how we came out. I told him there was no money in the room, as he had said there was—all the money there, was in a vault, and for our purposes might just as well be in the bank on Main street—that we might just as well try to break open the bank in the day time as to get into that vault. He asked me if we got no money at all. I told him I had got two hundred dollars, and I did'nt know what the others had got. I remarked to him at the same time that we had killed two, and that it was a shame to kill two young men for only two or three hundred dollars. He replied, that was nothing—colored people would never be suspected—all we had to do was to be cautious. I gave him the money. He got a light and divided it with Leah, Peter, himself and me. He gave Peter and Leah their's in bed. They asked no questions about it, but they knew, because every thing could be heard from one room to the other. Ennis then went and threw the bar into the privy, and returned. Shortly after this the alarm of fire was given, and he and Peter went down to it. They returned about day-light—Peter first and Ennis next. The next morning we all met at breakfast. After that was over Ennis went out—I remained in—for I did not feel well. Sometime afterwards Ennis came back, and appeared to be in fine spirits—told up they had offered $5000 reward, and that everybody suspected white people.

I remained at Peter's, or Leah's until the Thursday following. During this time, Ennis appeared to change in his conduct towards me. Before that we had drank together,

and kept our liquor together—but he appeared disposed to cut me. I did not suspect him of foul play, if I had, I would have taken him out a riding, and killed him. He advised Warrick, Seward and Brown to go away, but never said a word to me. The others told me of it, but it never occurred to me that he had any design in it; if it had, he never would have *blowed* us.

During the time I staid here I suffered a great deal in feeling. Nearly every place I visited, especially where there were white folks, I heard something good said about the two young men who had been killed, and especially Weaver. He was invariably spoken of as a young man of excellent qualities; and on one occasion I heard some men in a coffee-house speak of how kind and good he was to colored people, and it made me more sorry than anything else. I cursed myself a thousand times that I had not saved him by going away when we found we could not get into the vault. In these few days I drank more than I ever did in double the time in my life. The more I thought of it the more I drank. I was, at times, very much afraid of Warrick—he sometimes got drunk, and when so, said anything. Seward I was not afraid of, and Brown never drank anything. Finally, I concluded to go to New Orleans. Why I went I do not know, for I had no business there, but I thought it would be some relief—and I left on the steamboat Missouri.

When I got down and saw my master I was very glad, and he was so much pleased to see me that it made me feel very bad, thinking about this affair. In my former scrapes I did not care anything about them, but this would come up. I staid some days with my master. Whilst I had been absent, an indictment or something of the kind had been found against me, in connection with James Buel, for stealing Mexican goods. I

was not guilty, and had no fear to be tried, and proposed to my master to be tried then, but the principal witness was absent, and the understanding was that he would not return until fall. If they took me up on the charge I must remain in prison until fall. I then proposed to master that I would return to St. Louis, as the time was near at hand for him to go east, and in the fall, if he would come by St. Louis on his return, I would come down with him and stand my trail then, and remain with him all winter. He agreed to this arrangement, and spoke my passage on the steam boat Eliza.

On the way up I heard at Memphis, some white people tell some white persons on the boat that they had taken two white men engaged in the St. Louis murders and burning. One, they said had been taken off the Atlanta and the other off the Omega. When I heard it I felt sure that Seward and Warrick had been taken, but had no suspicion that Ennis had informed. I thought it was merely suspicion, and believed that they would have stout hearts enough not to tell anything against themselves. At Cairo I heard some more about it, and if I had wanted, could have left the boat, for captain Littleton was asleep, and no one was watching me. I however, resolved in my own mind to come right back, and go to Leah's house, and if I found that they had blowed me, I intended to stop their testimony by killing them. Besides, I thought that what I had said to Ennis was no testimony against me. I thought they could not convict me except by the oath of some one who saw me do it. I had no suspicion of any one watching me on the boat, and I don't believe they did. At least, I know if I had not made up my mind to come back I could easily have got off even after we left Commerce. When I was arrested I knew they had got the story somehow, but I thought if we all were true they could do nothing with

us. I was very much surprised when I heard how the others had told on themselves. I was also, very much astonished to find that they had Brown. I knew that he was the most daring of our party, and I thought he never would be taken. I stood out until after my trial, and then I knew the matter was over with me, and I began to think of the other world.

I have no right or reason to doubt the fairness of my trial. I believe my council, Mr. Primm, did all that the testimony warranted or the facts justified, yet, I believe it but a mere formality and I felt sure after Ennis' testimony was given in that whatever was the decision, my fate was inevitable.

My days are nearly terminated and I shall die with but two wishes ungratified. My first and most anxious desire is the forgiveness of my kind and indulgent master Mr. Blanchard. If in my carreer I have committed wrongs and injuries upon many persons, yet my life pays forfeit of them all. But the ungenerousness of my conduct towards my master—one who never treated me aught but kindness and confidence—the ungracious return I have made for all his bounties is a source of regret which the judgment of the law cannot repair. When this shall reach him I pray him to *forgive me.* I die fully concious of the wrongs I have unwittingly committed. I am unable to make any reparation, but I beg him to take my dying assurance that in no act of my life have I willingly or knowingly intended any injury to him, his feelings or property. I know my acts have brought distress on his gray hairs. If I could have known their effect before their commission—could I have foreseen that he would have been censured for acts of mine, every one of which he knew nothing and suspected nothing, I would have escaped my present unhappy

fate—for ever since I came into his employ there was no sacrifice of desires or of labor I would not have made to gratify him. But I supposed my acts my own. And my last declaration to the world is, that if my master has erred in any thing it has been in suffering himself to be deceived by me. That he has been so deceived, grossly deceived, I freely admit.

My second desire may seem unreasonable and wrong upon my part but it is in my breast and I will not die uttering a deception. It is that Ennis may *in his heart*, suffer some thing of the misery he has aided in inflicting upon his associates. I do not desire his death, but I hope that his concience may yet awaken in his bosom, that remorse I know he ought to feel. When he has suffered this he will mend his morals and become a better man and the community have peace and quietness.

To my friends of all colors, but especially those who have been associated with me, I bid a long and final farewell. Let my name be dropt from the list of those you remember with affection, but let the errors of my life and its disgraceful close stand as a warning beacon to your steps to the grave.

Adieu.

Confession of Seward

I, James W. Seward, a free man of color, having been condemned to suffer the highest penalty known to the law—desiring to quit this world in peace with all men and to leave behind me a full record of my carreer though life, make this my full and voluntary confession. My tale is brief and simple, and will probably be found to be marked by fewer crimes of a deep hue than my present condition might induce the reader to expect. But simple as it is, and unvarnished as I shall attempt to give it, I pray the reader, whatever may be his station, to peruse it attentively. It is a tale of the world. A parallel to much of my history may be found in the lived of thousands in every community. It is for these I have given it. I have not given it to gratify the curiosity of the idle or to indulge an appetite for the marvelous.

The time was when things so evanessent would have been to me some gratification, but that is past. I have closed my accounts with the world and all its joys and vanities. In a few brief hours I must stand before the awful tribunal of my God and render to him an account of all the blessings he has bestowed upon me. Alas! how basely I have abused his mercies—how negligent I have been of his precepts and how unmindful I have shown myself of his holy law, my present unhappy condition tells. But I know that my Redeemer lives, and I believe his mercies are unbounded to those who come to him with a penitent and contrite heart. In prayer and deep humiliation of spirit I have sought to prepare for meeting my justly offended God, and ere I enter on that untried state I would, as the only reparation now in my power to make to the violated laws of that

God and my country, warn those whom I leave upon the stage of life, of the dangers of vice, and the necessity of forsaking the wickedness of the world.

To me, God has been merciful and bounteous. I have shared liberally in his blessings and his favors, but my heart was depraved, and I disregarded the source from whence those blessings flowed. With indifference and a callous mind I trampled on his laws, and violated with impunity his most holy commandments—I tasted the bitter sweets of the cup of wickedness, I drank again and again—I wandered on, step by step, further and further into the depths of vice, folly and crime—the admonitions of the good were unheeded—the warnings of conscience were drowned in the revels of pleasure—I looked forward to a long life of iniquitous enjoyment—I felt free from detection, and the commission of one crime but led to the commission of another—in the whirl of sensual passions and enjoyments I forgot the early precepts of my parents and rolled sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue—the end of all this is disgrace, death, and the fearful meeting of the judgment of an offended God. Sinner, my fate may be yours. He that is traveling the slippery ways of iniquity, knows not how soon he may fall into the very depths of crime. Take warning, then, ere the hour of mercy is past; turn and seek, whilst the day yet holds out that righteousness which comes from on high, which alone can make your days on this stage of existence happy and honorable, and your life hereafter a glorious immortality.

In giving my history, I must necessarily allude to many of those who have been, by accident or design, associated with the incidents of my life. I pray them not to think I have done so through levity. Standing as I now do, at the portals of eternity, it is no time

to trifle; and I would warn those to take heed whilst there is yet time for escape. The immunity which I believed I enjoyed from detection, encouraged me to the commission of other crimes; but I now know, by the bitterest experience, that although the wicked may escape for a time they cannot throw over their dark deeds a veil thick enough to conceal them from the eye of God, nor can they always escape his judgments. Sooner or later, their evil acts will be exposed and punished.

I was born in Whitestown, Oneida county, New York, on the 26th day of June, A. D. 1813. My father, James Seward, formerly resided in Philadelphia and removed to New York state a short time before my birth. He was a farmer and owned property in the vicinity of the town. I however, know nothing personally of him, for he died in the year 1815. My mother, Hannah, had two children by my father, a sister about four years older than myself. After my father's death my mother sold her farm and removed to the town. As soon as I was of sufficient age, I was sent to the common school and continued there until I was 9 years old. During this period, being tolerably quick, I acquired the rudiments of a common English education. I was then sent to the academy and continued there perfecting my previous studies until I was 12 years old.

I possessed a wayward disposition and a very excitable temper, and my mother being indulgent and not having labor for me, suffered me to do pretty much as I pleased. Except attending school I had no employment, and my idle hours were dissipated with other boys of the town, often in mischief. From indulging in this idleness I early became averse to labor and restive under any restraint. My mother, in fact, had but little control over me, and could only influence me by kindness and persuasion. I loved her dearly,

and when she approached me with kindness, I implicitly obeyed her wishes: but I could not be driven to do the most insignificant act.

About this period my mother married a man by the name of Amos Mason, living in Oswego county, a farmer and a man of respectable property. When mother moved to her husband's residence, she intended leaving me with my grandmother at Whitestown. Her husband however conceived a fondness for me and insisted on my going with him, promising to be to me a father. I resisted the change for a time, for I did not like to give up the amusements and idleness of a town life for the labor and seclusion of a residence on a farm. My grandmother determining to remove to the same section, I had no alternative but to go with my step-father. I went and agreed to live with him until I was twenty-one, when he was to set me up in business for myself. I continued to work on his farm during the summer months, and from October to April he sent me to school. In this way I continued until I was sixteen.

My step-father was an educated man, of studious and religious habits. He had a number of valuable books, and also an interest in the town library. Being secluded from my former associations and amusements, with the council and advice of my step father, I soon became passionately fond of reading. I read not only histories, but many philosophical works, and a number of religious works. During this period I established in my own mind a set of religious principles, and from my reading and frequent conversations on the subject with pious and intelligent men, I fortified my belief so well and became so conversant with the subject, that they and I believed I really had true religion. My step-father was indulgent. He had two daughters by my mother but no son,

and his feelings seemed to run out to me as warmly as if I had been his own child. He seldom attempted to coerce me by force, but generally reasoned with me. From these combined influences I soon became, from the restless and ruthless boy, a studious, quiet young man. My old temper was greatly subdued, and but seldom broke out in its old violent bursts. I was, nevertheless, very ignorant of the world and practical life.

When I was about 17 years of age I went to Syracuse to keep school.—Soon after my arrival there I learned that my religion was not real, for I soon discovered that the things of the world, which were sinfull, were not abhorent to my feelings. I indulged in vicious propensities, became acquainted with woman and indulged in criminal connexion with them—visited the theatre and did many other evil things, but the only compunctious visitings I experienced was the fear of detection and exposure. I did not dislike the evil because it was of itself wrong. As to drinking, swearing and other fashionable crimes I looked on them as degrading.

I returned home the summer following but still kept up appearances, being unwilling to would the feelings of my parents. This restraint however soon grew excessively irksome, so much so that at times I could scarcely control my feelings. I at length besought my step-father to suffer me to go to Baldwinsville where my brother-in-law Charles Reed resided, to spend the winter. He consented and I went in the month of October and remain during the winter, visiting my parents sometimes but never for more than a day or two. During the winter, my brother-in-law's opinions of moral duty did much to shake my faith and undermine my principles. He held to the doctrine, that the world was dishonest and that it was the right of every man to live without labor it he

could make a living any other way. That all men practised in their trading and intercourse with each other greater or less fraud, and it was perfectly fair and right. That it was only the weak minded and ignorant who depend on gaining property and wealth by the drudgery of labor. He frequently spoke of my acquirements and the means I possessed by my education to live happily and obtain wealth easier than by manual labor. As he was much older than me, about thirty years of age, it may well be expected that his opinions had much influence. During the winter I employed most of my time in imitating signatures and became so expert that I could, after a few attempts, counterfeit any signature.

During that winter I also learned to play cards and played frequently for money; I studied the games of faro and rolette very thoroughly and was very expert in betting on either. When I visited my mother she frequently questioned my as to my employment, but I always answered evasively and turned her conversation as quickly as possible to something else. I left Baldwinsville in April and I determined to try my fortune. I set out with the intention of living by my ingenuity and wits. I resolved to cheat the world as much as possible, but at the same time as firmly resolved not to commit any henious offence, I intended to support myself in an easy life by what I understood to be fashionable rascality—such as gambling, cheating in trade, &c. I made my first essay before leaving Baldwinsville.

I owed my tailor a bill and several small debts, I had not money enough to meet these, so I forged a note on Mr. ____ ____, due in ninety days, and deposited it with a broker as colatearl security, promising to lift it before it was due. Upon this I raised

$100, out of which I paid the tailor part of his bill and gave my note for the balance at 60 days.

I then went to Oswego, but carefully avoided those I had formerly known; there I hired as a waiter, and after a month went to a boarding house; shortly after this I won $100 at cards, and meeting the tailor from Baldwinsville paid off his note—I then went to Kingston in Canada. I here ventured to counterfeit a note in my own favor on a man residing in the vicinity, for £100, payable at sight after sixty days. I hypothecated the note with a broker and procured on it a loan of £60. As soon as I became in possession of this sum I returned to Baldwinsville and lifted the counterfeit note I had left there. This was in the spring—I spent the months of June and July, in visiting different towns and playing the gentleman according to my conceptions of the character. I returned to Oswego in July and remained there until in August. Then I visited Peterboro' and Chittenango, played cards whenever opportunity offered. In the latter place, I remember well of stripping a barber of $50. Soon after I went to Syracuse to attend the races. Whilst here, fortune played with me as if she had marked me for her victim. She opened by almost a touch, and lavished upon me her rich favors in such a manner that I was completely captivated with her bounty, and made a willing slave to her temptations.

During the races I bet freely and even loosely, yet won on nearly every thing. At rolette I was very successful and soon found myself in possession of upwards af $500 as the products of my winnings. To avoid the detection of the means by which I had raised money in Kingston. I immediately sent money enough to the broker to lift the £100 note I had hypothecated with him, and pay his usurous interest.

