PART ONE

YOUTH AND REVOLT OF HARRIET TUBMAN

CHAPTER I

THE BREAD OF SERVICE

Although the time of Harriet Tubman's beginning as a slave is without certainty the *times* are not; and that is more important to the understanding of this woman than the detail of a date.

She was born during the dark and starless night of slavery,[1] probably in the year 1820. The place of origin was Bucktown, a village of a few hundred persons, in Dorchester County, Maryland. Harriet was the property of a plantation owner, Edward Brodas, who owned so many slaves that he hired out to other farmers those he did not need.[2]

Could we have the opinion of her master at this hour, he would perhaps date her birth even later, saying, "She was born about 1823 when she first began to run errands for me." Fortunately, a century or more afterward, the opinion of Brodas is not weighty, and although Harriet was certainly fetching things for her master in the middle of the third decade of the nineteenth century, she was breathing and bawling in a ramshackle cabin a few years earlier.

In a shack that was rain-soaked, discolored, without windows and almost airless, she took her place alongside an already large family. The slapdash framework leaned and it hung on as did most slave shanties. Somehow it weathered the storms, and its poor hungry boards rattled a raw kind of music when the wind blew.

Harriet's American ancestry traces back as far as 1725 or 1750,

for it is known that her grandparents on both sides were full-blooded Negroes who came, shackled, from Africa. The wretched Middle Passage, with its torture and revolt, was the pioneer beginning of her forebears. These ancestors set foot deep into the earth, and they remained rooted to it for centuries. Lowliest of the lowly, earthiest of the earthy, Harriet's ancestry was of that period in the world's history when nations arose and expanded, cost what it might —for the Negro in particular. In the America of Harriet's grandparents, the Underground Railroad, of which Harriet became the guiding genius, was already taking root. On to the North, on to Canada. This became the primary thought of the blacks, uniting them, giving them a common aspiration. And at night, over special paths and with secret aid, they went. By 1750 there had been thirty slave revolts in the United States area and the legend of these had spread among the Negroes, giving impetus to the development of new underground courses to the North. In spite of repression and denial of education, the black people were finding a way, even in the time of Harriet's grandparents. When she was born a vast network of underground channels leading to the "north star and freedom" had already spread over the continent. By word of mouth the news passed of a land of freedom up above, and songs of this country sprang into the Southern air. More than this, by the time Harriet was toddling about on the Brodas plantation the Negro people, from Delaware down through Texas, had become united by their tradition of revolt and escape, and more than one Negro was planning a black republic in the South.

So dissolute was the slave system that Harriet, like all chattel, was not entitled to a legal name upon birth. Since her parents, similarly, were not permitted a civil marriage, the girl inherited two sets of names: from her mother, Harriet Green, and from her father, Benjamin Ross. The new-born was called Harriet Ross, thus combining some identity from each parent. In accordance with Southern custom Harriet, when she worked out, was called Araminta, a name amiably conferred upon most slave girls. Likewise, Harriet, as a token of respect, had to refer to her mistress as Miss Susan. This was a kind of unwritten law, based upon the policy that familiarity was unwise, and it was wrong to grant a slave anything—

including a name of her own preference. So, variously as Harriet Ross and Araminta Ross, she plied her childhood on the Brodas plantation and in the service of others.

Scattered and fragmentary though the information may be on Harriet's kin, all accounts converge upon the point that she was an intermediate member of a family of eleven children. She had two sisters carried away in a chain gang, one of whom left two children.[3] There are accounts of six brothers, William, James, Benjamin, Robert, Henry and John, those she rescued by spiriting them off, under cover, to safety in the North; and a sister Mary Ann; but the other sisters and brothers were sold into the slavery of the deep South.

Of Harriet's African ancestry there is a legend that it was of the Ashanti country. Harriet herself stated that in her youth the people about her said she was "one of those Ashantis." [4] That was a tribute to her early sense of rebellion, for the Ashanti leaders on the West Coast of Africa fought off Britain's invasions for four centuries, resisting bondage until they became a colonial possession of England in 1896. Ashanti courage became a legend throughout Africa, and it is still a reality on the Black Continent.

The Reverend Samuel Miles Hopkins of Auburn, New York, a student of African life and a profound anti-slaver, surmised that she descended from the Fellatas, another courageous African strain. It was the custom of scholarly whites at that time to theorize about possible origins of Negroes. These attempts to trace her lineage were tributes to her bravery, but her courage was due, not to the fauna or flora of the African jungle nor the tribal sociology of that continent, but to the purely American conditions of the time. The oppression of her people developed in her qualities of irrepressible spirit in the face of tyranny. Whatever her origin, she issued from the black race of old, that people which survived the perils of Africa for a million years, as it has survived the repression of the white man on a foreign soil. She was as black as the paint that any artist can squeeze from his tube: proudly, typically, symbolically black, so that all who beheld this woman, all who touched her, knew they touched upon the reality of the Negro people.

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Half way up the Chesapeake Bay, large cruisers *en route* to

Baltimore passed Dorchester County in which Harriet lived for almost one-third of her life. In the center of the county was the drowsy hamlet of Bucktown, with no more than a dozen houses, and included in this number was the store, the church, and the postoffice. Behind the houses, and stretching in all directions, was the fertile country itself, and in remote corners of this landscape there moved, dot-like, the figures of black men and women as they nursed the soil's abundance. Just southwest of the town the Brodas plantation opened up, the home itself large and squat at the edge of a county road, the slave cabins a hundred yards behind, and the fertile acres rolling southeasterly toward the Big Buckwater River. Here was a background, idyllic and blooming, and Harriet, had she only been free, would have been content to live out her life there.

Once or twice she had been taken for a wagon ride six or seven miles off to the west to the shore of Mother Chesapeake, the region that was ripest with life, for the bay was stored with terrapin and the shore waters seethed with trout and bass hungry for worms. There were oysters and crabs to the point of industry, and the wild fowl spread upon the waters with primitive calls. A few times, as early as her fifth or sixth year, she went on long errands, miles to the east, where the slim line of the Transquaking River ran straight up the State, and she stopped and ached at the beauty of its tributary, the Chicacomico that stretched, thread-like, off toward the Atlantic.

An old and a rich country, Maryland—fit for kings, and slaves. Indeed, Charles I of England had named this region after his wife, Queen Henrietta Marie, and from then, 1632, to the time of Harriet, the lush riches of the country had been owned by almost regal wealth and worked by a subject people. For a century and a half tobacco planters had lived luxuriously here on the labor of their slaves, and this tobacco earth was the soil of Harriet's grandparents. Then came revolution in 1776, and tobacco sales to England fell to zero. The Dorchester farm land took on a new dress. There followed the tall stalk of corn, the waving yellow of the wheat field, acres of rye, and some areas became pastoral, with cows and sheep feeding, and snorting pigs trying to jump the fences that hemmed them in. So the centuries had rolled over in the central part of the Eastern Shore, with the black man rooting himself to this soft earth,

the generations coming and going, and now Harriet, a small thin one, stood in the sun, wearing a tattered cloth that she called a dress, and wondered at the gulf between slaveholder and slave.

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From the time when Harriet first toddled out of the cabin at her mother's skirts and looked up the dirt pathway at the large mansion that was known as "the big house" she had wondered about this place and compared it with the shack in which she and her folks were housed. Soon she learned that the abundant orchards of apple and pear trees, the laden peach and plum trees, were not for her, nor for Rit, as her mother was called, nor for Ben, as her father was known. Forbidden fruit stretched away endlessly across the fields. She could feed the chickens but only the Brodas family knew the taste of the fowl. The crowing of the rooster, the bleating sheep and the lowing of the cattle were in her ears always, reminding her only of the things that she and her family could tend but not own, listen to but not feed upon.

She was a vital child, even though the coarse hands of her masters and mistresses tried often enough to beat the strength and spirit out of her. Harriet herself has told of a childhood when the rebellion in her heart took the form of mischief and disobedience toward her owners. Reacting against the sharp contrast of "the big house" that loomed up above, like an evil god, she acquired a deep family sense, and made the cares of her parents and her brothers and sisters her chief concern. She merged into their lives pivotally, loving them the deeper for her early discovery of life's injustice. Sometimes she frolicked with her small brothers and sisters outside in the weeds and trampled grass, but these moments were few. At night when Ben came home from his work in the nearby forests where he supervised the cutting and hauling of great quantities of timber for the Baltimore shipyards, she ran to him, eager to take a lift skyward in his strong, lumberjack arms. There was little warmth in her childhood other than what she found in her own cabin.

Harriet never had a day of schooling. She was suddenly ripped out of infancy and placed into slave labor. At five she knew what

it was to have a mistress, to keep house, to take care of a baby, to labor day and night, and to feel all of the callous injury that some indifferent white souls in the South of that time leveled upon their fellow humans.

One thing Harriet loved beside her family and her people, and this was the world of nature. The serenities of the field, the generosity of plant and animal life that made no distinction between black and white, the fundamental equity of wind, rain and earth before all men: that was an early discovery. The great changes of the season, she found, spared not the black man any more than the white, and the rain fell upon all colors.

The slaveholding system, or as it flatteringly called itself the Patriarchal Institution (only to be renamed the "peculiar institution" by the Abolitionists), never betrayed character as far as Harriet was concerned. The "patriarchs" attempted no subtlety in showing her "her place." She never, from the outset, had anything in her make-up of the "faithful" or "loyal" slave. She was, from the first, without trust, presenting her hardness of spirit in direct contraposition to the lordly offensive of her overseers. Her earliest conflict with the social setup was as violent as most subsequent engagements.

