NEGRO WELFARE WORK IN PHILADELPHIA
ESPECIALLY AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE
CAREER OF WILLIAM STILL

1775-1930

Submitted in partial

fulfilment for the degree of

Master of Arts, February 1931

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UNIVERSITY
OF
PENNSYLVANIA

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

1. Introduction

   Interrelation of Pennsylvania Society, etc., and Activities of William Still.

2. Prevailing opinion of Abolitionists.

   a. North
   b. South.

3. Origin and early history of Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

4. Extension of Organization -- Incorporation

5. First systematic program of Enlarged Society.

   a. Improve mental, moral, industrial status of Free Negroes.

   b. Encourage performances of merit.

   c. Work for suppression of slavery and slave trade.

   d. Extend Abolition Societies.

   e. Unite with other Abolition Societies in Convention.

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The work of William Still was greatly intertwined with that of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. It was, in a measure, largely a by-product of the labors of that organization. Therefore a brief history of the Society will form a fitting background to a study of the development of this leadership.

As an irresponsible child is nurtured and trained to stand erect, to walk, and to foster those ideals and ideas which make for independence of thought and action, so were the ignorant and not altogether carefree Negro, who was not responsible for his condition nor habitat, the object of those early Anti-Slavery members.

Deposited in a strange land, the Negro unwittingly became a part of an invidious system. A system which was not only degrading to him, but was demoralizing to the Whites, as well. Seized upon by politicians, he became a political football, becoming more and more involved in an ever-increasing complexity of problems.

As the economic and political tension increased between the sections, so did the menace of slavery, increasingly assume alarming proportions. And to a corresponding degree did the odium of the Abolitionists, in some quarters, increase. To the conservatives in the North, they were a fanatical band of radicals -- peace disturbers -- who interfered with affairs of the country that were best ignored or compromised. While to

the South, they were that hated group of trouble breeders, who were straining every effort to make Southerners lose their property and their vested rights.

However distasteful the Abolitionists may have been to many, their work originated in "the great doctrine of the equality of the human family, which formed the basis of the testimony of the religious Society of Friends against slavery."[1] Feeling that this condition was contrary, not only to their own conscientious scruples, but also to those principles and ideals of their Forefathers, in 1688, the Germantown Friends presented a protest to their Yearly Meeting against "buying, selling and holding men in slavery."[2]

"Friends" were cautioned against encouraging and buying in any more Negroes. Another appeal was made, in 1729, at the Yearly Meeting to see if members were clear on importing or buying slaves, and those who persisted were not allowed to be employed in any of their religious affairs. Finally, a law was passed by the Pennsylvania Legislature, on March 1, 1780, for the gradual abolition of slavery.[3] But it was not until 1781 "that the records show that the Friends had become entirely clear of the evil."[4]

"The first notice that we find upon record of associated action, was a meeting of a few individuals at the Sun Tavern, in Second Street, in Philadelphia, April 14, 1775[5] at which time they adopted a Constitution, the Preamble of which sets

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1. Needles, Edward, An Historical Memoir, 108.
2. Manuscript History of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Book I, 5, hereafter designated Manuscript History.
3. Manuscript Collection belonging to the Pennsylvania Society, etc., Vol. I, 21, hereafter designated Manuscript Collection.
4. Manuscript History, Book I, 5.
5. Ibid., 8.

forth the object for which the Society was formed."[1] It commenced as an association of a few benevolent individuals of the "Society of Friends", formed for the purpose of protecting the liberated slaves from being kidnapped, and to act as their advisers.[2] It was then formed into a regular society with the name of "The Society for the Relief of Free Negroes, unlawfully held in Bondage."[3]

Because of difficulties engendered by the Revolution, no more meetings were held until the close of the war. But the Society was reorganized, after peace was concluded, on February 10, 1784.[4]

For several years the Society continued its work, ever growing in membership and gaining in public estimation. Several prominent "Friends" and some members of other Societies were now elected to the group. And, in addition to the many valuable "Friends", who had long been actively working in the Society, we find that there were many others who were desirous of becoming enrolled as Abolitionists. This was a term of reproach among the slave holders, but was considered honorable and worthy of being sought after by the greatest and most dignified characters in the community. Proof of this may be found upon the minutes of the second, third and fourth months of this year, 1786, in the list of thirty-six names of candidates for election.[5]

In 1787, the Constitution of the Society was revised,

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1. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 15.
2. Ibid., 108.
3. Ibid., 15; Manuscript History, Book I, 8.
4. Manuscript History, Book I, 15.
5. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 28.

membership was extended outside the "Society of Friends", and application was made to the Legislature for an Act of Incorporation. This was granted December 8, 1789. Subsequently, we find the enlarged organization beginning its work with Benjamin Franklin as its first President and with its new name and title of "The Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, and for Improving the Condition of the African Race."[1]

About this time the Constitutional Convention was being held in Philadelphia to frame the present Constitution of the United States. And it was to this body that the Abolition Society sent a Memorial on May 10, 1787 to suppress the African slave trade.[2] Efforts were also made to place before the public the object for which the Society had been formed, and to enlist their help and cooperation in support of its program. This was done by Benjamin Franklin who addressed an open letter to the public voicing the hope of the Society "to essentially promote the public good[3] by so doing."

A systematic plan was adopted this year and put into operation by "the appointment of 'The committee for the improvement of the condition of the free negroes', composed of twenty-four members, who were to be sub-divided; to wit:

"1st. A Committee of Inspection, whose duty should be to superintend the morals, general conduct, and ordinary situation of the free negroes, to afford them advice and instruction,

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1. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 29; Manuscript History, Book I, 17, 18.
2. Manuscript History, Book I, 15; Manuscript Collection, Vol. I, 82, 85.
3. Manuscript History Book I, 60, 61; Manuscript Collection, Vol. II, 49.

and protect them from wrongs.

"2nd. A Committee of Guardians, for placing out children with suitable persons, that they may learn some trade, or other means of subsistence by regular but reasonable apprenticeship.