I spent a few days sporting and carousing in Geneva and retired to Jordan. Here I played cards with one Jim Loyd, a barber, and after various success, fortune seemed bent on jilting me and in a little time he broke me, striping me of every cent I had, and every thing I could stake. Maddened by my ill success I made a firm resolution to quit gambling and try working for a living. The plan of raising money by pledging counterfeit notes was too liable to detection, and gave me so much uneasiness in the cases I had attempted, that I resolved not to attempt it again.

I returned to Baldwinsville and hired with Mr. ____ ____, as a servant.—My duties were menial but light, and I soon became displeased with the idea of living in that character. I thought it degrading and I had already tasted so much of the pleasures of a roving life that I soon began to feel a desire to return to it. I determined to leave him, and would have done so in a short time, but by accident rather more than design on either side, within a few days after entering his employ, I became entangled in an intrigue with a white female of his family. It was a long time before I accomplished my purposes; my feelings of pride became involved in my success and I remained with him in all from two to three months. At length when I had succeeded I became alarmed at what might be the consequences, and the anxieties I then suffered more than counterbalanced any former pleasures. I revolved my former course attentively over in my mind and resolved to abandon it and go to work. In all my course thus far, although I had enjoyed life to the full extent of my desires, yet, I had accumulated nothing and was as destitute as when I set out. I reflected on the consequence of continuing this course, and especially if I should take sick or otherwise be rendered unable to continue the practices I had been

pursuing. I then determined, very firmly, to brake off, to learn a trade and follow it for the future. I accordingly left my employer and joined a shoemaker. A few days work in his shop, its dull and monotonous round disatisfied me with the trade and I threw up my engagement.

This was in the month of January, and I determined to spend the winter at school. With this determination I went to Peterboro' and studied book keeping. In the spring I was informed a Mr. Rose in Susquehannah county, Pennsylvania, desired to engage colored hands to work on his farm. Two friends and myself determined to visit him, and if we liked his wages and employment to engage with him. I went more for the amusement than with a view of working. We accordingly took the stage which runs through the Chenango valley and Binghampton, and went down; but like boys who ride down hill on a hand sled, we rode down to walk back. When we arrived there we all engaged for the summer, and returned home to make the necessary arrangements for staying with him. Before leaving I succeeded in inducing Mr. Rose to loan, or rather advance me $30. I travelled on foot with my companions, for I did not wish to let them know how much I had raised out of Mr. Rose.

I returned home, visited my parents, and returned to Peterboro' to go to Rose's as had been agreed upon. On the way I stopped at Chittenango, and tried my hand again at gambling, with some success. In due time we reached Rose's, and I remained there about a month, but did not like the situation.—The labor was not hard, but the country was dull, and I thought the society too low and ignorant. A heavy fall of snow now came on in the month of May, and I left. In my dissipation through the neighborhood I had expended

my money, and my time not being up, I was without money. I, however, succeeded in reaching Binghampton, where I procured a loan of $25. On this I went to Owego. Here I joined an old auquaintance in an attempt to beat at play another party. Our opponets got the advantage of us, and soon broke me flat. My friend raised me money enough to pay my passage in the cars up to Ithica.

On my arrival at Ithica, I thought myself in a bad plight. I knew no one—had no money, and no clothes except what I had on, and they were much worn from travelling. I took boarding at a private house. Before the termination of a week I met my friend from Owego, who gave me five dollars to relieve my wants. With this I paid my board, got my clothes repaired and cleaned, and went to the Ithica Hotel to board, with the intention of becoming familiar with the signatures on the register. I knew that on the register men usually write their names more naturally than any where else, and I hoped to make a raise by counterfeiting. I had bespoke a suit of clothes of a tailor, but when they were ready he would not let me have the without his pay. I prevailed on the head waiter at the Hotel to go my security, and I got them. When I had been at the Hotel about two weeks I went with a party to Caskadila Falls. I got into play and won rising fifty dollars, which enabled me to square up a portion of my debts.

I continued to keep up as good an appearance as circumstances would justify. After I had been in Ithica about a month, spending most of my time in riding about, I accidentally fell in with a Miss _____, the daughter of Gen. _____, one of the oldest and most wealthy and respectable famalies of that section.

The young lady, from some of those unacountable freaks of the human mind, conceived a warm regard for me on our first acquaintance. Being of a warm and ardent temperament—in command of a fortune, not derived from her father, and over which she had a great deal of control, for her guardian suffered her to do with money as she pleased, being quite self-willed, and possessing peculiar notions about colored people, regarding them as an injured and persecuted race, she was not long in opening the way for further intercourse. Of the opportunities she offered I readily availed myself, and with her aid became a frequent visitor to her room. My visits were generally made at a late hour in the evening, after the family had retired. I also frequently met her in the streets, and in retired places, whither she would steal for the purpose. This secret and illicit intercourse we continued throughout the summer, during which time I lived chiefly by her bounty, and received from her a great many small sums of money and numerous presents. She gave me a watch, several rings, and some clothes. Her passions carried away her judgment, until she became resolutely bent on marrying me. To accomplish this, she insisted on my removing to Canada, where she would join me as soon as she was of age to act for herself, and at liberty to take her money and property out of the hands of her guardian. To these suggestions I lent a partial ear, but I could not in my own breast agree to marry her, for I entertained insuperable objections to marrying a white woman. But above all this, I knew she had not fully considered the weight or character of the opposition her friends would interpose to such a union. In fact, I feared their wealth and power, and the prospect of their discovering our intercourse.

When this had been kept up for some time, she was so emboldened by our repeated escapes from detection, that she became imprudent to a degree that alarmed me. She would frequently write to me, and send her letter directly to me by a servant, instead of sending it through the post-office. She would often wait for me until a late hour at the gate. Those and many other indiscreet acts, on her part, convinced me that if our intercourse continued much longer we should be exposed, and I would be subject to the prosecution of her family. I had of late husbanded the money she gave me, and extorted from her all I could; and by the time I was ready to leave, I had, in all, nearly three hundred dollars. I resolved in my own mind to stop all intercourse with her when I left, for I did not wish, after the kindness she had shown me, to do any act which might involve her future prospects. If her indulgence to me had been criminal, it at least demanded from me no other return than those of kindness, and, so far as I had the power, protection. Vitiated as my feelings in some things were, I had no disposition to injure her. I therefore, finding it impossible to prevail on her to give up the idea of going to Canada, left her under the pretext of visiting my parents, and under a promise to return.

I went from Ithica to Ovid, and remained a week, and from thence went to Geneva, and remained there during the races. I felt, from the time I separated with Miss _____, a sense of loneliness and depression. I felt that I was again on the ocean of life—without a ccmpanion or a friend. The acts of kindness she had bestowed upon me, the attentions she had manifested to me, her words, her looks, in fact every little incident of our connection recured again and again to my mind, and made me wish to be with her, but my judgment told me not to go. To dissipate this feeling, I plunged into betting on

the races, and gambling at faro. My resolution to husband my money forsook me, and it was not long before I lost all and even my watch, which I thought nothing could have tempted me to part with. But when my money was gone I thought to recover it, and staked my watch on an unsuccessful horse.

During the latter part of the races I succeeded in raising a little money, and with that I left for Seneca Falls, where I lost even that. I suffered many compunctions for having so lightly dissipated the gifts of her to whom I owed so much gratitude. From Seneca Falls I went to Auburn, and their hired as a waiter at the hotel. After being in this place about a month, a number of persons came up from Ithica, who, I feared, would communicate to Miss _____ my humble situation, and by this she would also learn the prodigal disposition I had made of her favors. I now resolved most solemnly in my own mind to abandon gambling. Accordingly I left Auburn and went to Skanaetales where I hired to a Mr. Erastus Kellogg, a Woollen Manufacturer, for a year.

Mr. Kellogg was frequently absent from home, and soon after I hired to him he discovered my education, reposed great confidence in me, which I never once violated. I studied his interest in every thing, and being actively employed I was well pleased with my situation. During this time I studied Vetenery, and became tolerably conversant with the diseases of horses and their management, and tolerably skillful in the use of horses. I continued with Mr. Kellogg between seven and eight months, when his brother John, who, with his wife, was about to visit the west, desired that I should accompany them, in the character of driver. I had visited my parents once or twice, and readily consented to the proposition.

We left in July, and travelled through Rochester to Niagara Falls, where we spent some days. Here my old passion for gambling returned. I played and with great success. From thence we went to Buffalo, where we tarried about six days. My situation was novel, and I had much idle time on my hands. I gave loose reins to my passions—visited the Point freely—gambled, and indulged with the females of that quarter without stint.

One night I lost all my money and my watch, my pencil, &c.; a watch I had purchased a few days before starting. I returned home at daylight, and in the stable gambled with a man belonging to it. Whilst playing, a colored man, a slave, belonging to a southern gentleman, challenged me to play. We went at it, and I won his money, watch and a fine overcoat. He was very desperate at his losses, and threatened me. I in turn threatened him with the law, which silenced him. Fearing he might expose me, I slipped the watch and money into the cushions of the carriage, satisfied that unless they found something on me, they could do nothing with me. Before leaving I returned him his coat.

We went to Detroit in a steamboat, and spent some time in that place; during which I lived high for about a month. From Detroit we went west through Anne Arbor and Jacksonburgh to Marshall. I won about sixty dollars of a man in Anne Arbor. We remained a few days at Marshall, when Mr. Kellogg left his wife and went to Allegon, on the Kalamazoo river, about twenty miles from the Lake. In about a week, I returned for Mrs. Kellogg, and her servant, and during my stay in Marshall, won some money from one of the men employed in the tavern. We returned to Allegon, spent some time there, and returned to Detroit. During this latter period I lost all my previous winnings, and was entirely out of money, but had drawn none of my wages.

Mr. Kellogg, sold out his horses and carriage to Mr. Ketchum of Marshall.—I then engaged with Mr. Ketchum, and was sent to Marshall with the horses and carriage. I remained some time in the employ of Mr. Ketchum, travelling with him, at different periods, to Detroit, Allegon, Kalamazoo, and other places.

In the fall I become enamoured with a Miss _____, a colored girl, living in Marshall, and determined to marry her. With this view, I determined to adopt several reformations, such as husbanding my money, less extravagance in clothes, and other expenses. For a time I adhered to this resolutioon firmly.

That fall, Mr. Ketchum sent me on horseback to Allegon, with a sum of money, which I delivered safely. I accompanied him to the railroad meeting at Adrian, and from thence to Detroit, and returned with him to Marshall. This trip we brought up in the carriage the money and the property of the Calhoun county Bank. The banking house was being erected. The Cashier boarded with Mr. Ketchum, who was the President, and the filling up of notes, &c., was done at his house. Being scarce of money, and having free access to the room, I procured a few blank sheets of the notes, (*ones* and *fives*) and having familiarized myself with their signatures, filled them up and used them. I used in all over one hundred dollars. I might have taken and used much more, but I did not like the business.

In the spring, I accompanied Mr. Ketchum and his wife to Detroit, and returned to Marshall sick with the small pox or varieloid. In the spring, Mr. Kellogg returned from New York, and offered me employment. I left Mr. Ketchum, and went with him. I was induced to this, by the resolution I still entertained of marrying Miss ____. I went to Mr.

Kellogg's mills, near Allegon, and remained there during the summer. My employment was light as I generally did what I pleased, turning my hand to whatever I saw necessary to be done. During the time, I frequently assisted in rafting down timber to the mills—this and the exposure brought on an attack of the fever and ague, and finally concluded to return home to New York.

I set out for home—staid a little while in Marshall and Detroit; but, upon reaching Buffalo I determined to take a regular blow out. I visited the Point one night, played cards, and got quite drunk. During the night, I lost my watch and chain, the same I had previously won in Buffalo, and most of my money. The next day, when I got sober, I went down and saw my guard chain on the neck of one of the white girls. I accused her of stealing it, and attempted to take it. A white man interfered, and I made a blow at him with my knife and cut him severely. I then drew a pistol, and would have shot him, but it was taken from me. Fearing an arrest I left immediately, and, by the first conveyance, went to Niagara, and thence to Lockport. After two days sojourn at the latter place, I continued on through Rochester, Canandagua, Geneva, Skaneatales, and finally home. At Geneva, I lost the last cent of money I had.

I grew tired of home, and returned to Skaneatales, and again hired with Mr. E. Kellogg. I soon became tired of the monotony of his business, and to make an excuse to get off, I raised a difficulty with Mrs. Kellogg. I then left him, and went to Auburn, and staid there during most of the winter.

In the winter I was initiated into a company of Counterfeiters, at Jordon, and became a member. This company consisted of about 500 persons, many of whom I

knew. The establishment was subsequently broken up, and many of the partners removed to other places. A great many came West, and there are several residing in all the principal western cities. Many of those whom I know, are men of business, and some of them, I believe, have abandoned the business entirely—others, I presume, continue it, as I have seen the same kind of paper in circulation here, and have received favors from some of them since I have been in the West. As I was initiated, under oath, I will not mention their names. In the spring they gave me a number of sheets of blank notes on Banks in New York, Vermont, Ohio, and Kentucky. In the month of February, 1837, I returned home, and having procured good notes of the Banks on which I had the blanks, filled them up; I had, in all, $600. I preferred filling them up myself as it saved expense, and I thought I could do it neater and better than the man who usually filled them up. I went to Rochester, and, in gambling and exchanging, succeeded in passing off the most of my counterfeit money. I returned home, after an absence of several weeks, and remained three weeks at home. This was my last visit to my parents, and the last time I ever saw them.

I then returned again to Jordon, and procured a fresh supply of blank notes, about seventeen or eighteen hundred dollars, chiefly on Eastern Banks. As soon as they were filled up, I took the canal and went to Buffalo, and thence to Detroit. At the period, there was great difficulty in the West in getting money which would go in the East. I immediately went out amongst person whom I knew, generally farmers, &c., who had come from the East, and who were returning, or had money to send East. With these I soon succeeded in exchanging most of my counterfeit money for Michigan and other

Western paper. Eastern money was at a premium, but I generally gave mine in small sums, merely as an accommodation. I left Detroit for Buffalo on the Columbus, and before we reached Cleveland, I succeeded in exchanging a large amount of my counterfeit paper. From the amount I passed, I was afraid to remain on the boat until she arrived at Buffalo, for I supposed it probable that there they would find out the deception; I, therefore, left her. Shortly after my arrival at Cleveland, news reached there of the blow-up of the Jordon establishment, and an exposure of the kinds of counterfeits issued. Fearing that I might be detected with what I had remaining, I deposited it with a friend, who knew its character, with instructions to sell what he could of it, and send me a portion of the avails; and if, when I reached Rochester, the suspicion had subsided, I would write him word to send me whatever remained unsold.

I returned to Rochester, and staid there the remainder of the summer. My Michigan aud Western money I got discounted at a brokers. The suspicion having subsided, I procured the counterfeit money I had left at Cleveland, and during the summer passed it off in paying board bills and gambling. I acted, in my exterior conduct, very circumspect, frequently attending church and prayer meetings.