Her first mistress believed that a slave could be taught to do nothing and would do nothing but under the sting of the whip.[5] Harriet, fresh from a fleeting childhood in the cabin, the orchard and the field, was placed at housework without any directions as to how to proceed. It was the first time she had even been in a then modern white home. Her failure to satisfy on that bright morning, when she was not more than five or six, brought on the wrath of an intemperate "Miss Susan." She was lashed about the face and neck with a whip four times before breakfast.[6]

The next labor that the child performed has been described by Franklin B. Sanborn, an anti-slavery historian. "When Harriet was six years old, she was taken from her mother and carried ten miles to live with James Cook, whose wife was a weaver, to learn the trade of weaving. While still a mere child, Cook set her to watching his muskrat traps, which compelled her to wade through the water. It happened that she was once sent when she was ill with measles, and taking cold from wading in the water in this condition,

she grew very sick, and her mother persuaded her master to take her away from Cook's until she could get well.

"Another attempt was made to teach her weaving, but she would not learn, for she hated her mistress, and did not want to live at home, as she would have done as a weaver, for it was the custom then to weave the cloth for the family, or part of it in the house." [7]

Harriet was resisting, hardening herself for a later, more definitive engagement with her masters. She did not want to work inside a home. Often when she was sent to a bedroom to beat up the feather beds she pretended that she was working hard, but when she had blown them up she would resentfully throw herself into the middle of them.[8] She wanted labor in the field and the comparative freedom of, at least, the fresh air and the sight of clouds moving happily northward. She was already determined upon the belief that her resistance could influence those who insisted upon her bondage. It would have been a miracle if this child had not ultimately become a rebel after such baptism in the slaveholding Christianity.

Harriet has related an incident of the following year. "I was only seven years old when I was sent away to take care of a baby," she said. "I was so little I had to sit on the floor and have the baby put in my lap. And that baby was always in my lap except when it was asleep or its mother was feeding it.

"One morning, after breakfast, she had the baby, and I stood by the table waiting until I was to take it; near me was a bowl of lumps of white sugar. My mistress got into a great quarrel with her husband; she had an awful temper, and she would scold and storm and call him all kinds of names. Now you know, I never had anything good, no sweet, no sugar; and that sugar, right by me, did look so nice, and my mistress' back was turned to me while she was fighting with her husband, so I just put my fingers in the sugar bowl to take one lump and maybe she heard me for she turned and saw me. The next minute she had the rawhide down. I gave one jump out of the door and I saw that they came after me, but I just flew and they didn't catch me. I ran and I ran and I passed many a house, but I didn't dare to stop for they all knew my mistress and they would send me back.

"By and by when I was almost tuckered out, I came to a great big pig-pen. There was an old sow there, and perhaps eight or ten little pigs. I was too little to climb into it, but I tumbled over the high part and fell in on the ground; I was so beaten out that I could not stir.

"And there I stayed from Friday until the next Tuesday, fighting with those little pigs for the potato peelings and the other scraps that came down in the trough. The old sow would push me away when I tried to get her children's food, and I was awfully afraid of her. By Tuesday I was so starved I knew I had to go back to my mistress. I didn't have anywhere else to go, even though I knew what was coming. So I went back." [9]

Harriet was given a flogging by the master of the house; and yet she said of this and other subsequent experiences that she did not blame the slaveholders for their cruelty. She understood their upbringing; she blamed the slave-system itself. "They don't know any better," Harriet explained, "it's the way they were brought up. 'Make the little slaves mind you, or flog them,' was what they said to their children, and they were brought up with the whip in their hands. Now that wasn't the way on all plantations; there were good masters and mistresses, as I've heard tell, but I didn't happen to come across any of them."

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The seasons turned slowly for her, almost as imperceptibly as the annular rings appear in a growing tree. She worked here and there; now for someone living near Cambridge, on the gently elevated shore of the Choptank River; and again she toiled farther to the north, in the deeper recesses of Dorchester County where forests and hills wound from the Chesapeake easterly across the State. Then she would be hired out to someone whose plantation stretched along the bay, and she looked from the house on the hilltop down into the cove, her eye sweeping the shell-covered shore.

Harriet, at the age of nine, for example, was hired out as a nurse and general houseworker. After slaving all day she was required to attend the baby at night. Her mistress was particularly cruel and whipped her as often as five or six times a day. When

Harriet was nearly starved to death and unable to perform her tasks she was sent home to her master.[10]

It was on these trips home when she was rebuilt into health by her patient and understanding mother that she had the only touches of human warmth that she knew. Most of this was extended to her by her mother, a nervously sensitive woman who forgot slavery—as much as one could ever forget it—in ministering to the needs of her growing family. If mother could not give them freedom and material things, and not even enough food, she could and did give a love that loosed no harsh words upon her brood. There was enough fighting out there beyond, and no need for it in the cabin. Upon Harriet more than the others she showered this affection, for she perceived that the child's rebellious ways brought her into difficulties. So often now Harriet had come home beaten up, whimpering, muttering her hate and vengeance, praying, showing too much wisdom for one who was not yet in her teens. And all that she could do was to go to her mother's shoulder, or her father's arms, asking, "Why?" Harriet Green held back her tears, or rushed about the cabin in some flurry of labor to keep hidden her emotions; and Ben Ross, not a large but a strong man, with a stable quality his wife lacked, and a hopeful, religious sense, would say, "Child, don't fret so about it all. Heed God and be as good as you best know how to be." But Mother Green did not hide her feelings from her husband. She was a complaining sort—to him—and often spoke of Harriet as a special problem. Ben would look downward helplessly; he was as much a slave as their daughter.

There was not even much of this, the brooding and contemplating. Master Brodas never allowed much time for recovery. As soon as the little body was fattened up a bit, she was rushed off to some new station. When she recovered from the abuse of her latest employer she was hired to a master who required her to do the work of an able-bodied man, hauling wood, splitting rails, and other kinds of laborious work. Failing in any task given, she was shamefully beaten.[11]

A man's work was her lot even before she entered her teens. Her arms were becoming fibrous, her hands strong and calloused. Her eyes were becoming sullen, and the lids hung heavily, in a way

that remained with her throughout life. Her features were forming prematurely; and even this early in life her lower lip protruded heavily, as though thoughtfully. She had not much pride of dress for she had never had a new one, and would not have known how to feel about a pretty article of clothing. She was unwashed and not considered attractive at all; she was just a *thing,* to be taught how to push and pull, to sew and cook—and then be compelled to do these things. During this period her muscles were moulded into the hard lines that were useful later to Abolition. Her own master, Brodas, she said, was never unnecessarily cruel, but some of those to whom she was hired out proved to be tyrannical and brutal to the utmost limit of their power. But as a field hand she was preparing for the life of hardship and endurance that lay before her.[12]

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By the time she was twelve or thirteen she had won a victory for she no longer had to work indoors. During the remainder of her slavery she farmed, wearing a bandana to protect her head from the sun; and her skirts, getting longer, brushed against the upturned earth. In the neighboring fields were her brothers and she could wave to them, or sing a song and hear an answering chant a moment later. She could go down to the cabin and get a drink and say a kind word to her mother or one of her little sisters, and if when she returned to her post in the field the overseer objected she jarred him with her defiance. By now, among all the Brodas slaves, and among the Negroes on the Hughes, the Meredith and the Ross farms nearby, they talked of the young spitfire who defied and laughed at overseers.

Harriet had long since turned her ears Christward. When she decided that book-learning might forever be inaccessible to her, she began to pay closer heed to the biblical quotations that she heard from her mother and father. Ben and Rit were regular church attendants; the Bible was the one thing for which they had much respect. There was good in this book and its idea, they averred, and if only the white man practised what he said he believed, everything would be fine. It is not strange then that the lines which reached Harriet most deeply were the ringing ones that had to do with man's advance, with a slave's right to deliverance. When she

learned that some Negro had been seen or heard of on his escape toward the North, the line ran through her mind, "Hide the outcast; betray him not that wandereth," and she prayed that the white folks would respond to her inner thought.

Working in the field, Harriet had picked up much of the folk-thinking that was prevalent. Such legend was centuries old, introduced here by the early colonial settlers, and passed on to all classes at that time by reason of the indentured servants, the Negroes and the children of masters, all living in the same household. The colored people gave the greatest impetus to such lore. Folk-thinking, superstition and religion often became an inextricable intermingling, but she was questing and trying to unravel the knots in her understanding. She could not yet distinguish between the kind of religion she wanted, that which could be useful to her for her own salvation, here on earth, and the whole web of myth and superstition with which she was surrounded.

CHAPTER II

A BLOW FOR FREEDOM

"Soon after she entered her teens she was hired out as a field hand, and it was while thus employed that she received a wound which nearly proved fatal, from the effects of which she still suffers. In the fall of the year, the slaves there work in the evening, cleaning up wheat, husking corn, etc. On this occasion, one of the slaves of a farmer named Barrett, left his work, and went to the village store in the evening. The overseer followed him and so did Harriet. When the slave was found, the overseer swore he should be whipped, and called on Harriet, among others, to help tie him. She refused, and as the man ran away, she placed herself in the door to stop pursuit. The overseer caught up a two-pound weight from the counter, and threw it at the fugitive, but it fell short and struck Harriet a stunning blow on the head. It was long before she recovered from this. . . ." [12]

This is the key to the later Harriet Tubman: for if a woman's life ever contained a youthful episode which was a lever to unlock all of the other facets of her being, that incident was such a one.