"3rd. A Committee of Education, who were to superintend the school instruction of the children and youth of free blacks. This branch of the committee was also charged to procure and preserve a regular record of the marriages, births and manumissions of all free blacks.

"4th. A Committee of Employ, which was to endeavor to procure constant employment for those free Negroes who are able to work, the want of which would occasion poverty, idleness and many vicious habits." For several years the labours of this committee proved very beneficial to the colored people, but afterwards some of its duties became obsolete and the committee was discontinued.[1]

The Society, in establishing these various schools and committees for work among Negroes, was putting into operation plans and ideas which it believed were practicable. It believed that, given the same opportunity, and under similar conditions, the Negro could make the same progress as any other person. And its aim was to help him to achieve this goal. Attention was also given to merited performance. This was evidently known in other States as a letter was sent the Society, from Maryland, asking for aid in getting published the almanacs of Benjamin

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1. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 37; Manuscript History, Book I, 58; Manuscript Collection, Vol. II, 41.

Banneker of Maryland.

Banneker was a Negro, about fifty-six years old, who had studied mathematics and for three years (about 1788) had begun to study astronomy. He became so proficient in this study that he calculated an almanac. He calculated one in 1791, but could not have it published. So he did another in 1792. He was so poor that he wanted some money from this, but felt that he would rather have it published and get nothing, rather than not have it published at all.

It was in his interest that Elias Elliott sent a letter to the Society on October 10, 1791, wanting the almanac published in Philadelphia if worthy.[1] A certificate was also sent that Banneker's knowledge in mathematics and astronomy were all of his own inquiry. He was "assisted only by astronomical tables which he with much difficulty procured."[2]

The Society turned the almanac over to Dr. Rittenhouse and William Waring who calculated almanacs. It was examined and thought worthy of presentation to the public.[3]

Other evidences of activities of the Society, outside of Pennsylvania, is found on their minutes where record of an interesting suit before the Supreme Court of New Jersey, which involved the liberties of a number of blacks who were unlawfully held in bondage.[4] Then various Memorials were drafted from time to time -- as in 1791 when the Society was informed that a Bill had been introduced into the General Assembly of this state to

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1. Manuscript History, Book I, 86.
2. Ibid., 87.
3. Ibid., 88.
4. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 38.

enable officers of the United States to hold slaves in Pennsylvania. A memorial was presented upon the subject to the House of Representatives which had passed the bill.[1] That same year another was sent to Congress on the subject of the slave trade.[2] Then, in 1792, a Committee was appointed to take measures for establishing an Abolition Society in New Jersey. This Committee subsequently reported that it had succeeded in having a Society formed at Burlington called the "New Jersey Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery."[3]

In 1793 "The Committee for Improving the Condition of the Free Blacks" presented to the Society a plan for opening a school for young Negro children. It stated that it had found a black woman who was well qualified for mistress of such a school, and was willing to engage in such a work. The Committee, as a result of this information, was authorized to obtain a suitable place for a school for free black children.[4]

Steps towards union of the various groups may now be observed. When the Pennsylvania Society met in April 1793, a letter was read from the New York Society. It proposed a Convention of Delegates from all the Abolition Societies in the United States. This convention was to meet at Philadelphia, "for the purpose of deliberating on the means of obtaining their common object, and of uniting in an address to Congress upon that subject."[5] After some deliberation, it was "Resolved,

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1. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 38.
2. Ibid., 39.
3. Ibid., 40.
4. Ibid., 40.
5. Ibid., 40.; Manuscript History, Book I, 99.

that the Society do agree to the proposition of the New York Society, and will appoint Delegates to the proposed Convention, provided a majority of the Abolition Societies in the United States do agree to the measure."[1]

In December, "Delegates were appointed,[2] with authority on behalf of this Society, to agree to an address to Congress on the subject of the slave trade; to decide on all matters that should come before them which have any relation to domestic slavery within the United States, and generally to unite in any measures that to the Convention may appear most likely to effect the common purposes of the several Abolition Societies." The chairman of the committee who drafted this address was Dr. Benjamin Rush, the eminent medical practitioner, teacher and philanthropist who subsequently was chosen President of the Society in 1803.

This Convention, the first of its kind, was called the American Convention and assembled in Philadelphia January 1, 1794. It issued the above-mentioned address, to the people of the United States on the subject of slavery, which for vigour and simplicity of style, and emphatic condemnation of the system of slavery, has rarely been equaled."[3]

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1. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 41.
2. Manuscript Collection, Vol. III, 293.
3. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 40.

CHAPTER II

INCREASE OF SLAVERY AND CORRESPONDING EXTENSION OF WORK OF THE ABOLITION SOCIETY

1. Effect of Expansion of United States on Slavery.
2. Extended Program of the Abolition Society.
   a. Attempts to safeguard interests of Negroes.
      I. Inspection of Congressional Measures.
         1. Missouri - 1820.
         2. Florida - 1821.
         3. South Carolina - 1823.
         4. Congress - slavery in District of Columbia 1824.
      II. Use of Press.
         1. The African Observer established 1837.
         2. The Pennsylvania Freeman
   b. Help escaped slaves -- Underground Railroad.
3. Survey of Association among Philadelphia Negroes - 1840.
   a. The Philadelphia Library of Colored Persons - 1833.
   b. The Rush Library Company and Debating Society of Pennsylvania - 1836.
   c. The Gilbert Lyceum.
   d. The Demosthenian Institute - 1839.
   e. The Bethel Education Society - 1842.
   f. Young Men's Literary Association.
4. Work of Society in Negro Churches.
5. Unbiased attitude of Abolition Society.

Many had hoped that the slavery question would take care of itself and become absorbed by the many pressing questions of the day. But the contrary to this was true. America was a new country -- of vast and apparently inexhaustible resources. Of these, the greatest was the riches to be made from the land -- acres upon acres of land -- only waiting for ownership and development.