Late in the fall I went to Olean Point and thence to Pittsburg. Returned again by Tioga Point and went up into Gennessee county, and spent most of the winter. I fell into company with a set of counterfeiters and spent some time in learning and making Bogus money, counterfeit gold and silver coins. In the spring I returned to Rochester and opened a writing school for colored persons. Miss ___ ___, continued to reside in Rochester and made the place attractive to me. I had intended marrying her that season,

but finally concluded that I would first settle myself and get into business and then marry. I had some money, and in April, after my school was out, I went to Buffalo, Cleveland and Detroit. I could not resist the temptation to gamble and at the last place lost, in play with a white man, all I had; I then opened a writing school in Detroit, but soon grew tired of it and went to Cleveland. On my way down, on the boat I gambled with desperation, and succeeded in winning some money. I left my board bill unpaid in Detroit, the first occurrence of the kind in my life. At Cleveland I commenced playing nine pins and was very successful. Upon this I made a raise, I then, in conjunction with a white man purchased a rolette. We were very successful in play and had many customers and in a month or little more I had $900, as my share. My partner desiring to travel through the state I sold out my interest to a young friend.

I then went to Akron in Ohio, and there met with one of the partners in the Jordon Counterfeiting establishment. I remained a short time at Akron making Bogus money, chiefly for myself. I also procured a quantity of blank counterfeit paper, chiefly on banks in Ohio and the Northern Bank of Kentucky. From Akron I went by the canal to Portsmouth, and to Maysville, Ky. From thence I travelled through Cincinnati, Louisville, Frankfort and Lexington and back to the Ohio, I next went to Smithland and up to Nashville. At the latter place I succeeded very well in passing my counterfeit gold and silver, particularly with the slaves, as they were unable to detect the difference.

In August I set out for New York. On reaching Buffalo, I diverged from my course and went to Toronto, in Canada. I there met the broker from Kingston with whom I had deposited the £100 note. Something had occurred to induce him to suspect me of

wrong in it, and he accused me of it. I feigned not to know him or any thing of the transaction, and I stuck to it with such boldness that he finally concluded he was mistaken in the person. Not knowing how matters might stand on the way, I returned from Toronto to Rochester via Queenston, avoiding the direct rout. In about five weeks I left Rochester and went to Erie, and from thence to Pittsburg.

In November the River rose and I resolved to go to the West Indies by the way of New Orleans. I accordingly took passage and went down. On arriving I determined to remain some time in New Orleans, and accordingly accepted a situation as waiter at the Planters' House. This was the first time I had been employed with slaves, and it was not long before a hostility sprung up between them and me. They succeeded in getting the steward on their side. A difficulty occurred about some money which had been stolen from a guest. I was accused but there were no circumstances to justify it; but the Steward entering into it, succeeded in having me thrown into jail, on the suspicion of being a run-away slave. I had my papers with me, but they were informal in some respects, and I was compelled to send to New York to have them corrected. I found great difficulty in getting either the means of writing or of sending letters, after I had written I believe, and having seen nothing to change by belief, that my letters were purposely withheld by those who had me in custody; for after the elapse of a given term they would have had me sold to pay fail fees, when doubtless they expected to make a profit out of me. I prevailed on the keeper to put me in the chain gang, and whilst working on the street, fell in with persons who knew me and took the necessary steps to procure the evidence of my freedom. The servants at the Hotel or some one else took all my clothes

and money, and when I was turned out in March, having been confined three months, I had neither a cent of money or a stitch of clothes, except what I had worn in prison, which it may readily be supposed were not very decent. I however, fell in with a white man who had known me in the North, and who gave me such clothes as rendered me decent.

Whilst I was in jail I became acquainted with Warrick. He was there a the slave of Mr. Gordon, who was so involved that he dare not take him out for fear of his being sold by his creditors.

I engaged as a cabin boy on a boat bound to Oauchita and left her on her return. I next took a birth on the Vandalia for St. Louis and Quincy. The steward and I disagreed, and I was dismissed on the return of the boat from Quincy to St. Louis. To have an opportunity of vexing the Steward I shipped on the same boat as fireman and returned to New Orleans. There I left the boat, spent about two weeks in the French part of the city and went to Cincinnati and Pittsburg.

At the latter place, in June, I shipped as second cook on the Agnes, bound to St. Louis, Galena, and Du Buque. On our return to St. Louis after the second trip to Du Buque, Madison shipped on board the same boat, as a cabin boy. This was my first introduction to him. We made two trips to Galena and Prairie Du Chein and returned and took in freight for St. Peters. During this time, Madison had not intimated to me any disposition to engage in robberies or any thing of the kind. He had proposed that we should go into partnership in the purchase of fruits, oysters, segars, &c, in New Orleans, and ship them to St. Louis and sell them. By purchasing from smugglers and by saving

the freights, which we could, by shipping as steward, cook or cabin boy, and by investing the proceeds in fresh butter, eggs, &c., we could soon realize a handsome sum. The scheme seemed so reasonable, that I assented to it, and he was to return to New Orleans that winter to make the necessary arrangements to commence. He informed me thas he was a slave, but had the control of his time, besides he always was flush of money.

On the way up to St. Peters, Madison and another on our boat made an arrangement to rob a store in Galena of which I knew nothing. On the second night after our arrival at Galena, we all left the boat together, and went to a house where there were several persons playing cards. We staid until about 10 o'clock, during which time I drank so freely as to become intoxicated. When we came out I heard Madison ask his companion if it was best to take me with them; and supposing they were going to a house of ill fame, I insisted on going. When we got in front of Mr. Campbell's store, Madison turned directly in front of me and said that he and his companion were going into that store; that there was a large sum of money in it, and if I would stand in the street, and if any one came along give them warning by throwing a stone against the house, I should have a share of the proceeds. They went in, Madison first—I leaned up against a pile of lead but I was so much intoxicated that I could have done but little in giving alarm, for I was scarcely conscious of the passing events.—They were gone a very few minutes, when they returned. We went up the hill to a back street, and round by another rout to the boat. We then went into the store room of the boat locked the doors and divided the money, $1260, about 1200 of which was in paper and the residue in silver. There was $500 on the Galliopolis Bank, and the residue on various banks. Madison took $650, his

friend and myself each $300, and ten dollars in specie was divided between us. In Madison's there was nearly $400 of the Galliopolis money.

The next morning there was great excitement, and the boat and all hands were searched. I had my money on my person but they did not find it after two searches. I felt very uncomfortable and uneasy about it. I had never been engaged in any thing of the kind before. Madison came to me and talked to me about my appearance, told me my looks were enough to condemn me. On our return from St. Peters, the boat was again searched but nothing found. On the way down I gave Madison my money to keep. When we reached St. Louis, I left the boat intending to return to Pittsburg. This was in the fall. Madison left in the night and went out into the city, taking my money with him, I spent nearly three days unsuccessfully looking after him. I thought his intention was to cheat me out of the money. Finally I left word that I would leave the city at a certain hour, on the Loyal Hannah. Just as the boat was ready to push off Madison came on board and handed me the money rolled up. I had no time to open it, but when I examined it I found he had slipped on me $190 Galliopolis money, and had taken $80. I was not well pleased at this trick, and resolved most firmly to cut his acquaintance for the future.

I went to Pittsburgh and spent about three weeks, a great deal of the time on the Hill. During this time, I familiarised myself with the signatures of the Cashier and President of the Galliopolis Bank. I returned to Cincinnati, and, from a man whom I knew in the North, procured a number of sheets of blank notes; whether they were impressions from the real plate or a counterfeit plate, I never could learn, but I could not discover the slightest difference between the engraving on these and the genuine notes. I

went to Louisville, and staid there six weeks, during which time I filled up and passed a good portion of this money. I then went to New Orleans, and spent Christmas there—bought a lot of fruit, and returned to Cincinnati and sold it, and returned to Louisville. Two young men and myself bought a rolette, but we were without money to start on, and I determined to come to St. Louis. I expected I could borrow some of Madison, or at least obtain from him the eighty dollars he had kept. I took the Pilot, and come round; I found Madison, and he readily acknowledged that he had kept the eighty dollars, and promised to pay it so soon as he could get the money, which he represented as loaned out. I, therefore, concluded to remain a few days to wait for Madison to raise the money; and accordingly took boarding at Leah's, but slept and spent most of my time with Warrick, at his shop. In a few days, the river closed, and I had no alternative but to remain.

At the end of about ten days, Madison confessed that he had been deceiving me—that he had spent his money, and was unable to pay until he could make a raise. He remarked that he knew where there was money, and proposed that I should join him in stealing it. At first, I promptly rejected the proposal; but when I came to consider my own situation, a stranger in a strange city, and without means, I thought more favorable of it, and partially concluded to go with him. The Galena affair still continued uppermost in my mind, and paralyzed my efforts to raise money by any of the methods to which I had resorted in former days. I certainly did not like this way of raising money. To do it by counterfeiting or gambling, or cheating, I did not regard as so degrading, or as involving the same degree of guilt.

Madison said he knew where there was $5,000, and which could be easily obtained; and after several conversations about it I agreed to help him. On the evening agreed upon, we went to the store of Braun & Hollander, on Main street, and when the gentlemen of the store went out to supper by the front door, Madison went in through the back door. I went in next. We barricaded the front door so as to prevent his returning on us suddenly. Previous to this, Madison or Ennis had procured at a blacksmith shop, a bar for opening chests or drawers. When in, we found we could do nothing with the iron chest; it was one of the smoothe kind without nails or knobs, which could not be opened with a bar. We searched the drawers and desks, but could find nothing of the key. Pocketing what money there was in the drawers, and taking some clothes and a box of segars, we left. We went to Madison's house and divided the spoils, Ennis I think got the clothes. The next morning, being anxious to know whom Messrs. Braun & Hollander suspected, I went to the store and bought some tobacco and segars, and made excuses to remain in the house a sufficient time to be satisfied that they were not much excited about it and did not suspect us.

About this time Madison gave me a history of his exploits in New Orleans. We were much together and apparently intimate. Warrick suspected us of being engaged in something of the kind and insisted on knowing, and complained of my want of confidence in him, and accused me of being concerned in the Galena affair. I counselled with Madison as to the propriety of informing him. Madison thought it best, and accordingly one day, after I had made him swear not to divulge, I told him what we had done. Shortly after this, Madison, Warrick, myself and one other, robbed a small fancy

dry goods store on Main street nearly opposite Braun and Hollander's. Madison and Warrick went in—I staid on the watch. They got a little money and a considerable amount of goods. What they did with the goods I do not know, for I cared but little about that part; the money was all I went in for. Ennis and Peter had the goods. Ennis generally knew of our plans and consulted with us frequently, but seldom went along.

In a short time after this, we agreed to rob the store of Mr. Scott, on Third street below the North Market. On the night appointed, we all went down, Madison and Warrick went in by the back window: I staid out. They got but little money, but nearly stripped the store of goods—particularly dry goods—such as silks, cloths, &c. I took some clothing; the residue Madison disposed of. About this time I became much disheartened and disgusted with this business and resolved to abandon it; but I had contracted debts and could see no way to get off, unless I could make a raise. One of my old associates gave me a lot of counterfeit paper, but I had not the courage, at least not the confidence in myself requisite to pass it successfully. Madison saw my distress, and finally proposed that as soon as the Missouri opened, Peter and I should take a parcel of goods up the river and sell them. He had a large amount of goods in Ennis' hands. It was understood that as soon as I returned, if we succeeded, we were to commence our former plan of buying fruits, &c. at New Orleans for the St. Louis market. I spoke to Peter about the trip up the Missouri, and he professed to know so much of the country that I entertained no doubt of our success.

Two days after this, Charles Brown came on from Cincinnati. He and Madison had been associates in crime in New Orleans, and consequently he was at once admitted

to our confidence and a share of our plots. He was the worst man of our party, for he was willing to go further than any of us, not hesitating to kill if necessary, and urging in every case as the best means of concealment, the burning of buildings. He gave fresh vigor to our irresolute purposes, as he urged us to go on. When alone with Madison he had considerable influence over him and could reason him into his purposes.

Madison said that Peter had informed him of a large sum of money in Messrs. E. & A. Tracy's store, on Water street. He had gone in on a former occasion, but had not succeeded in getting any thing. It was arranged to go the second time. Upon the appointed night, we went to the back window, shortly after dark—Madison opened it, and we went into the counting-room. We searched for the key of the iron safe, but could not find it. We then laid the safe down, and Madison went to work to pull it to pieces, with as much skill as if he had made it—the rest of us assisting him. In an hour or less, we had it apart, and the money out. There was about two hundred and fifty-four dollars in gold and silver, and some Mississippi money, not embraced in the above sum. We found a silver cup in one of the drawers of a desk. Took a basket of champaigne and drank over our work, and left. We went to Leah's and divided the money, but upon making the division, the gold and cup was gone. Every one denied all knowledge of them, and it was supposed they had been left. Madison proposed going back for them, but Brown and Warrick said it was no use. The next day, when the notice of the robbery came out, it was stated that the gold and cup were taken, and we knew that Brown or Warrick had them. Subsequently we ascertained that Warrick had the gold and Brown the cup. In the

division of the money, Madison got all but $90, which was equally divided between us three. Ennis got a portion from Madison.

Madison began to complain of his ill luck—said he never before had been so unsuccessful in his life; and to my suggestions to quit, he always replied that he wanted to make one good haul and then quit entirely. He insisted that eventually he would light on some place where we would be repaid for the risk. Warrick had lived at Burlington, I. T., and professed to know of a store there in which there was a large sum of money, which he proposed we should go and rob. Brown seconded Warrick, and I at first refused positively, but finally agreed to go if Madison went; and at length, to get Madison along, we agreed to pay his passage up. It was our purpose to go up on the Agnes, but the Captain refused to take Brown and Madison from St. Louis—they, therefore, crossed over the river, and went up to Alton. Warrick was to go with them, but played them the slip, and did not go. At Alton, they got on board the Agnes. I was disappointed in the Agnes, and went up on the Rosalie.—We met at Warsaw, and, as Warrick had disappointed us, we determined to continue on to Galena and try the Bank.

We spent several days in Galena, ascertaining how the land lay, finding out how many persons slept in the bank, &c. At length we were satisfied that at least three persons slept there, and Madison and myself were for abandoning it, but Brown insisted upon going on, saying that if we succeeded we would get enough to last us. A dispute arose about how it should be done. Brown was for killing the men and burning the bank. Madison thought that too bad, and refused to assent to it. It was agreed at length, that we would go on Sunday night on Brown's plan. On Saturday night it was very dark and

stormy. I saw Madison and we agreed to go that night and open the doors and if they wakened we could escape. About 1 o'clock, we went, Madison raised the window and I held it up whilst he went in; he then lit a candle and opened the doors, and we went in. The drawers had all been taken out into another room, and that room was locked and fastened on the inside. We went out with the intention of entering the other room by one of the windows, but by this time it had become so late that we concluded we could not carry the money away if we got into the vault. Madison and Brown returned into the Bank and fired it. On our way down to our boarding house we battered down with a stick of wood the door of a jeweller's shop. We had each a crowbar: Brown threw his away.

There was great excitement in the town the next day, but there was no suspicion on us. In observing the amount of business done, we concluded that Mr. Stillman must have some money. We observed his arrangements for a night or so, and when the clerk went to supper, Madison went in by a back window, opened his drawers and safe, but got no money. Finding the prospect so dull we left for St Louis, on the Illinois.