With this, the seal of bondage was literally stamped upon her head, as though life must give this prisoner a number in the way that men brand cattle. But because Harriet was sensitive, and already possessed of instincts broader than those necessary for merely her own preservation, this imprint upon the head was destined to become her revolutionary badge of faith. She had been baptized in fire: the overseer had ground a symbol upon her which was as clear an impress as that which the Abolitionist printing press was already making upon its own pamphlet. Harriet's consecration to Negro liberation distinctly originated in that raw drama which occurred when she was not more than fifteen or sixteen years old. And so her childhood—if it can be said that she ever had any—came to a sad end, quite in accordance with its whole tragic development.

It was not alone the maltreatment to which she had been subject

that caused Harriet to strike out in sympathy with the other. There were other, powerful factors at work at this time, both in Harriet's region and throughout the South, and it was out of these forces that the girl drew the strength to champion another.

Harriet, like many slaves in Dorchester County, had been influenced by Nat Turner's revolt in Virginia a few years earlier. The daring Turner had in 1831 delivered his fierce blow at the slaveholders, he and about seventy others striking up an insurrection that covered a twenty-mile bloody swath through hilly Virginia. They had killed sixty whites before Federal troops arrived, whereupon the militia and native whites, in an indiscriminate massacre of reprisal, killed about one hundred and twenty Negroes. For weeks Nat Turner cleverly eluded the white posses that hunted him but at last he was discovered, and he too took his turn upon the gallows.

Nat Turner had stirred up a hornet's nest. Perhaps this was largely because he had struck at an opportune time. For ten years there had been a sore depression in the United States; cotton and slaves brought less to the slaveholders in this period than they would at any time again until the Civil War. Mexico had just abolished slavery and was making a mighty effort to have the institution abolished in Cuba and Puerto Rico. In the colonial islands of the world and in many Southern slave states there had been sporadic outbursts of revolt by large and small groups of blacks . . . and the meaning of it all was that the Negro was beginning to move, that forces were at work inside the white population to derrick the Negro out of his trapped condition.

In Dorchester County, Harriet, then a growing girl driving oxen in the field and carting heavy produce, was exultant over the bravery of her fallen slave brothers in the State across the Chesapeake Bay. She hung upon every bit of information that trickled into Bucktown about Nat Turner's exploit. One or two of the free Negroes who knew how to read gathered slave groups about them at night, in the quiet of the cabins, and read to them the grim dispatches from stricken Virginia, and the controversial reactions that raged throughout America.

Harriet listened, nourished, not seeing Turner nor his confederates upon the gallows, but beholding only the enormity of the

attempt, perceiving only how Nat's plan, begun by a half dozen men, had spread and infected dozens in twenty-four hours. It was the sign of it all that she studied. It was the power of men working and fighting together. It was the meaning of the black man advancing to his own nationhood.

There had been other sharp outbreaks that had left their mark on the South, on Dorchester County, on Harriet herself. In 1822 Denmark Vesey organized an insurrection in the region of South Carolina and involved thousands of Negroes in a plot that was smashed. Long before the Denmark Vesey outbreak, in the year 1800 the six-foot-two giant, Gabriel Prosser, planned an uprising in nearby Virginia. One thousand were to take part in that campaign and its repercussions continued up to the time of Harriet's adolescence. By the time she was fifteen, the Gabriel, Vesey and Turner traditions, and the legend of a dozen smaller upsurges in that generation, penetrated the whole South, and the black people were actively smouldering against the concentration-camp life of the plantations.

These were the influences that had given Harriet the courage to strike a blow.

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Back on the plantation she passed the remainder of the fall in her parents' cabin. She was disabled and sick, her flesh all wasted away.[2] She lay on a pallet, or more correctly a bundle of rags in a corner of the room, and through dulled eyes she watched the movements of her family about the small, box-like place. She tried not to cry out her pain for fear of disturbing her small sisters and brothers, Benjamin, Mary Ann, and the others, but sometimes the anguish could not be borne. The child talked to herself and slept mostly, dreaming much, and in this way escaping from the plantation and the squalor of the dark dwelling.

No sooner did Harriet emerge from her crisis than her owner tried to sell her. Brodas guided one party after another down the narrow, dirt pathway that led to the shanty; arriving, he would bang on the door as a warning, push open the creaking boards as he might some dog kennel or cowshed, then usher within the prospective buyers. They wasted not much time here: through slit eyes they

quickly noted the face grown scrawny, the dented head with its wound still alive, and the dulled, disinterested eyes. Their examination of the livestock complete, they invariably turned away, shaking their heads vigorously. And the more the prospective buyers rejected Harriet, the more exasperated became Brodas, and the more determined to sell her. As Harriet herself stated later, "They wouldn't give a sixpense for me." That is the best medical estimate of how critically ill she had been and how weakened she had emerged, for in the Dorchester County of that time probably any Negro with breath in his or her body could be bought at some price —all, it seemed, but Harriet.

She had sustained a convex dent in the skull, a mark which always remained. This has been referred to as a fracture of the skull. Whether or not this was so, Harriet had become only a wasted, sorrowing bundle of anguish that whimpered and moaned through the cold nights. Naturally, there was a response for her all through the Green-Ross household. They rallied around her, the brothers, sisters and parents, like any brood does toward a newborn. Harriet, the maimed, was born unto them.

The Negroes in the other shanties came to the Ross cabin from time to time, looked in, and greeted the girl casually, as though they did not want her to know how hopeless they really felt about her prospects of a good recovery. The region still rang with the story of her daring intervention in behalf of a fellow Negro, for although slaves were injured daily, not all bore the scars of a bold self-defense; and such a brand as Harriet had, that of taking another's blow, was almost unknown. Although they could see her physical helplessness, they could not know that there had occurred a sharp stimulus in the girl's thinking. This she did not even know herself, but it was there.

That went on until about Christmas of that year, which was probably 1835. By now she was able to emerge from the cabin and move around a little, and with this improvement she tried to help her mother. But she worked in a disabled fashion; she was silent and the songs were wanting that once had arisen throughout the day from her easy throat. She would plod for awhile, and then tear-

fully she would turn toward the soiled rags that passed as a mattress, and hurl herself ino their miserable refuge.

Harriet, desperate, turned to prayer. The significance in this development lay, not in the fact that she took up prayer, but rather, in the *kind* of prayer, for she prayed that her master be changed, softened, *converted!* Naturally such a prayer was no more realizable than if Lincoln had merely prayed for the slavemasters to give up their slaves, but her hope for a changed master was a step in the direction of the dream that all mastery might change, and that one day the whole system of slavery might be abolished.

Simultaneous with this advance in her understanding, a precisely opposite impression of her developed among the Brodas people. As a worker, of course, Harriet was still "not worth a sixpense." In fact, her masters, glancing at the enfeebled girl, perceiving the horrible injury done to her head and hearing now that she had "spells of sleep" that descended suddenly as she moved about in her daily tasks, shook their heads with the same wisdom as that which they might apply to an ailing cow or mare, and they decided that she was "half-witted." These periods of somnolence were a residue of the blow that she received. The injury had left her subject to a sort of stupor or lethargy. In the midst of conversation or some household task she would suddenly halt and fall into a deep slumber. This might happen three or four times a day. Presently she roused herself and resumed her conversation or work directly from the point where she had left off.[8]

Harriet's owners speedily interpreted this malaise as a calamitous blow to her senses. To begin with, they had never known what she was thinking, as indeed they knew little of the thinking of most Negroes, and now, when they came near to her, she was completely uncommunicative. As her views at this time indicate, she was really thinking twice as rapidly and clearly as before, but her silence, together with her weakened condition and the seizures of somnolence, conspired to present her to them as one who was now hopelessly useless and wrecked; and hence, dull-brained. Could her owners have known her prayer for a changed master, could they have discerned within this the germ of her later realization that *slavery must change,* they would not have been so quick to regard

her as blunt-witted, and they might have sensed how really damaging that blow had been! Frank C. Drake, a newspaperman, writing upon this phase of her life, reported that "the white people on the plantation thought she was half-witted—*a theory she did not seek to disturb.*" [4] Far from seeking to upset this conception, Harriet learned to utilize it; for, it was just at the time when Mr. Brodas passed his opinion upon her that Harriet appraised him for what he was; that is when her intellectual faculties deepened, that is when she concluded upon the hopelessness of slavery, and at the same time embarked upon her own quest for freedom.

Her prayer at that time is one of the most revealing in the annals of religion, or more correctly, in the history of practical revolutionary thinking.

"And so," she said, "from Christmas until March (probably of the years 1835-1836) I worked as I could, and I prayed through all the long nights—I groaned and prayed for old master.

"Oh Lord, convert master! Oh Lord, change that man's heart!"

She prayed always, about her work, everywhere. When she went to the horse-trough to wash her face she took up the water in her hands and said, "Oh Lord, wash me, make me clean!" Lifting the cloth to dry her face, she implored that all of her sins be wiped away. Taking the broom to sweep, she entreated with the same kind of symbolism, "Oh Lord, whatsoever sin there be in my heart, sweep it out, Lord, clear and clean."

In March a new, a decisive factor entered into the situation, resulting in such a sharpening in her prayer as to represent the birth of a new, a fiery will. Rumor reached the Ross cabin that she and many others of her family might be sold South, or go with the chain gang down to the cotton and rice fields.

"Then," said Harriet, "I changed my prayer. I began to pray, *'Oh Lord, if you aren't ever going to change that man's heart, kill him Lord, and take him out of the way!'* " [5]

It had happened! The mighty religion of that time had struck root in her, as in thousands of other Negroes. In the North John Brown was acquiring a similar vision at about the same time; in New England hundreds of Abolitionists were bent by the same

furious zeal. Harriet had sought out a god that might help her and she found one—with a hammerlock, for that was the kind that a slave needed!