"But for this field of expansion, slavery might have fulfilled the expectation of the fathers and gradually died away."[1] Now, it assumed a position of ever increasing importance. And "What gave Slavery and State Sovereignty their powers and issues was the fact that they involved the question of dominance over the common territory in an expanding nation."[2]

So to a corresponding degree was the work of the Society maintained and broadened. Congressional measures were watched with much interest. In 1819 when James Talmadge proposed the exclusion of slavery from the new state of Missouri, the Pennsylvania Society voted him thanks.[3] In 1820, the Society was instrumental in having measures passed which resulted in obtaining for colored children a share of school education.[4] Other steps were taken to safeguard the interests of the Negroes. As in 1821, when the Society appointed a committee "to inquire what measures may properly be taken by the Society for

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1. Turner, F. J., The Frontier in American History, 201.
2. Ibid., p. 201.
3. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 68, 69.
4. Ibid., p. 69.

endeavouring to prevent the further introduction of slaves into Florida."[1] A Memorial was also sent to the Legislature of South Carolina in 1823 when that body passed a law "affecting the rights of free persons of color".[2] Another was sent Congress in 1824, "on the subject of slavery in the District of Columbia."[3]

Much interest was created in the efforts of the Society and information disseminated by the press. As early as 1827 "a weekly Periodical was published in Philadelphia, edited by Enoch Lewis, under the title of 'The African Observer', which contained a large amount of useful matter, tending to illustrate the necessity of abolishing slavery, and proving such a measure to be at once consistent with principles and sound policy."[4]

A committee within the Society also printed, every Thursday, and distributed, a newspaper called the Pennsylvania Freeman. This voiced the opinions of the Society and gave an account of its activities -- that is, all but its share in assisting fugitive slaves to escape from their masters. This work was carried on entirely under cover, and there seems to be no written record as to when it was first begun. However, this appears to have been a later development of the activities of the Society, when the Vigilance Committee was formed to take care of such matters. And the first written record appears to have been that made December 25, 1852 by William Still when he

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1. Needles, An Historical Memoir, 72.
2. Ibid., 76.
3. Ibid., 80.
4. Ibid., 86.

was a clerk in the Underground Railroad Office and a member of the Vigilance Committee.[1]

However, the various committees, which had been formed in an earlier period of the development of the Society, were still guiding and assisting in the work for the improvement of Negroes and also taking an active interest, generally, in the efforts which they, themselves, were making for their own self-improvement. One of these Committees in the Society formed for the "Improvement of the Colored Race", undertook a survey of the "Associations among the Colored People of the City, for promoting scientific and moral purposes",[2] and on December 25, 1840 made a report of such organizations which was as follows.

I. The earliest established of these institutions seems to have been "The Philadelphia Library Company of Colored Persons". This company was incorporated January 1, 1833 and had an active membership of from forty to fifty persons. The object of the Company was the collection of a library of useful works of every description for the benefit of its members, who might successfully apply there, without comparatively any cost, for that mental help which they could not readily obtain elsewhere. During the past winter the Company had given a course of lectures which was well attended. Its library consisted of three hundred valuable books and its lectures and debates had been held in the basement of St. Thomas' Church on 5th Street below Walnut.[3]

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1. William Still's personal record of the history, etc. of the arriving fugitive slaves.
2. Manuscript History, Book III, 270.
3. A Southerner, Sketches of the Higher Classes of Colored Society, 96, 97; Manuscript History, Book III, 270.

II. The next organization in the order of its formation was "The Rush Library Company and Debating Society of Pennsylvania." This Society was formed on December 16th, 1836 and was named after the eminent physician and philanthropist, Benjamin Rush. It had a membership of thirty and its library contained about one hundred volumes. The object of this association was the same as that of the Philadelphia Library Company. No one was admitted to membership who was over twenty-one and the place of meeting was Union Hall, at the corner of Seventh Street and Bradford's Alley, below Lombard Street.[1]

III. The Gilbert Lyceum comes next with the object of "diffusing scientific and literary knowledge." It had a membership of from twenty to thirty persons and weekly meetings were held in the afternoons for scientific and literary conversations. Its meeting place was on 7th Street below Arch.[2]

IV. On January 10, 1839 the "Demosthenian Institute" was established "for the sole purpose of disseminating light and knowledge."[3] It had a membership of thirty -- between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five and upwards. Meetings were held for nearly a year, at the house of Mr. John P. Burr, where it was first organized. During this time severel addresses were delivered and numerous questions discussed, but in the presence of members only, as it was a general wish

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 270; A Southerner, Sketches of the Higher Classes of Colored Society, 101.
2. Manuscript History, Book III, 270.
3. Ibid., 270; A Southerner, Sketches of the Higher Classes of Colored Society, 103.

that the Institute should be a preparatory school, until the members had gained sufficient confidence and experience to appear before the public. Membership in the Institute grew so rapidly that it became necessary to obtain a larger place for meeting and Salters' Hall was engaged. During the season of 1840-41, addresses and a course of lectures were given. These showed great energy and enterprise on the part of its members and was a striking example of the abiding interest which actuated them for its continued prosperity and usefulness. The lectures were chiefly the work of the members of the Institute, the activities of which were already bearing fruit, as it was doubtful whether many of them had ever ventured before the public, for such purposes, previously before joining. There was alss a debating department which had likewise been a source of great improvement to the young men of the "Demosthenian Institute".[1]

V. The Bethel Education Society was established in August 1842. The object of this organization was the instruction of young men, who may be called to the ministry. It had a membership of ninety.

VI. Another society, lately formed, was the Young Men's Literary Association. It had fifteen members from fourteen years of age and upwards and held debates weekly.

The Committee closed its report with the following statement:

> "From the foregoing statement, together with other information received, there

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1. A Southerner, Sketches of the Higher Classes of Colored Society, 105, 106.

> appears to be a considerable amount of emulation among our Colored people for their own improvement and advancement in the scale of intelligence by combining solid instruction with pleasing yet rational enjoyment."[1]

The interest of the Society seems also to have been extended into the work of Negro Churches, as there was a "Committee of Arrangements for Visitation of Colored Churches". This committee reported great satisfaction in the strong demonstrations which had testified to the cordial welcome with which the labors of the Committee had been received.