On our return Ennis urged us to go to Alton, but we declined it. He and Peter had previously urged the robbing of Messrs. Collier & Pettus' counting room, and Madison became decidedly in favor of it. Whilst this was under discussion we resolved to try Sinclair Taylor. One evening when on the levee watching the movements of the clerk of Mr. Taylor, we saw him go out and immediately resolved to go in, and did so. We found the key of the safe and opened it; there was in it a few dollars in good money and lots of bad money. In the division I got $15 and a double barrelled pistol and five shirts.

Madison and I came out together and started home, leaving Brown in. Before he came out he fired the house.

The proposition to rob Mr. Pettus' counting-room was now pressed more strongly than ever. The first proposition was to ascertain when the young man went to supper, to force off the window shutter, and do the whole whilst he was gone. With this view I went several times to the store myself, and watched him several nights. I communicated to the others my observations, and to satisfy themselves, they also watched him several nights. Finally it was ascertained where he boarded, and how long he was absent. He spent most of his evenings in the counting-room, and the time he staid at supper was not sufficient to open the window and commit the robbery.—Brown then proposed secreting ourselves in the store and when he came in to kill him and get the keys—open the vault, and then set fire to the house. This I opposed, as also did Madison, except when Brown got him separated from the rest of us. At length Madison gave in, and then Warrick agreed to Brown's plan. Ennis pressed this plan, and insisted that he knew that but one man staid in the store, and that he kept the keys.

Brown's plan was talked over on Thursday evening, prior to the fatal Saturday, but nothing agreed upon. We were then on the foot of Pine street. We met the next night again on the levee. Madison then swore he would do it that week or not at all. Warrick was very anxious to go right ahead with it, whilst Brown thought it best to defer it. Warrick became so enraged at Brown that he threatened to cut him. Finally he swore he would go in himself, and did go in with a bill which Brown gave him. He came out in a

little while and told us how matters stood inside, and how easy it might be done, but we concluded not to do it that night.

On Saturday evening I went with Warrick from his shop down to the lower end of town, and came up and met Madison on the Missouri and Brown on the levee. We went on board the Missouri, and came on the levee again. Here another dispute arose between Brown and Warrick. Warrick was for doing it instantly and Brown thought we had better know more about it, and proposed leaving it off until Sunday night. At length Madison asked Warrick if he would back him if he would go in and do it.—Warrick replied that he would, and Madison started off. We all came up the north side of the street together. When opposite the door, Madison crossed over and went in—I could not see what he did but heard the blow. In a little while he came out and gave his bar to Warrick, and told him to go in and strike him. Warrick went in. Madison seemed very much agitated when he came out, and when Warrick came out he desired me go in. I hesitated, and Warrick commenced upbraiding me as a coward. Brown started towards the door, and said to me, "let us go in," and I followed him. When I went in, Baker was lying on his back, on the floor, a few steps from the door, bleeding profusely. Brown took him by the shoulders, and I took hold of one leg, and we pulled him behind the counter. The sight of him, for he was yet in the last struggles of death, made me sick, and I went out. After I came out, I heard Brown striking several times. After I had been out some little time, they desired me to go in and help Brown look for the money. I went in. Brown told me to stand by the door—he was behind the counter looking for the keys. Whilst I stood there, a breath of wind escaping from Baker's chest, made a gurgling noise; Brown called to me, and

said "strike the d—d son of a b—h." I took up the candle and went and looked at him. The top of his head was mashed off, and the face all cut. I observed that it was no use, that he was dead, and took down a coat hanging on the wall, and spread it over kim. In a few seconds the same noise was repeated. Brown said "if you don't strike him, I'll strike you!" I then struck the body twice, about the bowels, over the coat. This sight made me sick, and I told Brown I would stay no longer—that he might call in Madison. We went to the door, and he called Madison, and I went out. About this time, the sound escaped again from Baker's body. Brown again struck him several blows on the head.

Madison and Brown continued in some time. During this time I went down to Water street, and up two squares, intending to go home to Warrick's shop, for I was very much agitated and disturbed. When I got up some distance I discovered that I had not the key or my pass, and I returned back for them. When I came back, Warrick was standing in the coal cellar of the house on the opposite side of the street. I asked him for my pass and the key, and he went down to the wharf, to ascertain by the light of the boat, which was mine. He returned, saying he could not make out which was mine. About this time Madison came to the door and said there was another man slept in the house and it would be necessary to kill him. I objected to this and said I would go home. I walked down to Water street and about several places, but for some reason could not muster courage to go away. I was perfectly bewildered, and seemed spell-bound to the place. As I was coning up Pine street, on the north side, I heard two men coming down Main street, talking—I jumped into the alley.—They separated at the corner, and one of them came down past where I was standing, and crossed over. He rapped at the door, and waited a second or

two—looked in at the key-hole, and then rapped again. The door was then opened, and he stepped in. The door opened wide, and Mr. Weaver made one or two steps in, when he stopped and turned his head once or twice, apparently in astonishment, as the door swung to, and at the same moment Brown struck him. I did not see the blow—the door had shut.—He made little noise, and I heard several blows.

Madison came out and told me to go and watch the front of the store. I went down Water street, and staid some time. When I returned, Warrick was gone. I waited some time at the corner of the Alley nutil he and Brown came out. Brown locked the door and carried the key up into the alley and we left and went to Warrick's shop. Brown had Weaver's watch and cloak and some money he found in the drawers. Madison found some money on Baker's person which he took. He subsequently loaned me a small part of it.

The next morning I cleaned my clothes, I had a spot of blood or two on my pantaloons and on the wrist of my shirt from the bar. That evening after dinner we all and Ennis met at Peter Charleville's. Peter and Leah had gone to church. We conversed some time about it and drank several times together. The next day we spent most of the forenoon at Charleville's. Ennis was with us and was in fine spirits. On Tuesday, Brown and Madison concluded to go to Cincinnati, and went on board the Goddess of Liberty. Ennis went down with them and told them not to fear any thing; if any thing occurred he would write and let them know. The Goddess did not leave that day, Madison changed his purpose, and resolved to go down to New Orleans on the Missouri. Ennis urged me to go, saying that by staying I might be suspected, and if I went away any thing occurred

he would inform me by letter in time to get out of the way. I preferred being on the ground and hearing for myself what suspicions were afloat, but finally concluded to go to Cincinnati. Warrick was to go along but could not get ready. I left on Thursday on the Atalanta and went to Cincinnati where I met Brown. I remained there five days. Very much troubled and perplexed as to my proper course, I could not decide in my own mind whether it was better for me to quit the country altogether or to return to the East and resume my old business. After much perplexity and doubt I determined to go to New Orleans, and accordingly took my passage on the Atalanta. At Cairo I was met by Mr. Gordon and taken.

He placed me in the custody of a man, who represented that he was the head of the St. Louis police. This man urged me to confess and represented that the excitement was so great, that unless I did confess, and he and Mr. Gordon interposed in my behalf, I would be burnt when I got to St. Louis. He told me my only chance of protection was to entrust him and Mr. Gordon. After repeated assurances that he was an officer and what I told him would do me no injury, I told him something. When Mr. Gordon came, I asked him if this man had told him what I said. I then asked him if he was an officer, and he replied, "yes," but his reply was made in such a way that I began to suspect the man had deceived me. I asked Mr. Gordon what the state of feeling in St. Louis was; he represented the excitement as very great and assured me, that my only chance of reaching the jail with life would depend on his protection and management. He advised me to confess, and as I understood him, assured me repeatedly, that if I did confess, I should have all the benefits the law allowed me. I thought of his remarks some time after we

were on the boat, and feeling sure, that I would be burned or destroyed on reaching St. Louis, unless I made a confession, I did confess to him most of the transaction. At the time did so, I thought however, that, as he was an officer, he could not be a witness against me, and so understood him to say, when I asked him, if what I should tell him could be so used.

I blame myself for suffering under the deception as to the effect of my confessions, but know that my sentence is just and my doom merited. The only return I make my council, Mr. Gamble, is to give him my dying thanks. He did not believe me guiltless, but he did all for me that could or ought to have been done.

To my friends and acquaintances to my former associates, to those who have known me under other auspices, I bid a long farewell. I am not afraid to die, I know that I have offended my God, times and ways without number, but I trust, that by the purification of the blood of my Redeemer, I shall yet be admitted to a seat on his right hand. My dying prayer shall be, that I shall meet their those whom I have washed also in the blood of that Lamb, that taketh away the sins of the world. FAREWELL.

Confession of Warrick

I, Amos Alfred Warrick, a colored man, in view of the awful sentence which now awaits me, knowing that in my course of life I have offended against the laws of the land, but still more and deeply have offended against the laws of that God before whose awful tribunal I must soon appear to answer for all my acts, and being willing to confess to men, as I honestly have confessed in contrition and deep humiliation, to the Supreme Omniscience, the acts of my life which have led me, step by step, from the happy fireside of an honored but abused father, and from the arms of a fond and doating but now wretched mother, to my present situation—the victim of evil council and evil passions, the adjudged culprit of the most high and heinous offence known to the law.

I give the history of my life freely. The time for concealment is past. To myself it can do neither injury nor benefit, but if my tale, simple as it is, and uninteresting as it may be esteemed, will have the effect to warn one person, now on the highway of vice and crime, to desert his evil ways, to "flee from the wrath to come," and to turn, and by a correct life and a firm reliance on the religion of Jesus Christ, look and seek light and truth from the only true fountain ere it is forever too late, then will I have done something to repay the injury I have inflicted upon others. There are many men of my color and many white men too, who, in my brief history, may see many acts of their own life represented, I pray them by the dearest of all ties, by their love of friends, of life, and above all, by their hopes of forgiveness hereafter to take warning by me, and pause, consider and turn from their wicked way. They may escape for a season, but the arrows of God's justice are as sure and his judgments as certain upon the wicked, as his mercies

are free and unbounded to those who come to him with a contrite spirit and true repentance. Let not my warning pass as the moaning of the expiring blast. Remember, it is the voice of one standing on the confines of eternity, and he who speaks has tasted deeply of all the fleeting pleasures the cup of wickedness can give, and in the midst of a career, promising as long a continuance and as much fruit as any one else can promise himself, is brought, ere the meridian of life, to a grave dishonored and disgraced. I speak the language of truth—God grant that it may reach the hearts of all who read it.

I was born in the town of Newbern, North Carolina, on the 31st of March, 1815. My father's name is Brista N. C. Warrick, a free colored man, and my mother's name is Levina. My father is a barber by profession, and served his apprenticeship in that place, and has always, as has my mother, maintained a good character. I trust no one will ever impute to them any blame for the fate of their unhappy son. God knows, my end has been the result of disobedience to their early council and oft repeated instructions, both by precept and practice.

In early life, my father sent me to school, and I soon learned to read and write, and cypher a little. He also took me into his shop where I learned the trade of a barber. Being of a quick turn, I early became serviceable to him, and was agreeable to his customers. During this period my parents spared no pains to instil into my mind the precepts of religion, and warning me of the dangerous and fatal results of crime. But unfortunately for me, their good advice fell upon a heart not insensible, but incapable of serious reflection. Conducting myself well in the shop, many gentlemen in the vicinity were anxious to get me as a servant or waiting man, which my father always refused. At

length, when I was about 13 years old, during an election canvass, I agreed to run off and stay with one Mr. James G. Row, then a candidate for the Legislature, living in Onslow county, about 41 miles from Newbern. I went with Mr. Row and remained with him some time, my parents not knowing where I was. When he went up to Raleigh to attend the legislature, I accompanied him. We passed through Newbern and staid there two or three days, during which time I kept hid from my parents. I remained at Raleigh with Mr. Row during the session of the legislature, and then returned to his farm. During that season, Mr. Row courted and married a daughter of Judge Johnston, of Charleston, S. C., to which place he went. Subsequently, he returned to his farm and took me on with him to Charleston.

The day we arrived at Charleston, before crossing Cooper's river, Mr. Row told me I must not let any one in Charleston know that I could read or write, and I must tell them all that I belonged to him. I readily promised a compliance with this. The Judge gave Row and his daughter a farm, 9 miles from the city, to which he moved. I remained there some time. Row being about to visit Onslow to move his slaves to a farm he had bought near Edgeville, I was anxious to return with him, and particularly to see my parents; but he persuaded me to stay, saying that he wished me to wait on his lady, and when he came back, I should have money to carry me to New York, where I had an uncle living. I was content with this and remained. After Row left, Mrs. Row and I fell out and she undertook to whip me. I determined not to let her, and for fear she would attempt it, (she then being in a delicate situation, and fearing I might do her some injury,) I left and went to her father's. The Judge approved of my course, but nevertheless I was taken up

and confined in a sugar house. Mrs. Row wrote to her husband, and he wrote back to her to sell me.

Whilst in confinement, a Frenchman named Cuculler, a negro trader, came and examined me and asked me if I would be willing to go to New Orleans with him. Being young and anxious to see the world, I readily consented, and he purchased me. After the purchase, he took me as his own servant and taught me to speak French. On the day he bought me, he took me to his boarding house and there I saw on his table the letter from Row to his wife, directing her to sell me. She had given it to Cuculler as a proof that she was authorized to sell. I however was so anxious to see New Orleans, that I said nothing about it.

In time, a drove of about thirty negroes and myself were shipped on board the brig Aspasia and sent to New Orleans, where we arrived in 18 days. I was then transferred to a French barber, Mr. Fourier, on Chartres street. I staid with him three months, and he treated so well that I had no wish to leave him. A Spaniard, who worked in the shop, and I, had a fight, and I attempted to cut him with a razor, but was prevented. When Fournier heard of it, he whipped me. This offended me very much, and I determined to be revenged. The first revenge I attempted was to throw about $20 worth of cravats, suspenders, &c., which were kept in the shop for sale, into the privy. This did not seem to spite him much, and I then determined to gain my freedom. I might have stolen money from him, but I then thought that that would be degrading.

The schooner Zembooca was then in port, nearly ready to sail. The Captain had formerly lived in Newbern and knew me and my father, and knew that I was free. There

were also two sailors on board who had gone to school with me in Newbern. When they learned that I had been sold, they wanted me to write to my father, but I refused. On the day the schooner was to leave, my boss and all hands were sitting out on the pavement in front of the shop. I put on my coat, took my umbrella and walked out, bid them all good by, shook hands with Mr. Fournier and went directly off. I had been so full of mischief and fun before, that they took it all as a joke. I went on board the schooner, took off my coat and went to work as steward, and that evening we were towed down. I left New Orleans on a Friday evening in the month of August, 1831, and arrived in New York in 13 days afterwards. I had about 40 or $50 of my own money.

Upon my arrival in New York, I did not venture to go to my uncle's, Christopher Rush, who keeps a grocery in Howard street, but staid a week at Mrs. Bowries, a seamstress who formerly lived in Newbern. Then I hired to Mr. Newton, and was placed in the principal charge of one of the tow boats which runs between New York and Albany. I received $25 a month wages, and liberty to make what I could besides, which made my wages nearly $60 a month. I continued on the boat until the end of the season, and falling out with one of the owners at Albany, I left her. I returned to New York, and after spending two weeks in idleness, I hired to Messrs. Hamilton & Sons, No. 25, Broad street. I attended in their store to receiving, marking and forwarding cotton, &c. When the business got dull I left them and determined to go to sea. I had got tired of my trade and did not like to be confined to a shop.