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Edward Brodas died within a year or two of the time that Harriet had been injured. The girl's serious illness had saved her from being sold South: no buyer wanted someone who might die, who might be an unprofitable laborer. Although Harriet had been anxious for her master's death, even to praying for it, she declared later that she sorrowed much upon the death of this man: "Oh then, it appeared as if I'd give the whole world full of gold, if I had it to bring that soul back."

Before Edward Brodas died he managed to sell some of Harriet's family to the South. Little is known of those dispatched to the South except that they retained the name of Ross, while those who later went North bore the name of Stewart.[6] When Brodas died the slaves were told that their master's will provided that none of them should be sold out of the State.[7] That information was received by the slaves with jubilation.

The death of Brodas was accompanied by a change of masters which was no improvement upon the old situation. The estate passed to an heir who was too young to administer the plantation, and the active mastery fell into the hands of his guardian, a man who, in all accounts, bears a most dignified "Doctor" before his name. Doctor Anthony Thompson was a preacher about Bucktown, apparently one of those abounding in the South at that time, of whom it has been said, they never delivered a sermon but that it was taken up with the obligations and duties of slaves to their masters.[8] In spite of Doctor Thompson's ministrations in the sphere of the divine he stinted his slaves on food and clothing and "led them a rough life generally." He has been described as a spare-built man, bald-headed, and wearing a wig.[9] A striking resemblance to the mature William Lloyd Garrison—minus the wig and the anti-slavery fervor!

There was at work the large, lumberjack hand of Ben Ross in the next stage of Harriet's life.

The thickly wooded Eastern Shore was naturally a lumbering

center and a major source of revenue for the slaveholders. One of these timber operators was the builder, John Stewart. He had hired Ben Ross from Dr. Thompson and made Ben the inspector of his lumbering gang. This was a responsible job, one that meant the supervision of the cutting and hauling of large quantities of wood to be sent to the Baltimore ship-yards. Ben, being a superior workman,[10] was worth five dollars a day to Stewart: and that was regarded as a sizable sum.

A valuable worker such as Ben might have gained the ear of his employer and confided the problem of his daughter who had been sick, who was still not altogether well, and in need of a decent place in which to work. Something of the sort happened, for Harriet soon started working for Stewart. John Stewart was a more lenient man than Brodas, Doctor Thompson, or the others, for long after Harriet's family escaped to the North many of them continued to bear his name. The steady period of employment with him and the fact that there is no record of any sharp incident taking place in connection with the service proves that here there was something of a moral breathing spell. She lived for five or six years with Stewart. At first she worked in the house. Later she labored in the open field, in the man-sized jobs that she liked best; she drove oxen, carted, and plowed, sometimes earning money enough in a year, beyond what she paid her master, to buy a pair of steers.[11]

* * * * * *

She recovered strength while she was still in her teens. The sunshine and the open air, the green fields and her own will to live —these were the medicines. Hard work put flesh upon her body, and she filled out and became womanly.

She attracted both Negro and white mainly for her typical qualities. There were already signs of that later magnetic appearance described in terms ranging from "magnificent" to "fierce." Her mouth was large and the cast of it was loose, with lips everted. Her eyes were heavy-lidded and appraising. A round, receding chin was set, rock-like; and her hair was short and crinkly. By now too she was almost as tall as she ever would be, which was about five feet; and her limbs had become strong. Labor in the field required nothing more for dress than that her body be covered, no matter

with what, and so she wore the ill-fitting, rough, cast-off dresses discarded by the women of the Big House. Pins held up her skirts and blouses; she went stockingless, and even walked shoeless across the paths, the fields and roads of the region. She could not have gloried in her appearance, made formless by such apparel, but there was one item of dress that she did prefer: this was the colorful bandana, sultanic in effect, that always circled her head. She wore such a headgear almost all of the days of her life. The bandana gave to her a hardy, peasant-like appearance that no other style could achieve.

Her self-respect was in other things, like her running speed and the lithe freedom that was hers in a dash across a field or down a country road. She took delight in her singing voice, for she sang whenever she could, and especially in the field it was good to lift the voice. She caroled soft Methodist hymns, and already she, like many slaves, composed her own verses. But her deepest emotion was the feeling that there was essentially no rank in this life, that she was as good as any white master or mistress.

"As Harriet grew older she became a marvellous specimen of physical womanhood, and before she was nineteen years old she was a match for the strongest man on the plantation of the new master to whom she now belonged. He would often exhibit her feats of strength to his friends as one of the sights of his place. She could lift huge barrels of produce and draw a loaded stone boat like an ox." [12]

That is an almost legendary strength. It is the power that has been related of John Henry, the steel-driving Negro whose might was that of a giant. Another report has it that her naturally remarkable power of muscle was so developed that her feats of strength often called forth the wonder of strong laboring men.[13] And John Brown was so astounded at the physical impression of this woman, together with the knowledge of her achievements, that he could only convey his regard for her by applying masculine terms to describe her.

Harriet, like her people, was gaining strength. If her newfound force was not calculated, if it was not deliberately acquired by her own knowledge that she might need it in her future

contests, then it was nature at work, subtly giving her a defense which her independent nature required. At all events she made a remarkable recovery from the critical encounter with the overseer. The period of labor in the fields developed in her those sinews which she later employed in the travails of Abolition and the Civil War. These were the earth years when her feet plunged deeply into the furrowed soil and when her mind extracted from the experience of slave labor patience and wisdom, vision and a supreme fearlessness.

CHAPTER III

ESCAPE

The 1830's advanced grimly, with the black man snapping his chains here and there, while Abolitionists fired their guns in a hard, steady attack.

There were deep currents abroad in the land, and hardy spirits, white and black, preparing to unite these forces into one mighty flood of national feeling. Quakers and Puritans; refugees from revolutionary Europe; black men from Haiti who could tell how Toussaint Louverture had done it and how it might be done here; free blacks from Canada; new arrivals from far away Louisiana. They were on the march definitely, finding their way to New England and to Canada, there to enter into the wide network of the Northern radical movement, and from there to strike daggers into "the meanest and most shameless form of man's enslaving in the annals of history." [1]

Harriet caught glimpses of all this as she pushed her way over the rich sod of Dorchester. Rumors came to her ears of the white friends in the North, of the Negroes who were already there and doing things, of the black men who edited newspapers that actually attacked the slaveholding rule, and she had dreams of going to all of that. Years later she said, "I seemed to see a line, and on the other side of the line were green fields, and lovely flowers, and beautiful white ladies, who stretched out their arms to me over the line, but I couldn't reach them. I always fell before I got to the line." [2]

The line that Harriet dreamed of was no more or less than the Mason-Dixon border, and what went on above was the great movement for freedom: and it beckoned to her. The rumor, the word, and the legend came and fell upon her ears, as upon the senses of all blacks, almost incredulously. White men helping them? Yet it was true, and who was the Negro that had not heard of Garrison? The "beautiful white ladies" were no dream at all, but a very real group, at work mostly in New England, and in spirit holding out

their arms toward Harriet in the South. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony had long since rebelled at the straitened conditions of women in all ranks of life. Lucy Stone, "a delightful young creature with voice of gold," had already spoken out against the major injustices of the time. Abby Kelly Foster was known to Abolition audiences far and wide. There were Sallie Holley, Lydia Maria Child, Lucretia Mott, and many others. Their words were heard throughout America and their influence had swept into Maryland.

But these women were white, with the white woman's increasing opportunities for education, career, money and public audience. It was more remarkable that Sojourner Truth, the first Negro woman orator in the land and one of the earliest suffragists, was already nationally known for her evangelical work, for her anti-slavery pronouncements, for her militant role among the white women suffragists. Sojourner was in her prime now, a tall, graceful woman, slim and strong, as hard work sometimes makes one; and the novelty of an ex-slave vying with polished and cultured white women for public leadership was a fact that hammered at the smug senses of those thousands of whites who believed in their own superiority.

Another was coming up, the most articulate colored woman of the century: this was Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, whose prose and poetry graced the most important Abolition journals, whose lecture campaigns drew hundreds to any hall in which she spoke. There were others, Sarah Douglass, Mary Cary, Grace Mapps, Mary Bibb, Frances Coppin: they were a solid corps of active Negro women who were growing up to speak and write and fight in various cities of the North and West.

Indeed, by now almost every Negro in the free states found *something* to do for freedom: they aided on the Underground Railroad with money and time and energy; they attended the white and Negro meeting halls and lent name and voice and appearance to their protests; they organized and signed petitions. In short, it was an age of genius, and a revolutionary movement, black and white in content, was crystallizing. For the first time in American history an understanding was growing up between a handful of whites and Negroes. There in the North they were finding their way to each

other, joining forces in the cause, training and strengthening each other, and calling down to the South for more men like Douglass, and women like Harriet, to *do* something; revolt, or come North, but hurry!

The movement for freedom was many-sided by now, to the point where there was much inner-feuding over questions of policy. Abolitionists denounced Colonizationists, and the other way about: the radicals split hairs over whether the Constitution was a pro-slavery or an anti-slavery document, for momentous meanings hinged upon the truth or falsity of this interpretation . . . until one day Frederick Douglass would come along to study these matters and formulate a policy by which men could fight. The leaders of labor made clear to the working people that there could never be a flourishing trade union movement or an independent political movement of labor until slavery was abolished. Colonel Thomas W. Higginson, the best historian of Abolition, wrote later that anti-slavery was a people's movement, that it was stronger for a long time in the factories and shoe shops than in the pulpits and colleges. One wing of the labor ranks raised the slogan, "Down with all slavery, both chattel and wages." Simultaneous with the mushroom growth of the Abolition societies and the forward march of white labor in the North, there sprang up regional farming cooperatives. Inside these cooperatives the anti-slavery question took hold and these reformers too threw their full influence onto the side of the Negro.