Aside from religious instruction, various other subjects had been presented to the Negroes. They had been encouraged to take an interest in such problems as the education of their children, the need for increasing the number of pupils in the public schools established for that purpose, in temperance, and in good conduct generally as "essentially important to the improvement of their condition and their elevation of character as moral and Christian members of Society."[2]

The foregoing history gives us a good idea of the constructive work and attitude of the Abolition Society toward its proteges, also of the resultant uplift work which was being carried on by the Philadelphia Negro himself, during this period, for his own advancement.

We must not get the idea, though, that the Abolitionists were one-sided or biased in their attitude towards a preservation of the Union with slavery on the one hand and

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 270.
2. Ibid., 271.

emancipation at the expense of peace and disunion on the other. Their idea was ever the peaceable settling of differences; a working together for the general good of all, and a preservation of those ideals as enunciated by their forefathers -- preservation of liberty, the pursuit of happiness, etc.

But, already, fully twenty-five years before the final break came, thoughtful people were viewing the situation with alarm. They saw the ever-increasing growth of the institution of slavery with a corresponding widening of the gulf between the two sections -- a gulf which, even at this time, it appeared would be impossible to bridge.

As a sort of vindication of their stand, therefore, the Society treasures among its correspondence an original letter from John Quincy Adams, dated Washington, June 25, 1836. It was addressed to Dr. Edwin P. Atlee. In speaking therein of the issue between slavery and emancipation, he says:

> "I would hope if I could that it will be made up peaceably and settled without bloodshed, -- but it must come. It is approaching by such means as it is the special prerogative of Providence to employ. The Society of Friends are among the most effective instruments to the attainment of the end, because all their paths are peace. Bound as I am by the compact in the Constitution of the United States in my political capacity, I have endeavored to retard rather than hasten the conflict between the parties which must ultimately be unavoidable. What I have done hitherto has been defensively to maintain my own rights, and the free Institutions of the country. -- I hope they will not perish in my hands -- but the people themselves can alone effectively maintain them."[1]

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1. Manuscript History, Book II, 239, 240.

CHAPTER III

EMPLOYMENT OF WILLIAM STILL AS CLERK IN OFFICE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ABOLITION SOCIETY - 1847

1. His reasons for seeking job.
2. Early history of Still's family.
   a. Parents in slavery.
      1. Father buys freedom - goes to New Jersey.
      2. Mother's escape to New Jersey.
   b. Early life and education of Still.
3. William Still in Philadelphia.
   a. Varied jobs.
   b. Application to Abolition Society.
4. Employment of Still as clerk.
   a. Duties - Care of office, mailing Pennsylvania Freeman, etc.
   b. Interest in Fugitives - Questioning - Writing information.

This brings us to the fall of 1847, when William Still, a young man of twenty-one, came to the office of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, then located at 107 North 5th Street. He had heard that a clerk was wanted and, although his education had been very meager, he made application for the job. The salary offered was small -- three dollars a week -- but the work itself was attractive. He himself was a free Negro, but he was deeply concerned in the efforts being made to help free the enslaved members of his race, and safeguard the interests of those who were free. He had married a young woman, Letitia George, who was as interested in the cause as he was, one who was truly his helpmate in desiring to help their people.

This concern, probably, was engendered by a knowledge of the trials and sufferings which Still's mother and his older brothers and sisters had undergone in their struggle for freedom -- as a brief resume of the family history will show.[1]

The family, consisting of husband, wife and four children (two boys and two girls) were slaves in Maryland where the father was known as Levin Steel. Hating the idea of being a slave, and determining to die rather than continue as such, Levin voiced this idea to his young master. The latter, feeling it would be better policy under such circumstances to make the best bargain he could, decided to let Levin purchase his own

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1. Recollections of the family history - from Miss Frances E. Still. Still, William, Underground Railroad, IV.

freedom. This was done, and the erstwhile slave, now a freeman, bade his wife and children goodbye. Leaving them to God's care and protection, he left for the North, settling near Greenwich, New Jersey.[1]

The bereft wife now felt her position more keenly than ever and determined to rejoin her husband at the earliest opportunity. When this chance occurred, she fled, taking her four children with her and trusting to Providence to guide her on her way.

Then ensued days of anxiety -- filled with tense moments of the fear of being trailed and discovered, followed by nights of horror made dangerous by forced or difficult travel across swamps, rivers, or of times when starvation threatened to block her plans. But the journey finally came to a successful end. The family was joyfully reunited and all settled down to peace and happiness until the ruthless slave hunter appeared upon the scene, having uncovered the trail of the fugitives. The peaceful household was disrupted and the wife and her four children dragged back to their old slave quarters on the Eastern shore.

This short but sweet taste of liberty made the slave mother more than ever determined to make another attempt for freedom. But this time she decided, with agonizing mother love, that she would flee with only two of her children, her two girls, who were the youngest and weakest. The two boys, who were the oldest and strongest, she felt could better stand chances of

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, IV.

survival and perhaps, later, of successful escape. Leaving these two in the care of her slave mother, she made the second attempt, using even greater precautions to elude pursuit and avoid discovery. This trial met with success.[1]

A new abode in New Jersey was selected -- this time in Burlington county, in the depths of the Jersey pines. Here the father became owner of forty acres of land. The past history of the family was carefully guarded and the family name was changed to that of Still. In time, through industry and thrift, the forty acres were eventually owned[2]-- and the family had increased until it numbered eighteen children, the youngest of whom was William Still, the subject of our discourse.

He was born October 7, 1821. When old enough, he began to work on the farm. From this time on, until he was seventeen years old, he engaged in a variety of works -- cutting and preparing timber for market, charcoal burning, cranberry picking, etc. He used his leisure moments in taking advantage of the very meager opportunities provided among a people so sparsely and primitively settled in the pines. In fact, school was only attended in a desultory fashion, it being the custom in those days to go to school on rainy days. So the little education that Still received consisted of the barest rudiments. But it served to beget in him a desire for greater knowledge and for more information of a broader and higher type.[3]

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, V.
2. This land is still in the hands of the Still Family,- Recollection of Miss Frances E. Still.
3. Still, Underground Railroad, VI.