I then shipped with Capt. G. W. Phillips, on board the schooner Elizabeth Jane, bound from New York to Velasco and Brazoria. Handy & Lusk had freighted her. The

Captain was a drunken character; the mate, Francis Peck, was a clever man. We were at Velasco bar in nine days, and were in all, at Brazoria and in the river, 9 weeks. On our return at the bar, a vessel had been wrecked, and whilst we were there the officers of the wreck offered a dollar the hour for hands to assist in getting out the freight. The hands on our vessel engaged in, and I worked at it when I had time. A sailor on our vessel, Frank Russel, proposed to me to steal some of the goods, alledging that it was the best way to secure our pay from the wrecked officers, but I declined. He however stole some, and stowed them in the forward run of the forecastle. They were found, and he was taken up to Velasco for trial. The trial was before a self-constituted court, and whilst it was going on, I went on shore and cut Russel loose, and took him on board our vessel and hid him. They thought he had escaped. That evening, in weighing our anchor it proved to be foul, and we had to slip it, carrying away our dead lights, and otherwise defacing the schooner. When it was dusk, I brought Russel up, and he went to work.

At New Orleans, when we returned, the vessel was turned over to the Insurance Company and sent over the river to be repaired. My wages were due from Brazoria, and the Captain and I fell out about them at the ship yard and had a fight. I worsted the old man, and he had me taken up and lodged in the Calaboose. He left New Orleans, leaving me there, and I remained in confinement two months. Was finally discharged by order of the Custom House Collector.

I then shipped as a hand at the Balize, S. E. Pass, and remained there and at the N. E. Pass in all 7 months. During this time I became very familiar with the duties, and was esteemed a good hand. When I came to settle up, little John Wilson, as he was called, a

German, tried to cheat me out of part of my wages, and did, out of about 15 or $20. To be revenged for this act, I went to the N. E. Pass and prevailed on the hands to run off with the pilot boat, and the provisions, &c. on board of her. They did so and took her to New Orleans. I came up shortly afterwards. They had disposed of some of the provisions, &c. and were trying to sell the boat. I persuaded them to ship on steamboats for the upper country, to avoid being taken up for stealing the boat. They did so, and then I wrote to Wilson informing him where his boat was. He came up and got her, and he and I made friends again.

After spending two weeks in New Orleans, I shipped as steward on board the ship Florida of N. Y., Capt. McSerrin, bound to Liverpool. When we had made the Irish Channel, the Captain and I fell out about one of the back lockers which a former steward had left very foul and dirty, but which I had not found out until we came to overhaul the ship. The Captain struck me. I complained of it, as I dare not strike back. So the Captain agreed to give me a fair fight on deck. We fought some time and quit so good a man so good a boy. At Liverpool I applied to the Consul and got my discharge, but compelled the ship to board me three weeks, and stood my own board one week.

I then shipped on board the ship Sterling of Boston, Capt. Conn, and had a pleasant trip, though detained out 45 days. I staid in Boston three weeks and shipped on the schooner Ante, Capt. Walter, for Georgetown, D. C. On our return from Georgetown, the schooner ran a foul of the bridge and carried away our main boom. The Captain finding her going on the bridge, heaved his anchor, but could not bring her up in time. I was in the galley at the time he ordered me to help heave the anchor, and did not hear the

order. He came to the galley, collared me and pulled me out, my feet striking the guards, I fell and he kicked me. Knowing I was in a slave State, I said nothing, but determined to pay him for it in New York. At New York, when the cargo was discharged, I proposed to fight him, as he had frequently said he was willing to give any sailor, black or white, a fair fight. Several of the other sailors had a spite against him and wanted him whipped; but he was afraid, and stole off with his vessel at night, leaving me on shore unpaid.

I remained in New York for about three months working at various places. I shipped during this time on the brig Mermaid, bound for Canton, China, but before the time for sailing, having got my months pay in advance, I deserted. My security, John Russell tried to apprehend me but I kept out of his way. Some days after the vessel left I thought I had done wrong and gave Russell half the money I had received for the month's advance.

I then next shipped on board the schooner Rosaria, Mr. Sears, master and owner, for Pensacola with rail road iron. Below Pensacola we took in a cargo of lumber for Mobile, from Mobile we went to New Orleans. The whole crew except officers, were colored men. We had on board a little Indian named Cuffy, for whom I formed a great attachment. The Captain whipped Cuffy and I determined to be revenged for it, accordingly I prevailed on the crew to leave him at New Orleans.

I then shipped on the Ambassador for Liverpool, Captain Upton.—Were 29 days making the run. I left the ship at Liverpool and remained about a month, when I shipped on the Napier, captain Stafford, for Baltimore. This was in the month of February. During the run we had a gale one night when all hands had to go aloft to reef; one of the

sailors and I fell out aloft and went to fighting on the foot rope; I was in the act of throwing him overboard when he cried enough. The weather was so cold during this sail that one of our men froze during the night on his watch. When we came into the Chesepeake Bay, we had to come to anchor, the ice was running so heavy. While we lay there I saw a large Dutch vessel, with a valuable cargo on board, cut down by the ice.

At Baltimore I shipped on the Tribune lying below Alexandria, as cook and steward. I did not know her cargo until I got on board. She was freighted with 82 slaves. At new Orleans the mate and I had a fight on the deck of the vessel, I wished then to leave and the Captain would not discharge me and I determined to run away. As I could not get my pay I determined to take my pay out of the market money which was entrusted with me. On reflection I thought it wrong and returned the money and left the vessel without my pay.

I then shipped on board the Mary Branard, Captain Beckwith, engaged in the Havana trade. He was a religious man and I continued with him some time. The ship being about to make a trip to Charleston, S. C., I left her on account of the laws in relation to colored people at Charleston. I was unwilling to go there and be confined in jail whilst there.

I remained in Madison street, boarding at Jo Prince's some time. There were two colored persons in New Orleans, whom I had known in Newburn: one was Shadric Robbins, a free man, the other Hamilton Williams, a slave of Mr. Nicholay. They were engaged in papering a house for Mr. Woodworth. The lady of the house had gone over the lake to remain whilst the house was being re-fited. Robbins and Williams became

negligent about their work and Mr. Wooodworth gave me the contract for $14. I took it and hired Robbins and Williams to help me. The furniture &c. had been moved into one room. One day Robbins called me into that room, he had been working there. He had the drawer open in which the lady had left all her valuable jewelry. I remarked, that Mr. Woodworth had been very negligent to leave the drawer unlocked and proposed to call him and inform him of it—Robbins said he would call him and I went to work. Robbins did not call him; but that night after we quit work, he and Williams took all the jewelry and make off.

About this time I became afraid of Mr. Fournier putting me into trouble and when this thing came out about the jewelry I kept pretty dark. Robbins and Williams however were taken and most of it found on them, and they confessed that I knew nothing of it. They were so explicit in their confession that Mr. Woodworth was satisfied with me.

Shortly after this I shipped as second stewart on board the steam boat Warren, engaged in the Yazoo trade, and remained on her about 2 months. I then left her and went to board at a house in Bienville street. Whilst there, Williams the slave, again tried to renew his intimacy with me, but I would have nothing more to do with him. He knew that I had been sold to Fourneir and to be revenged he informed on me. He stationed the watch to take me one night as I was going to the house of a girl I staid with. I was taken and thrown into jail. Fourneir came to see me but did not recognized me, neither did any of the boys in his shop except one. We had two trials and on the second I was decided to be his property.

Fourneir took me, hand cuffed, to his shop. I knew all the boys, but pretended I did not. He then sold me to a negro tarder living in Camp street, opposite Washington square, named Hite. He was a very cruel and hard master. One day a gentleman named John F. Miller, a horse racer and wealthy farmer residing in the Attakapas country came to look at me and finally bought me. I went with Miller into the Attakapas, at first he put me to work in the field but finding me averse to that and with all pretty smart, he took me from the field and put me in the stable. I remained with him quite well satisfied for about 12 months. During this period Miller spent most o his time in New Orleans and elsewhere, and his mother a very aged woman had charge of the farm. I frequently wrote letters for the old lady to Miller and to her daughter, Mrs. Wheeler, in Cincinnati. She was very good to me and I loved her like a mother.

At length I got tired and told Mr. Miller I wanted to go to New Orleans. He consented and I thought he was going to let me pick my own master, but instead of that he took me and three others to New Orleans—we understood he had hired us and delivered us to Martin Gordon, and we were sent to work at the mills. I determined not to stay at the mills and I left without ceremony.

I then shipped as second steward on the Bunkerhill, in the Yazoo trade, and remained on her about two months and a half. I then left her and went on board the Tuskina bound to St. Louis and Naples in Illinois. We made the trip and returned to N. Orleans. I left the Tuskina and went to see Miller. I told him a lie, for I said I had been round to New York to see my friends. Told him I wanted to see Gordon but was afraid,

so he agreed to go with me. I told Gordon the same story and he let me off without any repremand for going away.

I staid at the mill some time, and one night when down in the city rather late, visiting a girl, the watch took me up and put me in Mr. Harper's callaboose. They reported to Gordon that I was running off. I remained in the callaboose or jail one year and two months, working part of the time in the chain gang. Gordon at first believed the report that I was running off, and after that he was so much involved he could'nt take me out.

It was during my stay in jail that I first got acquainted with Madison the man who is condemned with me. He was in the jail three or four times and once was flogged; but I never during that time heard any thing disreputable of him. He always had plenty of money and whilst he was in jail was very free with it. Any little thing any of us wanted he could manage to get for us, and was a general favorite. My acquaintance with him was not intimate.

I was at length taken out and sold at the French Exchange for $700, to a Frenchman named Mariana, who lives over the lake near Manuel. When he purchased me, he asked me if I could talk French, and I told him no. He then replied that I could not get away from him. He took me to his farm and set me to work in the sugar cane. This I did not like, and my arms got sore; so they gave me an easier work, keeping crows out of the field. The food given the negroes was very indifferent; they gave them no meat. The boy who cooked, and I, one night stole a lot of hams, and whilst these lasted we lived very well. We shared also with some of the other negroes. At length a skiff which was

building on the farm was completed and launched. I took the skiff, the cook and one other negro, about 10 o'clock in the night, and put out across the lake. It was blowing pretty hard and we had hard pulling, but as I knew something of the steering, we kept on the right tack. The next day we landed at the wharf on the shell road in New Orleans, about 12 o'clock in the day. I put the skiff in charge of a vessel going across the lake, with instructions to leave it at Mariana's farm—gave the two negroes passes and left them to shift for themselves. I do not know what became of them.

I then engaged on the Maid of Orleans as a fireman and come to St. Louis. Being a little unwell I left the boat, and seeing Madison I went and staid with him three days at Mr. Shaw's. I then engaged on the Agnes as barber and made three trips to Galena. After the first trip, Seward and Madison were hired on her, I fell out with the steward and left her. I then fell in with a girl called Hannah Simonds and I staid with her two or three weeks. Hannah and I went up to Burlington on the Chippewa. I got the situation of cook at the Burlington House, and remained there about two months, keeping Hannah in the town until she left, about two weeks before I did. I then returned to St. Louis and rented a shop from Jeremiah Burrows, on Franklin Avenue and Tenth street. This was in the winter after Christmas. In a short time Seward returned from Pittsburgh and he took boarding at Leah's but slept at my shop.

One day we were coversing together and I mentioned that I had heard of a large robbery committed at Galena. From the way Seward talked of it I began to suspect him, but he would not tell me much. I afterwards learned he was unwilling to open the matter to me, until he consulted with Madison. They two had been in business sometime

together, but would not let me know it. I however, found enough to know they had been concerned in the Galena affair, and advised Seward to quit it. He said he would. One Sunday he brought some wearning apparel to the shop, which, though new, looked as if it had been worn, and I accused him of stealing it. He kept me off several days, and finally he proposed telling me all about it, and also what Madison had done, if I would take an oath. I agreed to the proposition and he swore me on the bible, before God and man, by my eternal salvation, and every thing else, that I would keep secret whatever they told me, or whatever should aftewards occur—that I never would accuse them through fear, in jest or for any favor—that I would stick by them until death, and never forsake them whilst I had breath—that I would go with them, and do as they did in all undertakings. This is the substance of the oath, on taking which I kissed the bible.

After taking the oath Seward explained to me the consequences of a violation of it, and something of what he and Madison had done. That evening when he returned from dinner Madison came with him. Madison went and got some liquor, and we talked a good deal and drank considerable. When dark came on we all started down town. I wanted to stop and see Mr. Kerr's black girls whom I knew, but the other two pursuaded me to go down to Leah's, and take supper with them. I went on, but we did not go to Leah's. We went down Main street below the Market, and went into the rear of a small fancy dry goods store. Madison said he was going to see an acquaintance. He had something rolled up in his handkerchief. He jumped over the fence, went up to the window, and with an iron bar he had rolled up, broke off the bar fastening the window—he then shoved up the sash, and come and called to me, I went where he was, and he told

me to get through the window—I did not like much to do it, but was afraid to disobey, and was much excited by the liquor. There were in company, Madison, Seward, myself, and one whose name I will not state. We took out of the drawer about $20 in money, and I suppose about $200 worth of goods, as many as we could all carry. We took them up to my shop, and about daylight Ennis and Madison came and took them away. I do not know what they did with them. I understood Ennis and Leah had the selling of them, and sold them to some store in the lower part of the city. Madison sometime afterwards gave me $6 as part of the proceeds.

About two weeks afterwards Madison was at my shop. We drank pretty freely and he talked a great deal about what he had done. I told him he would get caught and killed. He said it was impossible for them to catch him. A little after dark we started down town and came past the North Market. When opposite Mr. Scott's store, a store just opened in a new building, and they were digging a foundation for another just by it. Madison told us to stop. We stopped in the street, and he went round to the back side of the house. I heard him striking on the window—he got in and lit a candle. I did not like to stand there so I walked on. Madison came after me and told me to come back, that he did not want me to do any thing, but if I staid I should have half. I went back on his agreeing not to take what he stole to my shop. He and I then went in at the window, and took a great many goods, and handed them out to Seward. When I thought we had enough I wanted him to stop and he said no, and wanted me to stay in the store whilst he went and got a horse and cart to take the goods away. This I refused to do. As we were coming out he said he would see what was in the desk; he then forced open the lid of the

desk, and I held it up. He took out of a box about $16 in money. There were some notes and papers which I would not agree to disturb. We then carried the goods to Leah's house, and she and Ennis took charge of them. In these things Peter Charleville had but little to do, he knew of them but was too simple to be trusted far.

Sometime subsequent, Seward, Madison and Brown made an attempt on Sinclair Taylor & Co.'s store, but from some cause failed to get anything. I was not with them.

Ennis and Peter when they told any thing they told it to Madison. I never had any conversation with either of them about the business. From something they said it was agreed to rob E. & A. Tracy's store, on the wharf Madison, Brown, Seward and myself, went down—Madison forced open one of the back windows and went in and opened the back door. We all then went in leaving the door open, and went up into the counting room. This was between 8 and 9 o'clock. After striking a light we went to work in tearing the iron chest apart. After working some time, a dog came in by the back door and commenced barking. We were all alarmed and ran down. Supposing we had been detected. We stopped at the foot of the stairs, whilst there deliberating, each one afraid to venture forward, I seized the bar out of Brown's hand and rushed forward at the dog, and frightened him out of the house. I then shut the door and returned, they gave me three cheers, and we went back up stairs. In about two hours we got the chest to pieces and the money out. We were detained in our operation by breaking one of the bars. There was about 54 dollars in gold, about $122 or 3 in silver and some counterfeit or Mississippi money, in all $254. My courage in running the dog out, gave me the command of the party, and I took the gold. I and Brown had each a bowie knife, and we got into a

dispute. Brown was for firing the house and I was against it. At length I jumped on the chest and swore I would cut the guts out of the man who attempted to burn the house. Madison interfered and persuaded Brown to give up. There was a silver cup in the chest which Brown took. We then found a basket of Champaigne and drank friends over it. When we had drank till we were satisfied we went out by the front door. I pulled the shutters too. We then went up to Leah's. She was in bed but got up. We sent Peter out for candles and liquor, and when he returned we divided the money. Leah and Ennis sitting by the table. Leah in her night clothes. I kept the gold, the silver only was divided. Brown said something about the gold and accused Madison with having it, which he denied. I left them shortly afterwards.