The Negro drive toward leadership and culture was as irrepressible as the Civil War itself. Black men appeared on the social scene out of all proportion to the enslaved condition of the Negro mass. No place in the North, no meeting hall, no underground den where policies were formed, but had its Negro actives, leading and doing the strenuous work. Fugitives hastened to educate themselves to become more effective in the work of capturing the white North for the sentiment of freedom. The free Negroes perfected themselves in oratory, literature, the sciences and arts. But it was the slaves who leaped the highest, as soon as the most elementary opportunities presented themselves.

In Philadelphia black William Still, a prominent Abolitionist, was already operating one of the busiest stations on the railroad to

freedom. Scores of other Negroes, too, were functioning in this act of the revolution, running back and forth from North to South, guiding off escaping slaves to the free states. Samuel R. Ward preached to a white congregation in the North. Richard Allen founded the African Methodist Church, although he died before the organization really took form. The Massachusetts Negro, David Walker, had sometime earlier published his Appeal, calling on the Negroes to unite and the slaves to arise, and that exercised a profound influence. Kentucky-born William Wells Brown was fighting on all fronts, organizing, writing, shuttling on the Underground, and speaking publicly. Negro contributors were coming to the fore in such numbers that the whole myth of white superiority was delivered a shattering blow. Martin R. Delany was in the very forefront as a physician, an agitator and editor; Robert Purvis' clear political thinking was the talk of the Abolitionist world; Lunsford Lane, who had come up from North Carolina, took to the rostrum, poised his good right arm and let them have it on the whole question; and until the rise of Frederick Douglass there was that small, but dynamic Charles L. Remond, employed as a lecturer by the Anti-Slavery Society. There were dozens of others, educators, mathematicians, poets, lawyers, ministers. It was a list for enumeration in a book-length chronology, and several such books did appear in subsequent years.

Harriet's region must have been very oppressive for it produced many of the foremost Negro revolutionaries. From here came the Abolitionists S. R. Ward, H. H. Garnet, and J. W. C. Pennington. In 1830, Hezekiah Grice of Maryland called the first Negro convention in American history. In Baltimore a whole corps of freed Negroes were busy aiding the Underground Railroad. Frederick Douglass had been praying for years, but at last, in 1838, he decided to pray with his heels—and that he did in an escape, which was and event in American history. Before long New England and the entire North would know of him.

In Boston William C. Nell was studying American history and discovering that the first man to fall in the American Revolution was the Negro, Crispus Attucks, and Nell was preparing for issuance on a later day his invaluable study, *Colored Patriots of the*

American Revolution. Negro-edited periodicals like *The Anti-Slavery Record* and Samuel Cornish's *The Weekly Advocate,* were carefully pointing out that the American Negro actor, Ira Aldridge, was the rage of England as early as the 1830's; that in Russia the Negro poet, Pushkin, dominated that muse even in this decade; that in France the Negro novelist Dumas was hailed as the greatest of the Old World; and Cuba's colored Placido was now her promising poet. And this when the mass of the Negroes, the world over, were still in chains.

Black-edited magazines and newspapers went into the progressive homes. Black folk music inspired the composers, the poets and the artists. Color had passed into the Anglo-American bloodstream, changing the hue of the skin of whole portions of the country's population: brown skins and mulatto colorings spread widely in the Virginia country and down in New Orleans, and indeed, wherever Negro and white were for long in association. Black labor was making the wealthy wealthier and slave labor was angering the slaves to ever greater anger. The color question had already split the Government and populations of the North and South into huge, conflicting forces, and some statesmen were trying mightily by every ruse of law and logic, religion and morals, to keep the Union intact —and others, by the same means, to split it. The Websters and the Calhouns were sparring with each other, smoothing over the disputes about Western territories, compromising, cheating. And all this time the blacks around Harriet watched nightly a tiny sky-point known as the North Star—and now and then a party stole away to follow it.

It was the fighting age, when reform was the outlook and those democratic seeds were planted which would later sprout and grow into the leaves of grass that Walt Whitman talked about when he wrote of America and the people and "nature without check with original energy."

Those pivotal ten years closed on the *Amistad* case, when Joseph Cinque became a remembered name. The nation rang with the alarm in 1839 when a ship floated in on the Long Island shore, with fifty-four Negroes aboard, three of them young girls. They had been seized and chained on the African coast by Spanish slavers,

even though Spain had outlawed slave-trading; and when the blacks could no longer stand the crouching and retching in the hot confines, Cinque led them: they killed the captain, and four of the crew, and they took over the boat. Two white men were allowed to live—that they might steer the craft, and then the *Amistad* went on a ghostly, derelict ride through the seas till it reached the coast. The Negroes were jailed amid a great Abolitionist protest and as the two white navigators claimed the blacks as their slaves: then a long fight went on in the courts. The voice of the anti-slavers lifted in the streets; the protests were non-ending and the halls filled to overflowing, as the voice of a growing minority of strong-backed, strong-minded, free-thinking citizens demanded, "Let these people go!" And when the Supreme Court, obeying the voice of the people, decided that the Negroes had been seized contrary to Spanish law, they released them and the New England crowds greeted a half-hundred new free Negroes. Ten years of organizing had borne fruit in a great victory—and the noise of it all reverberated across the plains of America, and the plantations of Dorchester County too, saying, spiritually, "You have friends in the North: revolt!"

Yes, Harriet had friends, real ones, white and black, many of whom were willing and ready to lay down their lives for her and the black people. She did not know them as yet, and they did not know her, but she had heard of them. They, like Harriet, were still maturing, even as the anti-slavery question itself was growing in America. Now in the 1840's the time was moulding them, uniting them, black and white, into a significant political movement which was the talk of America and Europe. New England had produced such a corps of white leaders, Garrison, Phillips, Weld, Whittier and others, riding to fame and fortune and some to immortality upon the back of the slave, that critics referred to Boston as a modern Athens, as a place developing a "Golden Age of Genius." But a cause elicits the strongest stuff in men, and perhaps no age prior to that had produced a greater cause. Congressmen would soon lash out in the legislative halls: Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, and Joshua Giddings of Ohio. The South had produced noted anti-slavery rebels, Cassius M. Clay, John G. Fee, and the Grimké sisters. Out in the West a young Aboli-

tionist named Herndon was exerting an incisive influence upon his law associate, Abe Lincoln.

It was a young movement, too, in the main. John Brown, in 1840, was one of the "older" Abolitionists, and not very successful in business. Perhaps he reflected too much about his "greatest or principle object," that of working for freedom, and he was still haunted by the remembered sight of a Negro boy being beaten with a shovel. He was still beardless, prime and springy of step, and most of all he was busy spiriting off slaves to the North via that old locomotive that ran by night from darkness in the South to Northern light.

Harriet, chopping wood in the Dorchester forests, pushing the plow on the plantation, taking into her sinews the strength of the sap in the trees and the hardness of the rock underfoot, opened her mind to all of the inklings of activity that were going on up above and bided her time. To go North or to stay South, that was the question. To live here and to marry here, to slave, or to escape—these were her thoughts. To risk the dangers of escape or to face the humiliation of slavery, which? To desert her mother and father and their love, or to save herself? Over and over these thoughts raced through her mind, month in and out, year upon year.

It was marriage that decided her upon remaining still longer in the South. John Tubman was her last major experience in slavery.

* * * * *

Harriet was always notably silent about the matrimonial phase of her life, and it is the only chapter upon which, apparently, she was hesitant to speak. But there is sufficient information to reconstruct at least the outline of their life together, and to discern a conflict.

Harriet married late. It would have been late even for a white woman of that time, and it was especially so for a Negro mating because the people of color were nearly always married in their teens. She was married somewhere about 1844 to a free Negro named John Tubman, which means that she was about twenty-four years old at the time.

She could not have considered "taking a husband" in the sense that we understand it today. As a slave she would ordinarily have

to live with the husband *selected for her* by her master. In her case, whether from the question of her health or other reasons, she was exempt from this procedure. That she married a free Negro proves inordinate factors operated in her marriage. In a region and a time of slave-breeding, she was not considered a breeder type and she was left actually to choose a husband. In marrying John Tubman she was already in contact with, at least, a bit of freedom, that small measure which was allotted to free-born or manumitted Negroes in Maryland.

The husband bore the name of Tubman from the connection of himself or his father with the ancestral home of the Tubman family,[3] which reigned for centuries, like a dynasty in the "Glascow," at the western boundary of the town of Cambridge, overlooking the Choptank River. This estate contained about 265 acres and it was the principal part of what was known in the seventeenth century as "Lockerman's Manor." John Tubman's parents, grandparents, and perhaps great grandparents had ministered to the wants of the Tubmans inside the spacious mansion, with its large rooms, high ceilings, beautifully carved colonial mantels, open fireplaces, mahogany stair rails, walnut floors and deep window seats.[4] Whether John Tubman ever saw the inside of this place, or worked here, there is no means of knowing, but his forbears well knew this interior—as slaves.

Harriet's marriage to a free Negro did not exempt her from her slave labor in behalf of Doctor Thompson. It meant only that at night she could share the cabin of a free Negro. But whether by accident or irony, she had happened upon a slight advance in her social station, even if only that of association, for the marriage of a slave woman to a free Negro was unusual. She not only earned money for Doctor Thompson, but likely she also helped support John Tubman. He was not one to fret himself about his wife's overworking. He distinctly preferred her to remain satisfied with her lot as a slave; and he was reluctant to listen to her complaints about slavery and her now increasingly frequent threats of going to the North.

John Tubman not only did not trouble himself about Harriet's fears that she might be sold South, but he did his best to betray her

after she escaped.[5] How he attempted betrayal is unknown, but that is the best clue to him. Any Negro who betrayed another in flight was an abject and extraordinary individual.