Excelling in declamation, he soon won quite a reputation in that subject. He became an inveterate reader of such historical and geographical books as he was able to obtain. A book called "The Young Man's Own Book" now fell into his hands and seems to have had a great influence on him, as it was read and reread until he could repeat almost entire chapters from it. In it there was a chapter on grammar which induced him to buy one and to pursue the study of this branch at every spare moment -- while driving teams, during leisure moments in the woods, or at nights by the light of the pine fire, while shelling corn or paring apples, or performing many such tasks as were set aside for children during the long winter evenings.[1]

About this time he subscribed for the "Colored American", edited by Charles B. Ray and Philip Bell, of New York, which was the first anti-slavery newspaper in this country owned and published by colored men.[2]

In the fall of 1841, Still left home to try for the larger opportunities which he felt awaited him outside the pines. After varied jobs, he determined to try city life, feeling he would have greater advantages for mental improvement which he desired and also better chances of business success. So in the spring of 1844 he left New Jersey and came to Philadelphia.

He found a home on Fifth Street above Poplar in an old, rickety frame shanty which was as good as his limited means and uncertain prospects could afford. Then followed a period beset with discouragements and anxiety -- at a time when he was

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1. Still, Underground Railroad, IX.
2. Ibid., IX.

away from home with winter approaching, and alone in a great friendless city. He tried job after job until he finally got one which eventually turned out to be the most promising. It was with the family of Mrs. E. Langdon Elwyn on West Penn Square.

His duties here were light and though of a strictly routine order, yet they gave him some spare time. This leisure was given to books, for when Mrs. Elwyn discovered his taste in this direction, she gave him all the encouragement possible. She would select books from her well-stored library for him to read, and having traveled widely at home and abroad and enjoyed a wide acquaintance with leading public men and their families, she often entertained him for hours by eloquent dissertations on men and measures and by her vivid descriptions of scenes and manners in the old world and in the new. He was permitted to keep up his connection with the Sunday School at the Moral Reform Retreat, on Lombard Street -- and in all, led the pleasantest life he had known since entering the city.

And in all it was the most profitable school he had ever attended from a mental and disciplinary point of view. Mr. Boyd says:

> "He got a larger knowledge of books, new notions of men, public measures, and society in general, and learned many valuable lessons on the nature, necessity of duty, order and economy, from a source so high in wealth and station that their studied existence there was a surprise to him."[1]

But his connection with the family that had meant so

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1. Still, Underground Railroad, XVII.

much to his mental, moral and social development was terminated when the Elwyns left town. Still now had to seek other employment. This he was able to obtain with the family of William Wurtz on Walnut Street. Here he continued until the fall of 1847, when he applied to Peter Lester, a member of the Executive Committee of the Abolition Society, for a position. The latter sent him to J. Miller McKim, the general agent, corresponding secretary, and gentleman in charge of the office. Mr. McKim received him very kindly, but told him that he had better send a written application to the Committee. In compliance with this request, the following letter was sent. A study of this will give us a very good idea of Still's ambition even at this early age and of his underlying motives in desiring the position.

Philadelphia, September 21, 1847.

J. M. McKim, Esq.,

Dear Sir:-

I have duly considered your proposal to me, and I have come to the conclusion of availing myself of the privilege, esteeming it no small honor, to be placed in a position where I shall be considered an intelligent being, notwithstanding the salary may be small.

Therefore, if you think it proper to condescend to confer the favor upon me, I am at your service, sir.

I have viewed the matter in various ways, but have only come to the one conclusion at last, and that is this: If I am not directly rewarded, perhaps it may be the means of more than rewarding me in some future days. I go for liberty and improvement.

Yours respectfully,

- - o William Still[1]

1. Still, Underground Railroad, XVIII.

His written application for the job was favorably received and he entered upon his duties. These consisted, at this time, solely of keeping the office clean, and mailing out documents and copies of the Pennsylvania Freeman. As this office was the chief terminus of the Underground Railroad, the more difficult, dangerous and secretive work, that of receiving and helping escaped slaves, was entrusted to older, cooler and wiser heads than young Still's. Negroes, however, greatly assisted in this work -- offering their homes to secrete the fugitives during the day, and guiding, piloting and ferrying them on their way to freedom, at night.

Still, too, entered with zest into the labors of the Society. He began to take a greater interest in men and affairs, especially as they affected his people. On the one hand, he began to know more intimately, and to have a deeper appreciation for the Abolitionists and their work. And on the other hand, his interests began to grow and all his sympathies were aroused by the continuous stream of bedraggled fugitives who were coming in via the Underground Railroad.

So great was his interest, that each individual was the object of his especial attention -- his name, his former owners and abode, his age, his experiences, etc. These he began, on his own initiative, to jot down and to file away for future reference.[1] In this way he even discovered his long-lost older brother whom his mother had been compelled to leave

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1. Still, Wm., Underground Railroad, XX; Still, William, Personal record in MSS.

in Maryland when she made her second attempt for freedom.

CHAPTER IV

RAMIFICATIONS OF WORK OF THE ABOLITION SOCIETY

1. Appeal for rights of Negroes in Revised Constitution of Pennsylvania -- Memorial to Legislature, 1837.
2. Appeal to Negroes against demonstration of violence because of Fugitive Slave Law, 1850.
3. Negroes' Memorial to Legislature - 1858.
   a. Statistics presented.
4. Evidences of Still's rising ability.
   a. More responsible work given.
   b. Trip to Canada - to investigate conditions of and for fugitive slaves.
   c. Letters of introduction given.
5. Results of investigation.
   a. Still's letter to Public Ledger Jan. 21, 1860.
6. Still's newspaper article on one month's activities of the Underground Railroad.