A few nights after this, we all went to Sinclair Taylor & Co's., the second time. When we got there they kept so much noise, I determined to leave. Before they got in it was found that Brown had left his crow bar at my shop, so I proposed to go after it. I went but did not return. About an hour and a half afterwards I heard the alarm of fire.

During this time, Peter and Ennis had suggested to the others to rob Collier & Pettus' counting-house, and represented that the money was always left on the counter; as the house was fire-proof, they were not afraid of any one breaking in. About three weeks before the robbery, I went to the counting-room—I had told the others that Ennis' statement was not true, and I went to satisfy myself. I went in after night, and showed a man who was there a bank bill, and asked him if it was good. Whilst he looked at it, I examined the room, and saw that Ennis was mistaken—I told them of it; Peter and Ennis, however, stuck to it, and said that, especially on Saturday night, they left their money on

the counter, which their own negroes put away on Sunday. In this story, they succeeded in convincing the others.

On the Friday night before the burning, the other three went down there, but I was not with them.

On Saturday evening, I left the shop, in company with Seward, and went to my wash-woman's and got a shirt, intending to go to a ball. We then went up to an eating-house, opposite the market, and got supper. After leaving the house, Seward told me the boys intended that night to go into Collier & Pettus'. We walked up to Pine street, and down Pine street. Madison and Brown were standing on the street, nearly opposite Pettus' door. Seward stopped and talked with Brown, and I went on down to the steamboat Missouri. Madison came down after me, and I come back with him on the levee. Here we all got together. Madison swore he would go in that night, or not at all. Seward said we would have to kill Baker, if we went in. To this, Madison replied that there was but one sleeping there—that he would go in, strike him one blow, stun him, gag him, and tie him, but not to kill him. After some talk, in which Madison swore he would do all himself, we agreed to it, and all went up the street. Seward and I stood up the street, so we could see into the door.

Madison went in, and left the door a little open, but as he let go of it to strike, it swung to. He struck Baker twice, I think. He then came out, handed me the bar, and told me to go in and strike him. I went in, and saw he was dead, or would die, so I struck the chair twice, and came out and gave the bar to Seward. Seward, at first, was afraid to go in; Madison told him he must go, and then he and Brown went in together. They hauled

the body (Baker's) round behind the counter, in front of the vault, and beat it some time. We could hear the blows, and when I saw the body, the face was all mashed up.

Brown then came out and called Madison, and the two went in. Seward came out, and he and I continued watching on the outside. After a while Madison came out and said there was another man slept there, and we must keep a sharp look-out for him. He went back into the house, and he and Brown searched the drawers and rooms for money and the keys, and tried the vault. After a while, Weaver and another man came along down Main street; they separated at the corner. Weaver came down the street whistling, and passed us where we were standing, by the door on the opposite side. He ran across the street to the door, and knocked. Some little time elapsed before the door was opened. As he stepped in, Brown struck him—the blow fell upon his chin, and knocked him down. He hallooed once in a very feeble voice, and struggled a little. Brown repeated the blows until he was dead. We could hear the blows distinctly.

After Weaver was killed, Madison came out and told us to come in—that there were no more to come. Madison then tried the hinges of the vault door; said it was no use, and shortly after went away, taking with him one of the bars. He and Brown both had bars. He had examined Baker's body, and taken out his watch, but put it back into his pocket again, and it was burnt up with him. Seward took a cloak and threw over Baker's body; it looked very bad, and disturbed him very much.

Brown and I were down on our knees, trying to force off the lower hinge of the door. Seward had gone out, and I think we would have succeeded, but Brown kept swearing so awfully at the dead bodies, especially Baker's, which was just by us, that I

got scared, and refused to work any longer. Brown then quit, got up and took Weaver's watch, cloth cloak, and a pair of black pantaloons. He then proposed we should take Weaver's body and lay it in the bed, and set the bed on fire. I objected, and went and got a musquito bar and spread over it. We broke open a box of cigars and took what we wanted. Brown then commenced firing the house; I put fire into the desk in the counting-room, and left the house. Brown fired the bed and wardrobe, and set a cask in the store on fire, also some boxes of cigars. He spread the fire in several places, and then came out, locked the door, and walked up the alley north from the store, and laid the key down; and we three went up to my shop and staid there the residue of the night.

On Sunday morning, I opened my shop as usual. Brown and Seward, before day, took the cloak, and, filling it with rocks, threw it into the river, near the Dry Dock; Seward also threw his pantaloons away, as they were bloody. During the morning, I shaved, as customary—several of my customers talked of the desperate transactions of the night previous; I, however, kept up as good face as I could. That evening I went to church in the lower end of the city. As I went down, I stopped at Leah's—saw Madison, Brown and Seward there; after a while, Ennis came in. We drank several times, and I left. At church I saw Leah; she was up before the altar giving in her experience.

On Monday, about 10 o'clock, I saw Brown and Seward at Leah's. I went out, and when I came back, Ennis was there; Brown had brought him. Brown had been talking to him, and asked me, in Ennis' presence, if I had not destroyed Weaver's watch—I replied, yes. The way this came was thus: Brown took the watch and left it on a shelf in my shop; I told him about it, and he did not take it away. I then examined it,

and found there was no name on it, and concluded I might as well have it as any one else; so I took it, and, to avoid any trouble, I told them I had destroyed it—broke it up. Subsequently, when I was leaving the city, I left the watch and my clothes with a friend, who, however, knew nothing about it, and was very much astonished when I afterwards sent to his house for it.

Madison, in a few days determined to go to New Orleans—Brown and Seward to Ohio. Ennis, I understood, was very anxious to get the two last off, but never said any thing to me about leaving. When he had seen Brown off, he came to me and said, "Let them suspect now, and be damned; I have got the boys all off." I talked to him some time, and told him there was no danger, unless we all came in together—we then drank and separated.

Shortly after that, I had the offer of the steward's place on the Omega, and I took it and went up the Missouri as high as Iatan. On our return, Messrs. McDowel and Atchison came on board from the Col. Woods and took me. Soon after they took me, they began questioning me, and repeatedly told me I had better tell, and if I didn't, the people at St. Louis would burn me. I would not tell them any thing, and did not. I stated that all I knew about it was what Madison had told me. Mr. McDowel read the account from the Republican, and I told him it was not true so far as regarded myself. The only thing in which I committed myself was to Mr. Atchison, and I did that when I was mad. He asked me, after asking various questions, if we were all in the store when Weaver came in? and I replied, "Yes, we were all in, and the young man came down whistling."

The moment it was out, I thought of it, and regretted it. I told the same story to the grand jury which I had told on the boat.

With my trial and the incidents, I am satisfied. I know that, by the laws of the land I merited the punishment I suffer; but it would be some satisfaction if I could feel that the facts were obtained from me in the manner the world supposes they were. I, however, acquit the witnesses against me of all wrong intention—they doubtless did what their judgments and their consciences approved. To my counsel, Mr. Spalding, I tender my thanks; he made more out of my case than, from the testimony, I expected.

To my friends and acquaintances I bid a lasting farewell—to my companions and associates, a final adieu! That we may all meet again in that land of rest, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest," is the dying prayer of one for whom there is no hope this side of the grave.

FAREWELL!

Confession of Charle Brown

A Man of Color

I know that my career in life is nearly run—that in a few more hours I must stand in the presence of my God, to render up an account of my stewardship. The sentence of the law has been passed upon me, and I know there is no power on earth that will interpose to save me from the doom under which I labor. I go to meet my God. Before I enter the bar of that tribunal, before whom all must stand, I, in compliance with what I esteem a duty to my fellow-men, make this, my solemn confession of the acts of my life. My name will go down to the grave coupled with crime and disgrace. I must die a felon's death. I must meet my God as a murderer; but I know that his mercies are large and free, and I hope to appear at his bar with a conscience purified by conviction and repentance, and washed in the blood of that Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

To myself, a confession of my course of life can do no good. I must soon be beyond the power of this world's injuries and the reach of its pleasures. I have nothing to expect for myself on this side of eternity; but I leave many friends—many associates, companions, and relatives—and, hardest of all, I separate from a dear wife and child. These are yet in the land of mercy, and to them I would speak in the warning voice of one from the dead, conjuring them to prepare to meet their God, for the swift-winged messengers of God's vengeance come at such an hour as no man knoweth, and in the midst of life we may be nearest to death. That I have sinned often and repeatedly against God and my fellow-men, my present unhappy condition too plainly tells. To attempt to

justify these transgressions—if it were possible to justify them—would now be unavailing; but I pray the reader to mark that I have been lured on from violation to violation of law, not so much by the love of wickedness as from a conviction that I was fulfilling God's pleasure, and doing my fellow-men, especially my colored brethren, a service. I acted from a conviction of right, and from a warm and enthusiastic desire to avenge the wrongs of my people. In my zeal for their emancipation, I forgot that the violation of law, in one case, only begets the desire and steels the heart to further and more aggravated violations. That crime is progressive, and that he who steps into its way, though to do what he believes a good act, knows not where his career may end—like myself, his end may be shame, sorrow and disgrace.

These reflections have come to me too late to save myself; but I pray those who have known me—those who have shared with me in perils, and rejoiced with me in my triumphs, to pause and consider well the matter. Mark well my words! He who violates the laws of his God or his country, in small things, will, sooner or later, steel his feelings, and so drown the admonitions of his conscience, that the slightest temptations or his own necessitie may lead him, in an unguarded moment, to the commission of the worst of crimes; and, like me, in the spring-time of life, he may stand before his fellow-men a degraded outcast from the smallest sympathies. In the honesty of a heart, now borne down and broken by sorrow and guilt, I pray God that you may think well of these things whilst the lamp of life holds out to burn.

I was born in South Carolina, about the 18th or 20th of August, in the year 1814 or '15, about fifteen miles from Jacksonborough. My father, James Brown, was a free

man of color. He owned a small farm, on which my mother, Hannah, (also free) resided with her family, consisting of six daughters and four sons. My father was chiefly employed and spent most of his time as overseer for a widow lady, Mrs. McKanse, who had a large farm about three miles from Jacksonborough. My early life was spent chiefly in idleness. At one time, my father sent me to school in Jacksonborough, to a Mrs. Goodlin, but not liking the restraint, I ran away in a short time. From that period until I was about sixteen years old, I spent my time with various persons, and at various places. It would be uninteresting to run through a history of my early life, as it contains nothing more than may be found in the history of any boy's life. However, that I may be identified by those with whom I once resided, it may be well to state, that during my minority, I resided, at various times, with the following persons, and at the following places: At Sumpterville, with Mr. Murry; at Chitow; at Wiltown, with a man named Price; at Horse Shoe, with a Mr. Rump. I also resided several summers in Charleston city, and lived with Mr. Price, on King street, and with Mr. White, on Meeting street.

When I was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, I went to New Orleans as a servant for Mr. James McDonald. Shortly after my arrival, I hired at the Bishop Hotel, and remained there one season as a pastry cook. In the summer, I went to Cincinnati. Before leaving Charleston, I had heard and studied considerably about the abolition of slavery and the freedom of slaves, and had imbibed a strong passion to engage in the cause. I knew one or two abolitionists in Charleston, and had frequently conversed with them on the subject, but was considered too young then to engage in the business, and too inexperienced to be trusted. At Cincinnati, I became acquainted with

several white men, members of the abolition society, and my desire to help the people of my own color to their freedom was greatly stimulated by their zeal and the warmth they manifested in the cause. I had frequently heard of the Oberlin College, and, with a view to prepare myself to be more efficient in the cause, I determined to go to school at that institution. I went, and entered as a student, and remained in all about two months. During this time, I acquired most of the limited education I have. I can read tolerably, and write a little. The citizens around this institution, as well as the professors and students in it, are abolitionists; and the amelioration of the condition of the slaves was a theme of frequent conversation. My feelings became more thoroughly enlisted, so much so that I became a complete enthusiast.

During the time I was at Oberlin a Convention of the Anti-Slavery Society of Ohio was held there. There was a large attendance at the convention. I conversed freely with many of the delegates and informed them that my residence was in New Orleans. After a full and free interchange of sentiments and views, I agreed to embark in the cause and assist in carrying out their schemes as also to incorporate myself as a member of the society. I have continued in the employ of the society up to the present time.

The Ohio State Anti-Slavery Society is very extensive and as I have always understood embraces the societies in Indiana and Illinois. They and the town or county societies in the state are called auxilliary societies.—There are auxilliary societies in nearly every town of any note on the Ohio River above and including Shawneetown, and in most of the principal towns in the interior. The largest portion of the members are those who believe the objects and purposes of the society right, and are willing to

contribute money to aid in the relief of slaves. These aid in preparing public sentiment for the adoption of laws for the emancipation of the slaves, but are seldom engaged in the active duties of running off or secreting them. I believe the whole number now enrolled in the Ohio State Society is about 18,000 male and female members. The female members however are the most numerous.

Every auxilliary society has a President, Secretary, Treasurer and other active officers and members, to whom the secret operations of the society alone are entrusted. The agents are employed by the State society. They have employed in the State of Virginia, South Carolinas, Kentucky and the South and South-western states about one hundred and fifty agents. Some of them however are under pay from the Boston and other eastern Anti-slavery societies. These agents are either stationary or travelling as circumstances may require. In most of the principal cities and at many other points they have a number of members who aid the agents in their operations but are not under pay. The officers generally, except the agents receive no pay. The officers of the auxilliary or principal societies supply the agents with blank certificates of freedom, purporting to be from some county remote from the field of his operations. The officers have several county Seals, counterfeits, which are used in making out the certificates of freedom, and the certificate usually is signed in the real name of the clerk of the county from which the certificates profess to be issued. Generally the names of counties far in the interior of Ohio or some other state are used. I remember that some of the blanks I have used purported to come from Banward, Mercer and some from another small county. The certificates from Ohio are usually written, and the impression of the seal is something

stamped on the paper and sometime a wafer is used. I have used blanks furnished from Boston and Baltimore, these were mostly printed and the seal was impressed on the paper alone. Whenever the authenticity of these certificates is disputed, by writing to any of the officers having the impression of the county seal of the proper county, they will forward what purports to be a copy of the record and a certificate, that it is truly recorded in such a county, book and page. Of course the certificates and copy of the records are counterfeits but they usually pass as genuine unless the master can trace his slave up regularly to his birth. The falsity of these papers is sometimes detected in the slave states, but they seldom succeed in finding who furnished them or from whence they came.

There is an entire reciprocity and a constant correspondence kept up between the Ohio State Anti-slavery Society and the Anti-slavery society of Boston, New York and other eastern towns. The agent of any society may send a slave to the care of any other and he will be received and treated in the same manner as if he was sent to the society to which the Agent belongs. Every agent knows the active members of all the societies and when and how to direct the runaway slave where to go and to whom to apply for assistance when he arrives at the place of destination.