Prior to her escape she "never closed her eyes that she did not imagine she saw the horsemen coming and heard the screams of women and children as they were being dragged away to a far worse slavery than they were enduring there." [6] This was Harriet's major fear, and John Tubman made light of it. He chided her, called her a fool, and said that she was like old Cudjo (a mythical character) who, when a joke went around, never laughed till half an hour after everybody else got through.[7] By this analogy John Tubman meant that Harriet perceived dangers where none existed, or crossed bridges before she reached them.

It was not long after these two came together that mentally they began travelling different routes. Harriet continued in her fitful dreams of escape or local insurrection, being a moody and unconsolable mate, and John Tubman was ever trying to understand this woman who looked at life with such serious eyes.

Harriet loved John Tubman; and he was the only deeply physical love of her life. She lived with him for at least five years before her flight; and the proof of her affection is in the fact that two years after her escape she underwent all of the hazards of a journey back into the slave country to see him and bring him North. Then she discovered him married to another, and no longer caring to live with her.[8] Her return to take him to the North proves all that need be known of her love. Indeed, it may have been his hapless, unworried nature that she loved, for no doubt this was his character. In the cabin he had been a light-hearted fellow, providing relief to the long days beneath the hot sun and the bullet-like glances of military overseers. John Tubman was a Negro who whistled, and not long after Harriet left and after his first upset, he went whistling to another cabin. At any rate, soon after Harriet had flown from the South, he was married to a woman named Caroline.[9]

One of the influences of John Tubman was to arouse in Harriet a curiosity about legal questions. She inquired of him how he happened to be a free Negro. Out of this questioning she entered upon

an investigation of her own background which produced an astounding discovery. She was in reality a free Negro!

Her own mother, Harriet Green, had been freed, but was never informed of her right!

Harriet consulted Dorchester County records in about the year 1845. She paid a lawyer five dollars to trace the will of her mother's first master. The examiner searched back as far as sixty-five years and he located a will giving Harriet's mother to an heir named Mary Patterson. Harriet's mother was to serve this person until the age of forty-five, but Mary Patterson died young, unmarried, and as there was no provision for Harriet Green in case of her owner's death, she was actually emancipated at that time.[10] But no one informed Harriet's mother of her rights and she and her children, including Harriet, remained in bondage.

Harriet's anti-slavery emotions deepened when she discovered this fact for she realized that there had been played upon her family and herself a typical, deliberate, slaveholding trick. She nursed this new injury to her heart, gave up all hope of ever becoming a manumitted Negro, and pledged herself to find a way out of this whole military and legal system, a way that brooked no dealing with "papers." Papers were part of a white man's civilization, and the whites could juggle them as they pleased. She had other plans.

John Tubman's most durable contribution to the partnership was that of his name. Harriet never ceased using it.

John Tubman influenced Harriet to appreciate all the more the need for freedom and its possible joys. Her escape was becoming more and more inevitable, and his resignation to the present scene more and more inviolate. It was now only a question of time . . . and the right situation.

* * * * *

The sleeping seizures continued throughout the years, attacking her daily, forcing her to suspend work for brief periods, and making it impossible for her to forget for a moment that slavery had maimed her. The sleep was of an amorphous type, not very deep, and it was troubled with dreams: she described these dreams to

those about her. She had heard many stories of the Middle Passage, the voyage of slaves from Africa to America, and her dreams often reflected this phase of slavery. In one dream she saw a ship's deck with black men in revolt and white men lying in crimson stains upon the floor.[11] This was about what had happened in the *Amistad* case, and in dozens of other voyages across the Atlantic. Such stories had been told to Harriet by older slaves who themselves witnessed mutinies in the very ships that had brought them to these shores. In another dream she was on a ship at night and a Negro woman clasping a child to her bosom crept from below and leaped into the sea.[12] Suicide had been responsible for a high toll of slave casualties, especially on board the terror-rife slave ships that crossed the seas. And self-inflicted death still took a toll throughout the South.

The dreams revealed to her fellow blacks a restlessness which, they knew, was likely to burst forth one day in the form of escape or some other type of outbreak. Her descriptions of them also indicated a naturally developing sense of poetry, an actual facility for composing it. The world was in her mind, and if she could not get up in the public square and denounce it, she could express her criticism through relating these dreams of swift deliverance, martyrdom, bloodshed. But the dreaming was parent to the later acts of disciplined revolt.

Finally, the turning years had deepened her religious sense and matured her early views. Harriet, a born wrestler with ideas as well as with the physical tasks of the plantation, had only one recourse, and this was to transform the white man's religious conception to suit a black woman's purpose. She did that without at all being aware of the process by which the change transpired. For years she had been attentive to the quotations from scripture, and by now she had an arsenal of lines, all of which fitted the purposes of a slave. Yet it went deeper than that. Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, Cato, and other Negro revolutionaries, all implicit religionists, had taught the black American *applied* religion. It was this that Harriet acquired. If once she had prayed for release from an individual master, now she was desirous of an end to all of slavery for all of her people. It was no longer a personal matter between herself and a Brodas or a Thompson. The question of her salvation, she under-

stood, was tied up with the issue of emancipation for her entire people. Although she prayed and quoted extensively from liberal Scripture, she no longer required of the "Lord" to do any of the changing of masters or killing of them for her. By now she herself was ready to kill for freedom, if that was necessary, and defend the act as her moral, her religious right.

* * * * *

The spectre that had haunted Harriet for so long, the fear that she might be sold to a far more degrading slavery in the deep South appeared one day as an immediate threat and impelled her to leave at once. The escape was precipitated by the death of the young heir to the Brodas estate. Rumor reached the slaves that Doctor Thompson planned to sell them directly. Then it hit like a thunderbolt when, one Saturday, it was whispered in the quarters that two of Harriet's sisters had been sent off with the chain gang.[13]

Harriet's flight occurred in 1849.[14] She had been living with Doctor Thompson for two years, she and her husband occupying one of the many cabins in the "quarters." Her parents and several brothers and sisters still lived on this plantation, all in the service of Doctor Thompson, or hired out to other nearby users of slaves.

The accounts of Harriet's breakaway attest the immeasurable peril involved in forsaking a Southern plantation. For long she had been agitating among her brothers an escape to the free states, and at the present opportunity she persuaded three of them to accompany her. But the brothers did not go very far. They became frightened by the dangers of discovery and returned. In spite of Harriet's objections they brought her back with them.

It was no wonder that the brothers lost courage. Their course was across one of the most hazardous no-man's-lands in history, not less perilous than a field of battle—and hundreds of miles in depth! This became evident to Harriet's brothers from the minute they stole away. On all sides were whites and Negroes who knew them, who might suspect they were escaping, who might inform on them, prevent their even getting out of Dorchester County. If one person reported to Doctor Thompson that they were seen heading North, that news would be relayed speedily to the slaveholders and slave-catchers all through the region. Handbills announcing their escape

could be spread far and wide overnight. Then, what men could not find, bloodhounds might.

Harriet remained over Sunday. On Monday night a Negro from another part of the plantation came privately to tell her that she and her brothers were to be carried off that night.

That was enough! Harriet decided to venture forth alone, and this time to make good the flight. She said of this moment that this was her thought:

> "There's two things I've got a right to and these are Death or Liberty. One or the other I mean to have. No one will take me back alive; I shall fight for my liberty, and when the time has come for me to go, the Lord will let them kill me."

Harriet's last contact with her mother was when old Rit was on her way to milk a cow. Harriet approached and said, "Here, mother, you go along; I'll do the milking tonight and bring it in." Whether or not she did the milking does not much matter, but the ruse to retire her parent to the cabin succeeded.

Only one further step remained: to notify someone, anyone whom she could trust, of her plan to start out at once, for if she suddenly disappeared with nobody knowing where she was they might believe she had been seized and shipped South.

Harriet went to the "big house" to find her sister Mary, but when she located her, in the kitchen, there were others about, which prevented Harriet from speaking. She resorted to some mild rough-house with her sister in order to draw her away from the others and out of the house. The sister ran out, with Harriet trailing behind; but outside, still another barrier developed.

The master of the house came riding up on horseback, and as frolicking during working hours was forbidden or frowned upon, Mary had to dart back inside of the house without having learned Harriet's intention.

And now, for the dual purpose of notifying someone, anyone, of her intention to leave, and to allay any suspicion by the master, she broke into song. The melody was often used by escaping slaves but it was also sung in church. She advanced toward the doctor and sang as she passed him. Did he wonder if her song had a double

meaning? He stopped his horse, turned around in the saddle and stared at her as she burst forth with these verses:

I'm sorry I'm going to leave you,
Farewell, oh farewell,
But I'll meet you in the morning,
Farewell, oh farewell.

I'll meet you in the morning,
I'm bound for the promised land,
On the other side of Jordan,
Bound for the promised land.

I'll meet you in the morning,
Safe in the promised land,
On the other side of Jordan,
Bound for the promised land.[15]

Long before Harriet decided to leave she had found an ally in a white woman who lived in this region, one who had vouchsafed aid to the slave woman in case she ever wished to escape. Such allies were not unusual: white Southerners often helped slaves on to the North, especially the Quakers and a few Southern Abolitionists. Even slaveholders, if they were paid, were known to send on an occasional fugitive. The story of this abettor has been recounted thus:

"Harriet had a bed quilt which she highly prized, a quilt she had pieced together. She gave this bed quilt to the white woman. I recall that Harriet even told me this woman's name, but what it was I do not remember. The white woman gave her a paper with two names upon it, and directions how she might get to the first house where she would receive aid.