Time, so interestingly spent, passed quickly, and when Still had been with the Society two years, an incident occurred which showed one of the ramifications of its work. It also evidenced the great care exercised by the Society in attempting to safeguard the political rights of its proteges. A revision of the Constitution of Pennsylvania had been made which contained a clause limiting the right of suffrage to white male persons. The Society "felt that any astringement of that right to any portion of the inhabitants endangered, to some extent, the liberties of the whole and was injurious to all."[1] So on January 5, 1849, it sent a Memorial to the Legislature in which was noted its gratification at the increasing tendency of the Legislature to protect the rights of the colored population. It asked the Legislature to continue to safeguard those rights as were conceded to the Negroes in the Act of 1780 for the abolition of slavery, and hoped that those wrongs inflicted by the revised constitution might "receive that consideration which its importance demands and that measures be immediately taken to effect in a constitutional way an alteration in that instrument so as to erase the word 'white' in the article relating to the right of suffrage and thus restore to them their ancient privilege and inalienable right to which they are justly entitled."[2] No change

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 279.
2. Ibid., Book III, 279.

was made at this time.

Another matter also engaged the Society's attention. The Fugitive Slave Law had aroused much excitement throughout the North and the decade following its enactment in 1850 was a particularly active one for the Abolitionists. There were hundreds of those incoming Negroes who had to be helped and safely hidden while awaiting the departure of a safe and convenient "train". This had to be skilfully and secretively done, for throughout the city, Southern search officers were on the alert, and many were the legal contests waged for freedom, even free Negroes sometimes having difficulty in proving their right to liberty.[1]

Much sympathy was aroused by the arrest of some of these alleged fugitives[2] and memorials like the following were circulated for signatures:

> "To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met:
>
> The subscribers, legal voters of the County of respectfully ask your body to grant Jury Trial to all persons arrested within this state, as fugitives from slavery."[3]

Resident Negroes, also, were a problem to the Society, for the passage of the law had aroused and greatly excited them. They held meetings, at which time highly inflammatory speeches

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1. Public Ledger, Phila., Dec. 14, 1902. "Recollections of a Tumultuous Period as Described by Isaac H. Clothier."
2. North American and United States Gazette, Apr. 4, 1859.
3. In Anti-Slavery Repository in the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons.

were made and threatening language was used indicating their determination to use violence should a slave holder arrest a colored person as a slave.

When this matter came to the attention of the Society, a special committee was appointed. This committee prepared, printed and distributed two thousand copies of an "Address to the Colored People". These pamphlets, together with the private exertions of various individuals, had their effect, and calmed the resistant attitude of the Negroes. The Committee appealed to them, not only for their own sakes, but for the welfare of their friends and for the cause of their enslaved brethren, to guard against any demonstration of violence or any appearance of being riotously inclined.[1]

The Negroes accepted this advice and permitted themselves to be guided by the wisdom of their friends, although the incident may be taken as an indication of a tendency toward a growing independence of thought and action.

A much more creditable instance of their better judgment and initiative was their own memorial to the legislature in 1855 for a restoration of the right of suffrage which had been taken away from them by the constitution of 1838. This suffrage they had enjoyed for forty-seven years, and included in the Memorial, which was neatly printed in pamphlet form, was the following interesting statement of statistics which they themselves had compiled:

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 281.

> "We possess $2,685,693 of real and personal estate, and have paid $109,766.42 for house, water and ground rent. We have had incorporated 108 Mutual Beneficial Societies, having 9,762 members, with an annual income of $29,600 and a permanent invested fund of $28,360, which is deposited in various institutions among the whites, who derive a large profit therefrom. These Societies assisted 1385 families to the amount of $10,292.38 during the year 1853."[1]

Just as we may note signs of racial consciousness and of material prosperity among the Negroes, so may be seen evidences of advancement in Still, himself. He, also was beginning to show signs of ability and of progress in being able to grasp fundamental principles. Broadened by his contacts, he was able to appropriate and carry out more responsible work within the Society, and to assume a position of leadership without. Many questions now arose in his mind regarding those fugitive slaves who were being shipped on to Canada. What provisions were being made for them? What were they accomplishing? How might they be further aided? Many conflicting accounts and rumors were afloat, and these and many other questions were not only worthy of consideration but it was necessary to know about them. Letters came urging him to go.[2]

He secured a leave of absence from the Society and in 1855 prepared himself for an extended trip throughout Canada to many of the places to which the fugitive slaves were being shipped. Many prominent members of the Society gave him letters of introduction and recommendations which show the kindly

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 290; information on many Beneficial Societies, the property of the Negro Historical Society (non-existent) in hands of Mr. Theodore Richardson, 1931 Bainbridge Street.
2. Appendix 1.

spirit of the writers and also the great esteem with which these, his employers, regarded him.

A sample of these read as follows:

> "Understanding that William Still proposes to visit the Settlement of Colored people in Canada, I take pleasure in recommending him as an intelligent and worthy citizen whose statements may be relied on, and whose interest in the cause of his oppressed people entitle him to the favorable consideration of all with whom he may be associated.
>
> Dillwyn Parrish[1]
>
> Phila.
> 9 mo. 8th, 1855"

Starting on his trip, Still visited all the places where the fugitives had located or which were centers of information for those who made their homes in the country. These places included Toronto, St. Catherines, Hamilton, Ontario, Kingston, Chatham, Buxton, etc.[2] He was delighted with his visit, which proved to be not only pleasurable but profitable as well. Many good reports were given by the fugitives. They appeared happy in their new homes and were proving themselves to be industrious and thrifty. They did not appear to take advantage of the freedom which was so new to them, and were quite responsive to the advice and teachings of those who had helped them to their freedom.[3]

The results of this investigation were far different from the opinions and arguments of the pro-slavery people who

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1. Letter from Collection of William Still; Appendix 2 for similar letters.
2. Sill, William, Underground Railroad, XXV.
3. Ibid., XXVI.