The agents are paid various sums, from 20 to $50 per month by the society which sends them out, according to their zeal and success and the danger and risk they encounter. Then their pay and provision for enabling poor runaway slaves to get off is made in this manner: there is a small contribution levied on every member of the society. The goes into the Treasury. It is the duty of the Agent to prevail on slaves to runaway

from their masters, and when he finds one willing to go he is at liberty to advise him to steal and take with him any of his master's money or property which he can obtain the possession of. This is not regarded as stealing in a criminal sense, for the servant, who is regarded as free by the law of nature, having assisted the master in accumulating money or property has as much right by nature to a portion of it as the master himself, consequently, when he takes either he is only taking that which the assisted to make. It is only taking the result of his own labor. It is not often that slaves leave their masters without money. They mostly get some, and frequently as high as $12 or 1500. No definite or specific sum is demanded from the slave as a compensation for getting him away. If he is willing to go, the agent must give him free papers and help him off whether he has money or not. The slave will be sent to any place he may desire but if he has no particular place where he wishes to go, the agent may send him to any town where there is a society. He is directed, when he arrives at the town to go directly to a certain place in it and enquire for certain persons, generally blacks; to these he communicates the fact that he is a runaway slave and they inform the officers of the society, when a meeting is held and arrangements made for sending him off or secreting him. If he has no money a draft is made on the Treasury for a sufficient sum to defray expenses. When the runaway has money it is usually suggested to him that he ought to pay into the Treasury something as a compensation for the assistance in obtaining his own freedom and something to help off those unable to help themselves. The amount is left to himself, but usually, as his gratitude is greatly excited, he will give liberally. A runaway having a $1,000 usually gives the society from 3 to $500. Besides this, he will give the agent, who

helps him off, something. This the Agent has the right to keep over and above the pay he draws from the society.

Every member of the society knows that slaves are induced to run away, but very few know who is the agent that induced or helped them off. When a runaway arrives at a place, a great many members may know that there is a runaway in town, but generally it is kept as quiet as possible. The sending him away, or secreting him, is usually entrusted to only two or three, and generally no one but themselves know where he has been sent to. If the slave has no place he can secrete himself, in the interior of the states, he is usually sent directly to Canada, where he is beyond his master's power to take him. As I before restated, there are societies, in nearly every town, from Shawneetown up, on the Ohio; but I suppose the strongest societies are at Evansville, Mount Vernon, Madison, Cincinnati, Portsmouth, Steubenville and Pittsburgh. The societies in Cincinnati, Steubenville and Pittsburgh do more than any of the others, and do much in taking off slaves from their owners when travelling with the through the country. They are usually sent through by the direct stage route; but if the pursuit is hot, or the liability to capture very great, they are sent through by a more retired route. In the latter case, they are sent from one society to another, so that they may always have friends about them to defend them, or rescue them if taken. When they arrive at Detroit, Cleveland, or Buffalo, the society there passes them over into Canada.

There are in St. Louis, and throughout the state of Missouri, a number of Abolitionists. Some of them are members of societies in the East, and some of them are members of the Ohio society. There is also one or two agents usually in or about St.

Louis. I, however, am unaware of any regularly organized society in the state at this time. There was at one time, somewhere on the upper Mississippi, I think in Marion, an organized society. They sent away, in a short time, several slaves; but I have not heard any thing of their operations for a long time. When I first heard of them their affairs were in a flourishing condition, but some of the principal men left the country, and I understood the society had declined afterwards. I think they have made no report for some time.

Their are some members residing in St. Louis, who are very efficient. I have had several occasions to consult with them, and at the time of my arrest I was to return here and help off with a man slave and his wife, and some others who were under a partial agreement to go. The Agents in St. Louis and Mobile receive larger pay than any others, as it is believed they would be burned if detected.

Delegates from the various societies meet once a year. Their conventions are held at Oberlin or Columbus, and sometimes they have them under the guise of a camp meeting. The agents are required to keep a record of those they help off, and report to the society their names, and all the particulars of their escape. All the reports are brought into the general convention, but are exhibited to any but those who may be entrusted with the secrets.

This is a brief outline of the society; imperfect because I have no papers by which to refresh my memory.

There are also many slaves induced to run off and helped away from the south, by white men, not members of any anti-slavery society. These do it not from a disposition to

help the slave but to make a profit out of them. In these cases the slave mostly has some money, the most of which his white friend gets as a compensation for aiding his escape.

At the convention at Oberlin, before mentioned, after joining the society, I engaged to act as agent in helping slaves run away from their masters. When I first engaged I was to receive thirty dollars per month, but in a short time I proved myself so efficient, and got off so many, that my wages were raised to fifty dollars per month. My plan of operations was this: I determined to spend the fall, winter and spring months in Orleans, and the south, and the summer in Cincinnati.

Having supplied myself with blank free papers, I returned to New Orleans. My first attempt was on a bed-room servant, named Warrick, belonging to Mr. Bishop, and employed in the Hotel. I supplied him with a certificate of freedom, and secured him a passage on the Ben Sherrod to the mouth of the Cumberland. From thence he went on a St. Louis boat to Cincinnati, and was sent by stage to Canada.

I cannot pretend to remember all I have sent away. I have a list of them and a statement of the time and manner of their leaving, at my residence in Cincinnati. I have taken and assisted away from New Orleans and the surrounding country, I think about eighty; and from Vicksburgh and the neighborhood about sixteen. Besides these I supplied a great many with certificates and advised them how to get off, but in most of the cases I never knew whether they succeeded in getting away or not. In several cases I know that persons whom I have sent, and others whom I had advised, were apprehended and brought back. The following are all the cases I can now state with sufficient distinctness:

I sent away a boy by the name of Palmer—I cannot recollect his owner's name, but think is was Fornier, a Frenchman. He was engaged in digging the upper basin. I supplied him with papers, and secured him a birth on a boat for Madison, Ia., from whence he was sent to Canada.

I sent of a man named Odeal—he belonged to Mr. Baveny, living on the battle-ground, about five miles from Orleans. He went to Pittsburgh. I secured him a passage on the old Philadelphia.

I afterwards sent another on the Gen. Brown, named Azrell, a carpenter, also belonging to Mr. Baveny. He stopped at Portsmouth, and took the canal.

A man named Abraham, belonging to Madame Wilton, about 60 miles above Orleans, on the left hand side as you ascend, heard of me and sent me word that he wanted to get off. I sent for him to come down—he did so, but he had no money. The white abolitionists of New Orleans raised him a small sum, and I sent him away on the steamboat Orleans.

I sent away, on the Rocky Mountain, a man named Benner. He belonged to a Frenchman, whose name I do not remember. The boy staid at the Water-works, at the old Baisin.

I sent on the Henry Clay a mulatto man named John Smith. He belonged to Mr. Bushell who lived on the Battle Ground, not very far from Mr. Baveny.

I put a boy named Henry, belonging to a Mr. Smith of New Orleans, on board the Sultana. The Captain interrogated me very closely about the boy before he would take him. Finally, he consented to take him.

On one occasion I made arrangements to get away a man named Lewis, his wife and their three children, belonging to a man named Warner, living back of the French Exchange on Royal street. I supplied them with papers, but they not being able to leave when I did, I directed them how to proceed. When Lewis was ready he took his passage on the A. M. Phillips, a white man helping him get it. At Baton Rouge they were arrested and thrown into prison. I was at Vicksburgh and immediately wrote to a lawyer in New Orleans who procured the necessary affidavits and process and got them out before they were advertised, and sent them on to Cincinnati.

I sent away on the brig Mary of Boston, a boy named James, belonging to a Mr. Adams living on Burgoin street. I sent him to a friend in Boston, with instructions to get him into business there. He was supplied with Boston free papers, and the Captain of the brig did not know that he was a slave.

I sent away a boy named Guss, a bricklayer and a very intelligent boy. He belonged to a bricklayer whose name I don't remember. I sent him on the Augusta. His wife had been previously sent to some part of Delaware. Guss went to Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, and to where his wife was.

On one occasion when going up to Cincinnati in the Rocky Mountain, I took with me a man named John, belonging to the widow Bruce, residing on Canal street. At another time I took his wife up in the Diana; I have forgotten the person to whom she belonged: and at another time I took her sister away.

I had been absent at Cincinnati, and when I returned a colored man came to me and informed me that a Dutchman (his name I can't pronounce) who owned his wife

Polly, was about to remove to Texas and carry her there. I furnished Polly and another girl named Mary with free papers, and a negro man called London, sometimes London Moss, who belonged to a black man named David Drake, residing about a square below St. Mary's Market. I took the three on board the steamboat Gen. Harrison and left for Cincinnati. On the way up, the boy London appeared so much dejected and borne down with the idea of running away that I began to fear he would expose me. He had not over half sense. One night, about 20 miles below the mouth of the Ohio, about 3 o'clock he had been talking about the dangers, &c. of running away, and seemed to regret it so much that I determined to get rid of him. He was standing near the guard of the boat, I believe in the act of drawing up water, when I gave him a little shove and he went into the river. I never saw him afterwards. I believe he went under the wheel and arose no more.

I took a mulatto woman named Frances belonging to a milliner living on Canal street. Mr. McMasters, the broker, boarded with her. Some time previous her husband, who belonged to Mr. McMasters, had run away from his master in New York city and gone to Canada. He wrote back to some of his acquaintances to send him his wife Frances, and they applied to me to aid her. I supplied her with free papers and took her on board the Chester and accompanied her as far as Vicksburgh. I instructed her to come to St. Louis to the charge of a white man who would send her round to me at Cincinnati. Instead of obeying my directions and coming to Cincinnati, she remained in St. Louis and I subsequently had to come after her.

I gave free papers to a boy name Frederick and his wife. The boy staid, I believe, in the cotton press, and belonged, as I understood, to Mr. Ferret, the present Mayor of

New Orleans. Frederick took with him a little daughter of his by another woman whom he had kept. The little girl had a sore ankle. I took them down to the levee in a carriage and put them on board the steamboat Vienna. I directed Frederick that as the boat was slow, if she did not reach Evansville in seven days, to stop there; but if she got up in that time he might continue on to Louisville. The boat did not reach Evansville in the seven days, but he was so anxious to go on that he disobeyed my instruction and went on to Louisville. A boat which had left after the Vienna reached Louisville before her. The police were on the look out and they were taken up and sent back.

I gave papers and directions to a boy named Brooks who belonged as I understood to the Water Works. I don't know whether he got away not.

I sent away a mulatto man on the Wm. L. Robeson, called Missell. He was a prisoner in the Calaboose, but they allowed him to go about in the streets.

I sent away a man named John Baptiste; he hired his own time. I never knew his master's name. I sent him on the Farmer.

I sent away on the Warren a man named Brown. He belonged to a man living on Canal street whose name I cannot recollect.

I took away a girl named Amelia. Her mistress was in France. I do not remember the man's name who had the custody of her.

The slaves generally understood my business and whenever any of their acquaintances wished to run away they sent them to me. In general I escaped not only from detection but from suspicion. In one instance a colored man was courting a young woman belonging to a Mr. Ross. They both wanted to go to Canada. I advised them not

to marry until they got away, but they resolved to get married. After they were married I supplied the woman with free papers. The husband became jealous and one night when I was staying at Mr. Ross' Kitchen he informed on me and brought Mr. Ross with a company of Police to catch me; I however succeeded in getting off from them.

During this I was hired a part of the time at different places in N. Orleans I staid a while with Mrs. Ousterd on Canal street, right hand side going down, at the French Exchange on Chartres street, and at the Richeson Hotel, portions of the time as pastry cook and at other times as bedroom servant. I also spent some time at the Pinkard Hotel in Vicksburg. A large share of the time I spent on the river trading. I purchased a great many stolen articles from slaves which I carried on the river and sold out as opportunity offered.

During the time I was at Vicksburg I took or sent off the following slaves.

A man named Joshua, a preacher, he belonged to a man named Fox, who lived on the hill. I took him off with me on the Ambassador.

I carried away on the Tuscarora a man named Henry, belonging to Dr. Pucket, a one eyed man, living on Main street.

I sent away on the Wm. L. Robison to Memphis, a man named Scipie. He belonged to on Irish man who kept a cotton yard on a back street opposite the Washington Hotel. From Memphis he went on the Warden Pope to Louisville.

I took away a man named John M'Dowel, sometimes called Harris, he belonged I believe to a firm of Harris & M'Dowel. The latter lives on the hill in a very large brick house.

I took on board of the William French, a woman and her child belonging to a young man residing opposite Vicksburg, and connected with the Ferry. I had not given her her free papers. Her master was on board and detected her.

The laws and police in Vicksburg was very rigid and I could not succeed well there. I however gave a great many free papers and instructions how to proceed and left them to take their own time to get away. When I last left New Orleans, I had a list of about 60 whom I had promised to get off this spring or summer. I had determined to quit the business, for the risk of detection was every year increasing. I would have quit about a year ago, but the officers of the society would not agree to it.

About a year ago a Miss, ___ ___, of Washington City, a yellow girl came with her brother to Evansville. She remained in Evansville with an uncle to go to school and her brother went to Oberlin. I became acquainted with her and wanted to marry her but her brother opposed it; he is also an agent for the company and a preacher. After he left Evansville I prevailed on Miss ___ ___, to visit Cincinnati and Reading to see some acquaintances; at Reading I married her. She knew the risks of the business, I was engaged in and repeatedly urged me to quit it, which I promised to do. When I first went to Cincinnati, I joined the Methodist church and have continued a punctual and regular member whenever in Cincinnati, but made no profession of religion when out of the city. During my whole life I never indulged in the use of liquor at all, and never was intoxicated.

I have not indulged much in stealing or robbing for I had business enough without it. My principal business when not employed as a waiter, was to purchase articles from

slaves and sell them on the river. During my stays in New Orleans and Vicksburg, I committed a few small thefts, of which I remember the following.

On one occasion I overtook a well dressed man in the street, leaving the St. Charles, he was drunk and had his gold watch in his hand. I laid my hand on his shoulder and walked with him some distance. He gave it to me to look at, and I walked off and left him. The name engraved on it I think was Moss. I afterwards sold it to a white man on Chartrer street.

I went to a Scotchman who had just returned from Mexico with some money, goods, &c. He wanted lodgings, I took him to a place for lodging and had his things taken to another; I repented afterwards of the deed, and sent a man to show him where most of his things were.

On various occasions I took several articles, such as pistols, knives, beads, &c., from Mr. Striker, hardware merchant living in a four story house on the levee. He had some blacks who staid in the store and with whom I frequently went in, sometimes they took articles and I bought them.

I also obtained a great many articles of dry goods from the store of Messrs. Auguste & Bordoir on Chartres Street. I went in whenever I pleased, with the boys who staid about the store.

On several occasions I stole some small articles, such as pencils, penknives &c., out of the store of Mr. Johns; he kept a piano and music store about six doors further up Chartres street. I remember once of taking five cards of silver pencils from him.

On one occasion I went up the coast about 60 miles on business of the society. I went up on the Brilliant and when ready to return, I took of Mr. Vassel living nearly opposite the French College, a good horse, bridle and a new Spanish saddle. I rode the horse down in a single day. He was nearly given out when I arrived opposite the city. I gave him into the hands of a boy at a stable to take care of him, and took the saddle with me into the city, and afterwards sold it. I understood the owner afterwards got his horse.