"Harriet reached this first house. When she arrived and showed the woman of the house the paper, Harriet was told to take a broom and sweep the yard. This surprised Harriet but she asked no questions. Perhaps she suspected camouflage. Anyone passing the house would not suspect the Negro girl working in the yard of being a runaway slave. The husband, who was a farmer, came home in the early evening. In the dark he loaded a wagon, put her in it, well covered, and drove to the outskirts of another town. Here he told her to get out and directed her to a second station. . . ." [16]

Harriet followed the North Star until it led her to liberty. Cautiously and by night she traveled, carefully finding out who were her friends. Aided partially by the organization of the Underground Railroad but succeeding in her flight mainly because of her own initiative and resourcefulness, she at last crossed the "line" which then separated the land of bondage from the land of free men. Thus she completed a journey that was epochal in the life story of her people.

Early one morning she arrived on free soil in Pennsylvania. The ex-slave's exalted emotion upon this occasion is evident in her own unforgettable words:

> "When I found I had crossed that line, I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven." [17]

DOCUMENTATION

PART I — CHAPTER I

[1] Reverend James Mason, *The Modern Amazon*, pamphlet, passim.
[2] Letters of Harkless Bowley, Tubman Collection, Schomburg Collection, 135th Street Branch Public Library, New York.
[3] Benjamin Drew, *The Refugees, or Narratives of the Fugitive Slaves*, p. 30. Fortunately a living relative has something to say upon this matter. This is Harkless Bowley, a grand-nephew of Harriet, who is now 88 years old (in 1941). In point of his years he may be regarded as the dean of the living relatives of Harriet. He lived with Harriet when he was a boy, and his own mother was one of those who fled North with the "Conductor of the Underground Railroad," as Harriet was often known. For the information supplied by Bowley, see his letters referred to in the preceding footnote. In the Sanborn article, *The Commonwealth* (Boston), July 17, 1863, there is further mention of Harriet's kin, and there is also some dealing with them in William Still's *The Underground Railroad*.
[4] Frank C. Drake article in *The New York Herald*, September 22, 1907, passim.
[5] Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 10.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Harriet Tubman article, the Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[8] Statement of Mrs. William Tatlock, in Tubman Collection, Harlem Library.
[9] Sarah H. Bradford, *Harriet, the Moses of Her People*, in supplementary chapter added to the 1886 edition.
[10] *Letters of Harkless Bowley*, Tubman Collection.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 10.

CHAPTER II

[1] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[2] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 13.
[3] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim. Also described to the author in correspondence with historian Wilbur H. Siebert, who talked with Harriet. Letter, in Tubman Collection, is dated September 4, 1940.
[4] *The New York Herald*, September 22, 1907, passim.
[5] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, pp. 14-15.
[6] Statement to author by Mrs. Carroll Johnson, 64 Garrow Street, Auburn, N. Y. Mrs. Johnson is a great grand-niece of Harriet Tubman.
[7] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 15.
[8] Herbert Aptheker, *Negro Slave Revolts in the United States*, p. 15.
[9] William Still, *Underground Railroad*, pp. 395-6.
[10] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] Drake article, *The New York Herald*, September 22, 1907, passim.
[13] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 10.

CHAPTER III

[1] Elizabeth Lawson, *History of the American Negro People*, p. 15.
[2] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 16.
[3] Elias Jones, *Revised History of Dorchester County*, account of Tubman estate, passim.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 15.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*

[8] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[9] Letter to author from Clerk of Circuit Court of Dorchester County, Maryland, in Tubman Collection.
[10] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 107.
[11] *The New York Herald*, Sept. 22, 1907, passim.
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 24.
[14] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863.
[15] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, pp. 16-21.
[16] Statement of Mrs. William Tatlock, in Tubman Collection.
[17] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 19.

It was stated at the outset that Harriet's master was Edward Brodas. That is the name and spelling given by Harkless Bowley, the living grand nephew of Harriet. Records substantiate the fact that slaveholders named Brodess lived at the same location where Harriet was reared, that the "Brodess brothers" owned property at that point. There are other records, noted in the chapters devoted to the Underground Railroad, which refer to several of Harriet's brothers being in the service of a mistress named Eliza Ann Brodins. That is the name and spelling as recorded, perhaps hastily, by historian William Still in his "The Underground Rail Road." This "Brodins" may also be one of the Brodas clan but there is no certainty on this point. We have used the Brodas spelling throughout when referring to her master.

One report, in a fictional account dealing with Harriet Tubman, states that upon her escape from slavery, she killed her master. That appears in Leonard Ehrlich's, *God's Angry Man*. Mr. Ehrlich admits that he took a fictional license, on this point, saying that if there were no other accounts of any such incident, then his treatment of this matter must be ignored. See the Leonard Ehrlich letter in the Harriet Tubman Collection, Schomburg Library, Harlem, New York.

PART II — CHAPTER IV

[1] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, pp. 19-20.
[2] *The New York Herald*, September 22, 1907, passim.
[3] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[4] Letters of Harkless Bowley, Tubman Collection.
[5] "A Moses in War-Time Maryland," *The Baltimore Sun*, April 21, 1928, p. 13.
[6] Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad*, p. 358.
[7] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.

Fred Landon, librarian of the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, in a letter to the author, on August 15, 1939, sends a report from a Toronto newspaper referring to Harriet's arrival there with members of her family. Mr. Landon says: ". . . I came upon the enclosed extract from *The Globe* (Toronto). It was not dated but was plainly printed shortly after her death. I knew the Rev. R. A. Ball, when he was a minister in London (Canada), and I am sure that his statements can be relied on." The report sent by Mr. Landon is an editorial that appeared soon after the death of Harriet Tubman. In it the following was stated: "The Rev. R. A. Ball of B.M.E. Church of this city, who was a lad in St. Catharines while the underground railroad was in operation, remembers Harriet Tubman's arrival there on her first escape from slavery with two of her brothers. On her first rescue journey she led to freedom another brother, William, and his wife and child. On the next she brought her aged father and mother. By that time the desire to help in the destruction of slavery had become the passion of her life. Henry Ball of St. Catharines, a brother of Rev. R. A. Ball . . . tells how Harriet Tubman, after getting a party safely over the border—usually at Niagara Falls—would say to them: 'Shout, shout, you are free.' Some of the refugees in their ecstasy would clap their hands, kneel in prayer, kiss the ground that meant freedom to them, and say, 'This is British soil.' " There are several contradictions in the foregoing with other reports of the order in which Harriet rescued members of her family.

[8] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] Frederick Douglass: *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 329-30.

[11] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[12] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER V

[1] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 57.
[2] William Still: *The Underground Railroad*, p. 395.
[3] Sarah Bradford relates this story of a brother named John Ross, but William Still's record of this escaping party indicates that it was Henry Ross who was "the father of two small children, whom he had to leave behind." No John Ross is mentioned in this account. The likely explanation is that the Henry Ross named by Still took the name of John later, in freedom, and when Harriet told the story to Mrs. Bradford, she related it of one who was now named John. William Still, however, made his notes in the heat of the escape itself, fourteen years before Mrs. Bradford wrote her story; his notation definitely refers to Henry Ross as leaving a wife, Harriet Ann, and two children.
[4] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 59.
[5] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road*, p. 298.
[6] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 62.
[7] In a letter by William Brinkley to the Vigilance Committee of Philadelphia, dated March 23, 1857, in William Still's *The Underground Rail Road*, p. 74.
[8] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road*, p. 296.
(Still has reported six men in this company, Sarah Bradford five. Garrett either erred or sent on an extra man for some reason or other.)
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 297.

CHAPTER VI

[1] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 22.
[2] William Wells Brown, *The Rising Son: or The Antecedents and Advancement of the Colored Race*, pp. 536-539.
[3] Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad*, p. 118. Siebert's interview with Harriet Tubman on April 8, 1897, in Boston.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Doctor R. C. Smedley, *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester County*, pp. 249-50.
[6] Reverend James E. Mason, *Tribute to Harriet Tubman: The Modern Amazon*, a pamphlet reprinting an address given by the Reverend Mason during the month of June, 1914, and first published at that time in the *Advertiser-Journal*, Auburn, New York.
[7] The Boston *Commonwealth*, July 17, 1863, passim.
[8] Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Eighty Years and More, Reminiscences of Elizabeth Cady Stanton*, p. 51.
[9] Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 329-330.
[10] Willis B. Knowles, in the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, November 8, 1936, in a series of articles on the Underground Railroad in Western New York.
[11] John White Chadwick, *A Life for Liberty, Anti-Slavery and Other Letters of Sallie Holley*, p. 80.
[12] Reverend James Freeman Clarke, *Anti-Slavery Days*, pp. 81-82.
[13] Drake article, the New York *Herald*, Sept. 22, 1907, passim.
[14] Philip Green Wright and Elizabeth Wright, *Elizur Wright, the Father of Life Insurance*, p. 203.
[15] Letters of Harkless Bowley.
[16] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, p. 25.
[17] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road*, p. 297.
[18] Letter to author by Helen Storrow, Cornish Point, Buzzards Bay, R. F. D. 2, Mass., August 29, 1939.
[19] See Tatlock statement.
[20] Marion Gleason MacDougall, *Fugitive Slaves*, pp. 62-3.
[21] See Tatlock statement.
[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Washington, City and Capital, American Guide Series,* 1937, p. 70.
[24] Letter to the author, May 31, 1939.
[25] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* p. 21.
[26] Letter to author from the Negro writer, George Schuyler, Sept. 1, 1939, Shomburg Collection.