emphatically declared that a slave would never prove himself of any account once he was out of slavery. So, five years later, Still prepared an article for the press, in order to contradict this idea. It began by quoting a paragraph from the Public Ledger of January 21, 1860 which was but one of the many which had been going the rounds of the anti-slavery press and read as follows:[1]

> "'The Colored Population in Canada.--The Canadians are beginning to experience the evil of the encouragement which they have given to fugitive slaves escaping from the United States. In some districts they outnumber the white population, and of course wish to rule by the power of numbers. Collisions are becoming common between them and the white population, and the laws are obstructed by riot and other outrages. The town of Chatham, on Monday last, was in a state of excitement owing to the colored people taking possession of the public school-houses and refusing to let the white teacher and children into the schools. They had hitherto had schools of their own, but now insisted that the schools shall be opened in common to whites and blacks. The mayor and authorities had to quiet the hubbub by consenting to take the matter into consideration. The feeling of the people is, however, so great that there is every prospect of a riot if the mayor consents to the demand. In Sandwich similar disturbances from the same demand occurred. The hate of races has begun in Canada and it will be quite as "irrepressible" as the contest between slavery and anti-slavery.'[2]
>
> "Although this article from the Ledger is very brief, it is, nevertheless, very damaging, and misrepresents entirely the facts of the case relative to the colored people in Canada, and that to a degree that could not possibly be corrected by the simple paragraph alluded to on the subject. It is

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXVI; Appendix 3.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XVI; Public Ledger, Jan. 21, 1860.

obvious, of course, that the Ledger founded its charges on reports from the journals alluded to above. Hence, I wish to present in reply such facts as shall not be subject to truthful gainsay -- such facts as I witnessed with my own eyes while in Canada on a visit of observation and examination into the condition of the colored people; also such facts as I have had opportunity of gathering from various other sources for a long time. First, with regard to Chatham. In this town the entire population is from seven to eight thousand, the colored inhabitants not exceeding fifteen hundred. This does not look as though 'they outnumber the white population.' Nevertheless, it is well known from one end of Canada to the other, that the colored people are nowhere so thickly settled in any town or district as at Chatham. Nowhere in Canada do they approximate in numbers so near the whites as there, and although they have the right, and exercise the franchise freely in common with all other citizens, they have never attempted to organize a colored party; they have always been loyal, voting with the regular 'Reform party' or the 'Conservative party' (the only parties in Canada), same as all other citizens vote.

"The assertion, therefore, that 'they wish to rule by the power of numbers,' or that collisions are becoming common,' or that the 'laws are obstructed by riot and other outrages,' certainly is sustained by no more truth than were the allegations that the 'Negroes had taken possession of the schools' etc.

"The truth is, the colored people of Chatham, as a general thing, are industrious, peaceable, and prosperous. They have four churches, three schools, one or two fire companies, one company of soldiers. In mechanical trades they may be found as masons, plasterers, blacksmiths, cabinetmakers, carpenters, shoemakers, one watchmaker and one gunsmith, two or three wheelwrights and carriagemakers, and last, though not least, they have one printing-press. In the city market a large proportion of the butchers, as well as the farmers with pro-

duce cultivated on their own lands, are colored men. In office at this time there is but one colored man -- he is a constable. ...

"To say that there are not those amongst the colored people in Canada, as every place, who are very poor (many of them have had but precious little chance to be rich), who will commit crime, who indulge in habits of indolence and intemperance (the laws where they may have been raised probably prohibited education) would be far from the truth. Nevertheless, may not the same be said of white people, even where they have had the best chances in every particular?

"Again, if the colored citizens of Canada were the 'lawless, lazy wretches' that they are represented to be by the Detroit Free Press, etc., would not the Canadian Parliament, the intelligent press, the rigidly impartial laws of the land find a way of enlightening the public in relation to this class of settlers, and adopt measures to prohibit their emigration? It cannot be said that sympathy for the negro prevents them from acting, for it is an undeniable fact that the white Canadians manifest no particular sympathy for the Negro. They neither encourage his coming, nor offer objections against it. True, Mr. Larwell, an ex-member of Parliament, a rabid negro-hater, but without influence, while in Parliament offered from time to time bills, and made speeches against colored people coming to Canada, but his bills invariably fell dead,without receiving a single second. It is also true that Colonel Prince, now a member of Parliament, two years ago, in Parliament and in the press, heaped upon the colored settlers no small amount of censure and odium (although actually elected by colored votes). Yet his charges were promptly met and refuted, both in Parliament and by the leading press of Canada, and it had just no more effect than would be produced by a violent Native American Speech in Congress or the press of this country, against foreigners and foreign immigration. Indeed, it is said on good authority that even Colonel Prince has since taken back his wholesale

charges against the Negro. I have confined myself to a simple statement of facts, Mr. Editor, and if you will publish them you will greatly oblige.

"Yours respectfully,

"William Still.

"Philadelphia, January 30, 1860"[1]

Still's tour throughout Canada apparently satisfied him and the Society as to the welfare of the fugitive slaves, also as to the propriety of continuing to ship them there. For from 1855 to 1859 the operations of the Underground Railroad were particularly active.[2]

Other material for publication now engaged Still's attention. And in 1857 he prepared an article which covered the activities of the Underground Railroad for one single month of that year. During that period, at least sixty fugitives, young and old, male and female had been shipped northward to freedom.[3]

During this period, not only was Mr. Still concerned about the welfare of the fugitive slaves, but he was evidently interested in the education of the freedman as well. This we may glean from a letter which he wrote to Esther Hayes, in 1858, for information regarding the schools for a colored boy in Kennett Square.[4]

Then another letter, which was written to him this same year, gives us a very interesting sidelight on the thoughts and activities of Negroes in the West.[5]

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXVI, XXVII, XXVIII; North American, Feb. 1, 1860.
2. Appendix 3 A, B, C, D, E, F.
3. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXVIII.
4. Appendix 4.
5. Appendix 5.