I bought at different times large amounts of silver spoons and jewelry from slaves and others. They were stolen articles and when not marked were easily disposed of at a large profit on the river. When spoons were marked I had them run up into bars.

I had frequently heard of Madison, before I became acquainted with him, as a man of extraordinary talents and great daring. The boys about Orleans both loved and feared him. I first saw him on the Tuskarora steamboat, where he was pointed out to me. I, however, did not succeed in making his acquaintance until in January, a year ago. After our acquaintance, Madison said he wanted to make a big raise and quit the business. I proposed to him to go out of the United States and he partially agreed to, if he could make as large a raise as he wished. Madison had a plan to rob Mr. Barker's brokers office opposite Bishop's Hotel. We watched it several nights before we attempted it. I believed he every night deposited his money in banks as he took out a tin box. One Sunday night Madison, myself and a negro named Nay or Nose, I think he was a slave, I did not know him, neither did I know to whom he belonged—we went in by an alley to the back window. Madison broke the window open, went in and unbarred the door and we all went in. With a crow bar Madison broke open the iron chest. We got

$1500 in silver and a gold guard chain probably worth $60. The loose silver we put into a bucket and set three bags on top of it; that Madison carried away. I took the chain and a japaned tin box; there were two cups fitted into the box, these contained a large amount of small change. We went to a house which Madison had on Esplanade street. We bought some Champaign and other liquor on the way. At the house we devided the money. I counted it and got rather the largest share as I cheated the others in the count. The negro Nay got quite drunk, we however gave him about $300. I took my share away in a market basket. Madison took his in the bucket and Nay his in a cloth. Madison kept the guard chain, and I understood from him that he afterwards gave it to Nay. We left Madison's house about daylight.

Last fall when I was in Vicksburg a slave named John, I do not know his master's name, but he worked mostly about the stores, proposed robbing a jeweller's store kept by a Dutchman, on Main Street. The store had folding doors and the Dutchman would get drunk and go out and not bolt the stationary door, consequently the lock did no good. We watched him four or five nights and finally we found the doors in this condition and went in; we got 14 silver watches and two small gold watches, and a gold watch case. I gave the negro two or three of them, the residue I sold.

There was a slave in Vicksburg named Jim Perry, he belonged last I think to Mr. Diggs. I once tried to run him off but he did not follow my advice and was retaken and brought back. He stole a fine watch from some young man whose room he attended and gave it to me as a compensation for my services

On one occasion I met in Vicksburg a black man whose name I don't know. He was rather simple and had a very fine gold watch, which I supposed he had stolen. One night I stole his watch and threw him down into a deep gully or ravine.

The foregoing are the leading events of my life prior to my coming to St. Louis. During this time I had accumulated some money and property in Cincinnati. Of all my crimes I never committed one there, for I thought it necessary to keep up my character there and I always contemplated a time when I would retire and live with my family in peace and security.

When I returned to Cincinnati last fall I found that Frances, the milliners slave before mentioned, had not come on as I had directed, I came round to St. Louis after her. When I arrived here I found that a free man named Lawson had courted and married her. Feeling bound to her first husband to send her on, I, after considerable delay broke off her engagement to Lawson and sent her to Cincinnati and from there she was sent to her husband in Canada.

On arriving I staid at Warrick's shop, but eat at Leah's. The boys had a project on foot to rob Messrs. E. & A. Tracy's store on Water street, and two or three nights after my arrival, I went to help them. We went in the back way. Madison and I broke open the window; when Madison went in and opened the door and we all entered. There was Madison, Seward, Warrick and myself. We opened the drawers and found no money; I found a silver cup. We then laid down the iron chest took it apart and got some silver, I suppose upwards of $200. We went down to Leah's and devided the money. Seward, Warrick and myself received $30 a piece. I kept the cup and Warrick stole the gold.

When I left Cincinnati, I intended to go to New Orleans, but about this time Warrick spoke of a large amount of money in Burlington, and we concluded to go there. He represented that there was a bank there which was untrue. Upon the day agreed upon to start, Seward got drunk, and could not go, and Warrick gave us the slip—I suppose afraid to go, after having lied so about the bank. We were to go up on the Agnes, but the captain would not take Madison from St. Louis; so he and I crossed over and went up to Alton, and there got on board. Seward came up on the Rosalie. We all got together at Warsaw. At Burlington we saw no chance, and concluded to go on to Galena. The boat could not go up Fever river—we were landed on a Island and walked up. We watched the bank officers a number of nights, to ascertain when they went out, how many slept in the house, and where they slept. At length we satisfied ourselves that there were three that slept in the house. Our first plan was for Madison to go into what we thought to be the Cashier's room up stairs and kill him and get the keys, but we could not find the means to get into the room, so we concluded to go in at one of the lower windows. The night we went was dark and very stormy, the wind blew loud and hard. There was a preacher up stairs at the time walking about. Madison on the second attempt opened the window and went in, lit a candle and examined the room. He then sent Seward who was outside to tell me he could find no money, that the drawers had all been taken out & carried into another room, & the door was fast on the inside. Madison then opened the door and I went in. He was for carrying out the iron chest, but on turning it over I found it had nothing but papers in it. We then thought of going into the other room by a

window on the outside, but when we came out it was too late. We returned and set fire to the desks, a champaign basket on the stairs and some old papers &c. and left.

On our way, down Madison ran his head against a Jewellers door, but could not burst it open. He then took up a stick of wood and broke it open. We all ran off and in a few minutes the alarm of fire was given. I went and worked a while at the fire and then went to the boarding house.

A night or two following, we attempted to rob Mr. Stillman's store. Madison went in by the window but came out in a few minutes, not getting more than about $15. We left Galena on the Ione, but the Captain made us eat in the social hall and we would not stand that, we accordingly left the boat at Bellevieu and the next evening took our passage down on the Illinois.

Shortly after our return we resolved to rob Sinclair Taylor's. One windy night we went there. Madison broke open the window with a big rock.—Whilst the rest were looking for the keys I went into the back store, when I came back they had the chest open. We got but little good money and considerable bad. I broke open a trunk and found two gold pieces. We took some clothing and other things and put fire in the wardrobe and desk, and left.

Ennis who was frequently with us urged us to go to Alton but we refused. We talked of robbing Braun & Hollander on Main Street and watched their store several nights, but could not get in. Madison had been in before but did not get much. During this time and previous, Ennis and Peter Charleville had urged trying the counting room of Collier & Pettus. Peter said the vault was down stairs and they never carried the silver

down but left it on the counter. It was agreed to try it; and at first we thought to go in though the window when the young man, Mr. Baker, went to supper. We watched him a number of evenings. Seward first watched but his information was not satisfactory and Madison and I went and watched two or three nights. One night we followed him to his boarding house and staid until he returned. During this time we discovered that there were two men slept in the store. One night whilst we were watching they came to the east end of the house and both looked out of the windows some time. They were generally in and the doors locked before ten o'clock.

On Thursday night we were to go in certainly, and by this time we had concluded there was no alternative but to kill Mr. Baker. Some of them urged that we should go in and, if necessary, every man kill his man. I did not like that proposition and opposed it. During the evening, Warrick went in and showed Baker a bill and asked if it was good. Baker replied to him, he thought not, but if he would come in the morning he could tell him more correctly. We continued to discuss the subject until the door was locked and then we went home.

On Friday night the Missouri came up and it was said that Mr. Collier had brought up a large amount of money. We went that night on the levee and consulted about the matter a long while. I opposed going in that night for I thought Friday an unlucky day. Whilst consulting the door was locked. As we went home, we went by Col. Brant's whose house we had frequently spoke of robbing, and which Madison had before examined, I understood with Col. Brant's carriage driver. There was a carriage before

the door and we did not attempt it. We probably would have tried it but were so confident of making a big haul at Mr. Collier's.

Saturday evening before dark, we all, with Ennis, met at Leah's and talked the matter over. It was well understood, that to get in we must kill Baker and probably Weaver, if he was there or came before we accomplished our purpose. We parted to meet at the store of Mr. Collier's. Warrick and Seward went to Warrick's shop, Madison and I remained sometime and then went down. We had been at the store sometime when Warrick and Seward came We saw Baker go and return from supper. When he returned we waited a while to see who else might go in. In about half an hour a man came down and went in. He remained with Baker probably half an hour and came out and went away. During this interval we were walking round watching the door and discussing how we should go in. Madison went into the alley by Collier's store and set a barrel or box up by the door which opens on the alley and looked in through the sash over the door. Madison and Warrick were several times upon the barrel. When the person who had gone in came out and Baker was by himself, Madison looked into the room again and said that Baker was sitting down writing.

My object in delaying them was to make it as late as possible before we went in. At length Madison swore that if it was not accomplished that night he would have nothing more to do with it. Soon after Madison went in with his crow bar in one hand, and a bill in the other. I could not hear the blow he gave Baker, but I heard the body fall upon the floor. I was standing at the time in the alley by Collier's house. Madison then came out and Warrick went in and struck him two or three times. When he came out he

gave the bar to Seward, but he hesitated about going in. Madison then said to Seward and me, go in and pull the body round behind the counter. We went in and did so. We spread newspapers down on the floor where the blood had run, for there was a great quantity on the floor. I struck Baker two or three times. Seward then went out, and Madison came in. We searched the drawers and desks for the keys. In the desks we got a little money. We then went into the other rooms, and finally concluded to try the vault. Madison and I worked sometime on the door, trying to force the shutter off the hinge; during which Madison broke his bar. At length Madison quit and swore it was no use to try, as we could not get in. I then punched a hole into the bricks by the side of the door.

Whilst we were thus engaged we heard Weaver coming. I told Madison to go and kill him. Madison swore that he would not, that he had killed his share and that he would kill no more. I took the bar and went to the door, unlocked it and let Weaver in. When he stepped in a step or two, he suddenly stopped and looked round the room in apparent astonishment. He evidently saw something unusual. I had placed the candle on the desk at which Baker had been writing, which was to the right as you enter and nearly up against the north wall, Madison had blown out the other candle and was standing by the vault door. As Weaver turned his head to look at the table, I struck him, holding the crow bar in both hands. The blow was given with all my force and fell on the side of the head and neck. He fell uttering a low and faint groan and struggled a little, but I repeated the blows so quick that it was not long before he was entirely dead.

We then all went out to take air, and whilst out the watch, as we supposed, came along up Main Street.—We scattered and run down to the levee, and hid behind piles of

lead and planks on the bank. When they had passed, Madison, Warrick and myself went in again. We tried the vault a second time, but with no better success. At length Madison said it must be nearly day, and he would work no more—he would go home, for we could not get into the vault any how. To show him how late it was I took out Weaver's watch—it was not yet eleven o'clock. He, however would not stay. When he left, Warrick and I continued to try to force the vault, but finding it impossible to open it, we set fire to the building and left. I came out last and locked the door and threw the key into the alley. We went up to Warrick's shop and staid there during the night.

The next day I met at Leah's house all the boys, and we conversed some time about it. We met at the same place again on Monday. Ennis was in good spirits, and tried to cheer up the others, assuring them that there was no danger of suspicion falling on them. I went over a great portion of the town and listened to the conversations which were had at different places about it.

On Tuesday I determined to return to Cincinnati, and accordingly took my passage on the Goddess of Liberty. Madison was going with me, but the captain objected to taking him, as he was not free. He then left the boat and determined to go to Orleans on the Missouri. I reached Cincinnati, and remained there several days, during which I watched very closely the accounts in the papers from St. Louis. At length Peter Charleville and two white men came on. I heard of their arrival shortly after the boat landed, and I felt sure of their purpose. Several of my friends both white and black, also heard that they were after me, and determined to get Peter out, and, if necessary to kill him. With that view they hunted for him until a late hour of the night, but could not find

him. Their purpose was to get him down into what is called the Bottom, below Cincinnati, to play cards, and to make him drunk, when I intended to shoot him. I went to my house, which is up in the back part of the city close by the Wesleyan Chapel, and loaded my pistols and guns, as I expected they would attempt to take me during the night. I slept none during the night, and whenever the dogs barked or any other noise occured I got up and looked out. I now resolved to go to Orleans, where I thought I would be more safe from apprehension than if I was in Canada; and if they pursued me there, I intended taking a ship for Liverpool. My wife was expecting daily to be confined, and would not hear of my going away. She knew nothing of my situation, and supposed I was going to Orleans on my ordinary business. During the night I slipped into a carpet bag my papers and such things as I wanted to take with me, and at daylight, whilst my wife was saying her prayers at the foot of the bed, I slipped out. I carried my carpet bag down to Mr. Benson's, on the wharf, and left it there, and took a turn on the wharf to meet Peter. I had disguised myself in such a manner that I thought he would not know me. I, however, did not meet him. As I was returning up Sixth street, near Main, I saw Peter coming up Main, and a white man and one of the Cincinnati constables with him. I saw that he recognized me, for he crossed over to the side next to me. I, however, watched for an opportunity and slipped into a little alley. I then went down into Broadway, and down again to the landing. I then went down to the Bottom, but there were none of the boys there. I then returned and determined to send my carpet bag on board the mail boat, and when she was leaving to slip on board and thus reach Louisville. Going up Columbia street, I again saw Peter and the white man coming down. I slipped into a salt yard and

remained there until they passed. Peter had, in his first recognition of me, observed my dress. To aid in my disguise I took off my coat and tied it up in a pocket handkerchief. This and my umbrella I had in my hand. I met a man at a corner—he stopped me and enquired if I lived here and how long. I saw by the change in his face that I was detected. After a few remarks, he told me to put on my coat and go with him to the mayor. This I refused—he attempted to lay hold of me, and I endeavored to strike him in the eyes with my umbrella. I struck him and knocked him down—he sprang up, and drew his pistol and threatened to shoot me. If I could have found a rock then I would have killed him. A grocery keeper on the opposite side of the street, and some others, ran out and told him he must let me alone—if he had any thing against me he must get a writ before he could take me. The white man got a Spanish looking man who was passing with a basket, to watch me, whilst he ran off I supposed for a writ. I walked off slowly, intending to go to the Bottom; but the scuffle had collected a crowd of boys round, and they followed me up.—Before I had gone far the other constables came round in front and arrested me. I was taken before the Mayor and committed for further hearing the next day. When before the mayor the second day I could easily have effected my escape, for I saw from two to three hundred persons in the crowd ready to raise a mob and help me off; but it was understood that I was to be sent back to prison for a further trial the next day, and my friends determined to release me that night from the jail. In a little while after I was in jail, a carriage drove up and I was put on board a boat before my friends knew it. At Louisville I was lodged in jail one night. There were several in the jail whom I knew, and if I had remained a night longer, would have helped me away.

With my trial and its incidents I am fully satisfied. My counsel, Mr. Darby, has my thanks for his exertion in my behalf. I have bid farewell to life and all its hopes and joys. I go to meet my doom in another world. In leaving this, which I have so deeply injured, I have but one request to make. My wife, I understand, was confined three days after I left her, and delivered of a daughter child. I commit her and my offspring to the mercies of the world. I trust I leave her a competency to live upon; but what I would ask of community is, that they shall not impute to her and her child, the offences of the husband and father Let not the brand of infamy or the finger of scorn be pointed at them. They have in no wise offended; and if I had listened to a loving wife's council I would now be free from crime. God grant that we may all meet in that world where there is no more trouble nor death. Adieu!