CHAPTER VII

[1] Samuel J. May, *Some Recollections of the Anti-Slavery Conflict,* p. 283.
[2] James B. Clarke, *An Hour with Harriet Tubman,* passim.
[3] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* p. 50.
[4] Higginson collection of letters, Widener College, Harvard University.
[5] Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Cheerful Yesterdays,* p. 8.
[6] Frank C. Drake article, *The New York Herald,* Sept. 22, 1907, passim. Drake reported this incident as occurring in Virginia, but that was unlikely as Harriet had no masters in that State. Other accounts say that the incident occurred in her home town, which would be Bucktown, and the master involved was Doctor Thompson.
[7] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* p. 63.
[8] According to Carter G. Woodson, in his *The Negro in Our History,* p. 269, William Wells Brown had done more than any other writer to popularize Negro history during the Abolition and Civil War periods. There is therefore a very authoritative source for the date of Harriet's arrival in Boston even though some of the Abolitionists do not seem to have met her until the late 'fifties.
[9] William Wells Brown, *The Rising Son; or the Antecedents and Advancement of the Colored Race,* pp. 536-9.
[10] Benjamin Drew, *The Refugee; or Narratives of Fugitive Slaves,* p. 31.
[11] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road,* p. 386.
[12] *Ibid.,* p. 387.
[13] Letter to the author from Mrs. Alexander D. Brickler, Jr., Wilberforce, Ohio, August 14, 1939. Mrs. Florence Carter, a close friend of Harriet Tubman in the closing period of Harriet's life, in a statement to the author, has verified the fact that the "kidnapped" child remained throughout life a favorite of Harriet Tubman; Mrs. Carter verifies that this woman bore a marked resemblance to Harriet, and photographs of the "favorite" do indicate this. Mrs. Carter states that this woman knew the life of Harriet better, probably, than any other person. Mrs. Brickler says that her mother died about ten years ago. The only point in Mrs. Brickler's story that might be questioned is the reference to one of Harriet's brothers as an ex-slave. Nowhere else has it been stated that Harriet had any brothers who were not slaves. Even so, it is possible that one of them might have bought his time or in some other way been manumitted.

CHAPTER VIII

[1] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* pp. 25-26.
[2] Sarah H. Bradford, *Harriet, the Moses of Her People,* chapter of additional incidents, pp. 133-153, passim.
[3] Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* p. 17.
[4] Richard Randall, "Fighting Songs of the Unemployed," *The Sunday Worker Progressive Weekly,* September 3, 1939, p. 2.
[5] Letters to the author, dated July 25 and July 26, 1939.
[6] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road,* p. 272.
[7] *Ibid.* William Still says that the direct reason for Bailey's flogging a few weeks earlier was a result of an altercation between Josiah and another slave. Sarah Bradford says that the beating came when Josiah was purchased by a new master, William C. Hughlett. This master immediately whipped Josiah, much as he would a new dog, to show him who was master. Whatever the reason for the flogging, Bailey decided to leave.
[8] Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* pp. 29-33.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] John Lovell, Jr., "Social Implications of the Negro Spiritual," *Journal of Negro Education,* October, 1939.

CHAPTER IX

[1] *Frederick Douglass' Paper,* statement on Sept. 12, 1856.

[2] The *Frederick Douglass' Paper,* from 1856 on, reveals the intimate connection of Douglass and his followers to the growing Republican organization. In the Reconstruction period Douglass' allegiance to the Republican movement became orthodox, no doubt resulting from the efforts of this party in pushing through the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. On May 30, 1872, Douglass wrote an editorial in *The New National Era,* a Negro newspaper, which concluded with the words, "The Republican Party is the true workingman's party of the country." The liberator, in this period, went into Negro labor organizations, trade unions, conferences and conventions, and always politicalized as a Republican, winning inestimable influence among the Negroes for this group. Charles H. Wesley in his *Negro Labor in the United States* (1927) devotes a chapter to "Early Organization of Negro Labor" wherein the important role of Douglass as a Republican is seen. Douglass' relationship to the Republican Party and the Negro influence he marshaled for this party is worth a special study. To this day Douglass' influence on the national vote, through the Republican vote, is a mighty and continuing factor in American life.

CHAPTER X

[1] *Auburn Citizen,* June 11, 1914, p. 5, col. 2. Mrs. Telford says that Harriet's parents were immediately settled there, but actually they did not stay in Auburn until the winter or spring of 1858. Mrs. Telford also says that at about that time Harriet made her first trip to Boston in the course of raising funds to pay for the new house, but Harriet had been there repeatedly for several years, according to the most reliable evidence.

[2] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road,* pp. 72-73.

[3] *Ibid.,* p. 74.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 638.

[5] *Ibid.,* p. 639.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 74.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 247.

[8] *Ibid.,* p. 247. William Still goes on to say, "The Spring previous, she had paid a visit to the very neighborhood in which "Sam" lived, expressly to lead her own brothers out of "Egypt." She succeeded. To "Sam" this was cheering and glorious news, and he made up his mind that before a great while, Indian Creek should have one less slave and that Canada should have one more citizen." Harriet must have told young Green of some other Underground success, for she did not rescue her brothers until late in 1854.

[9] Boston *Commonwealth,* July 17, 1863, passim.

[10] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* pp. 109-111.

[11] *Ibid.,* pp. 52-53.

[12] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road,* p. 396.

[13] John Bell Robinson, *Pictures of Slavery and Freedom,* pp. 322-327.

CHAPTER XI

[1] *The Liberator,* July 8, 1859; also *The National Anti-Slavery Standard* (New York), Saturday, July 16, 1859.

[2] Frank C. Drake article, *The New York Herald,* September 22, 1907, passim.

[3] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* p. 25.

[4] William Still, *The Underground Rail Road,* p. 99.

[5] *Ibid.* The drawing was by a craftsman named Osler and it appears opposite page 102 of the Still book. Once in the North the Cambridge slaves were separated and settled in various places. Most of them went on to towns in Canada West; but at this time the anti-slavery sentiment in the free states was recrudescing, the defiance of the Fugitive Slave Act was becoming more overt, and many towns in the free states began to house and protect fugitives. At least one of the latest Cambridge party, a man named Nat Ambie, was settled in Seward's and Harriet's town. She, likely, was instrumental in finding shelter for him here. Nat was described by historian Still as "no ordinary man . . . and of more than ordinary intellectual capacities." p. 103.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 109.
[7] *The National Anti-Slavery Standard,* Saturday, August 21, 1858, reprinted from *The Cambridge* (Md.) *Democrat* of August 10, 1858, article entitled "The Slaveholders of Maryland."
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro in Our History,* p. 250.
[10] *The National Anti-Slavery Standard,* November 13, 1858.
[11] Report of Senator Pearce of Maryland, as the Report and Resolutions adopted by the Convention, *Anglo-African Magazine,* p. 320.
[12] *Anglo-African Magazine,* p. 316.
[13] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* pp. 35-6.
[14] *The National Anti-Slavery Standard,* Saturday, November 30, 1867.
[15] Item appears directly below editorials.
[16] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* p. 52.
[17] William Still *The Underground Rail Road,* p. 638.
[18] James Redpath, "Life of Captain John Brown," p. 64.
[19] Mary Thacher Higginson, *Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson* 1846-1906, p. 81.
[20] *The Liberator,* July 8, 1858; Convention reported by James M. W. Yerrington.
[21] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Cheerful Yesterdays,* p. ?.
[22] *The Liberator,* July 8, 1858.
[23] *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman,* p. 7.
[24] *The Liberator,* Friday, August 26, 1859, article entitled "New England Colored Citizens' Convention."

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO PART TWO

How did Sarah Bradford and the others who consulted with her at the time that Harriet's story was written, in 1869, arrive at the computation of nineteen excursions into the slave land? Franklin B. Sanborn's record of the five earliest trips, from 1849 to 1852, unquestionably formed the first base of the estimate. Then Harriet's statement that she made eleven trips from Canada, but that she kept no accounting of other journeys, entered into the total. Thus, if Harriet made her first four sallies from one of the free states, and the next eleven from Canada West, this would reach fifteen. Since Harriet established her home in Auburn sometime in 1857 or 1858, there would remain, to be accounted for, about four additional trips from that town for the period on through December of 1860. (One or two of these remain to be described.) The William Still records have indicated at least one trip in the closing period; Franklin B. Sanborn described what he believed to have been Harriet's final campaign in 1860, and Colonel Higginson referred, in 1859, to Harriet's intention of "going again." About four trips would be a correct estimate, it seems, from the time of her Auburn residence through 1860. This would bring the total of campaigns to nineteen.

Actual dated journeys in the Sanborn, Still, Bradford and other accounts total only ten; but as has been observed, innumerable episodes, some of which occurred on the dated campaigns, and others belonging to a half dozen or so of voyages to which no actual date can be ascribed, bring the evidence of conductions, if not up to nineteen, then somewhere between the Sarah Bradford figure and the known dated journeys. All writers since Sarah Bradford have accepted the nineteen computations, but possibly few if any have attempted verification of the figure. There is no reason why a conservative estimate of fifteen excursions should not be acceptable. We can well afford to reduce the Bradford total to fifteen, and allow for some overlapping of records, and concede that there have been, as the cook says of the brew of coffee, a few spoonfuls for the pot. Actually, though, there is no reason, in view of Mrs. Bradford's careful check on Harriet's story (and multi-varied confirmation of both Harriet and Sarah Bradford) to question the total of nineteen. Then, as observed in the body of the story, even if there were only a dozen campaigns, it would not lessen the stature of the accomplishment; it would still be a dozen war-like marches into the camp of a desperate and vigilant enemy. If Harriet had not absconded with about 300 slaves, as is likely, and ran off with only 200, it would still be an economic blow to the slave power worth $200,000. Finally, it is when we try to estimate Harriet's total Underground effect,