CHAPTER V

JOHN BROWN RAID 1859

1. Connection with Philadelphia.
2. John Brown's attitude toward Slavery.
    a. His long cherished dream.
    b. Plan as stated to Frederick Douglass.
3. Brown's attempt at organization.
    a. Tour among Negroes.
    b. Constitutional Convention at Chatham, Canada.
    c. Provisional constitution.
4. Brown's attempt to get aid of Frederick Douglass.
5. Zealousness of Brown's followers.
    a. Shields (Emperor) Green.
    b. William H. Leeman.
6. The Raid.
    a. Attitude toward raid throughout nation.
    b. Excitement following raid.
    c. Still's connection.

The work of the Abolitionists now continued uninterruptedly until the John Brown Raid, and Philadelphia was intimately connected with it, in that an intimation of the plot was known to active anti-slavery workers here, long before it took place.[1]

For years Brown had cherished, in his heart, the idea of the speedy emancipation of the Negroes and dreamed of the time when he would be able to strike a vital blow for their freedom. In a meeting which he had with Frederick Douglass, full twelve years before the strike at Harper's Ferry, he said that for the last thirty years he had been looking for colored men to whom he could safely reveal his secret, and had, at times, almost despaired as to whether or not he would ever be able to find such. But that "now he was encouraged, for he saw heads rising up in all directions to whom he thought he could with safety impart his plan."[2]

He thought and brooded over his cherished life's ambition for forty years until he became fanatical in this one obsession and now decided to talk it over with others. Beginning February 24, 1859, he began a tour among the colored people to acquaint them with his plans and to unite them to a support of them. From February 26, to March 3rd, he was in Brooklyn and Boston. March 15th, he made a return visit to

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1. Public Ledger, Dec. 14, 1902 - "General Mulholland's Recollections of a Tumultuous Period."
2. Douglass, Frederick, John Brown, An Address, 23.

Philadelphia, where he met certain prominent colored men including Stephen Smith, Frederick Douglass, Henry Garnett, William Still and others. His plans, however, William Still never approved of.[1]

Two weeks before the Raid, Brown summoned Frederick Douglass to meet him at an old stone quarry near the town of Chambersburg, Pa. It was in this town that his arms and ammunition were stored and were to be moved on from here to Harper's Ferry. When the plans as unfolded disclosed a contemplated attack upon the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Douglass opposed it, seeing a fatal result to all parties concerned. It not only meant that it would be an attack upon the Federal government, one that would array the whole country against them, but that it would be a perfect steel-trap, which once they were in, they could not hope to come out alive.[2]

Douglass objected to the plan with all the arguments at his command, but Brown was not to be shaken in his resolve. In parting, he put his arms around Douglass and said, "Come with me Douglass, I will defend you with my life. I want you for a special purpose. When I strike, the bees will begin to swarm, and I shall want you to help hive them."[3] But Douglass could not be persuaded.

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1. Information from Miss Frances E. Still.
2. Douglass, Frederick, John Brown, An Address, 26; Villard, Oswald Garrison, John Brown, 412, 413; Wilson, H. P., John Brown, 349; Warren, R. P., John Brown, 328; Leech, Samuel V., The Raid of John Brown, 23; Sanborn, F. B., John Brown, 539.
3. Wilson, H. P., John Brown, 349-350; Sanborn, F. B., John Brown, 539; Warren, R. P., John Brown, 329; Douglass, Frederick, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, 390.

Brown regretted the decision, but, with the zeal of the fanatic, determined to go on with his plans. He himself feared no personal danger and was always ready to do something for others. Villard says: "To all these powers of an intense nature were added the driving force of a mighty and unselfish purpose, and the readiness to devote life itself to the welfare of others." He also feels that it was this "straightforward unselfishness", this "willingness to suffer for others", that gave him the power "to draw men to him as if by a magnet", even in the face of perilous undertakings.[1] We may see this in the action of Shields Green, sometimes styled 'Emperor', one of his brave and devoted followers.

Green was a fugitive slave from Charlestown, S.C. He had escaped to Rochester, where he lived with Douglass' family. When this last conference of Brown and Douglass was over, Douglass turned to Green, who had been present. He told him that he had heard the entire discussion, knew the danger involved and gave him the option of going back to safety with Douglass or staying with Brown. Green's answer was, "I b'leve I'll go wid de old man";[2] and go with him, he did, into the fight, to the gallows and to his death.

Such zeal also characterized another one of the followers, William H. Leeman, for instance, who wrote to his mother

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1. Villard, Oswald Garrison, John Brown, 78.
2. Douglass, Frederick, John Brown, An Address, 26; Villard, Oswald Garrison, John Brown, 412, 413; Sanborn, F. B., Life and Letters of John Brown, 538, 539, 540; Douglass, Frederick, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, 390.

two weeks before the raid:[1]

> "I am now in a Southern Slave State and before I leave it, it will be a free State, Mother --- Yes, Mother, I am waring with Slavery the greatest Curse that ever infested America; In Explanation of my Absence from you for so long a time I would tell you that for three years I have been Engaged in a Secret Association of as gallant fellows as ever puled a trigger with the sole purpose of the Extermination of Slavery."

Brown's act assumed tremendous proportions. To some it was the misguided act of a madman;[2] to others, a "just retribution for the South's policy of violence in Kansas and a perfectly inevitable protest against the wickedness of slavery"[3] and again, he and his followers were regarded as "Martyrs of a Cause in itself noble."[4] To the pro-slavery believers, it was nothing less than a wide sweeping rebellion to overthrow the existing government, and construct another upon its ruins, with Brown for its President and Commander-in-Chief, the proof of which was the Provisional Constitution which was found in the old man's carpet-bag.[5]

The Raid created a blaze of excitement throughout the country. No Abolitionist nor anti-slavery sympathizer was safe from arrest or imprisonment and there was an early exodus of many of the prominent Abolitionists to Canada and England.[6] Many arrests were made in Massachusetts and throughout the

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1. Villard, Oswald Garrison, John Brown, 408.
2. Ibid., 472-473.
3. Ibid., 473.
4. Ibid., 474.
5. Douglass, Frederick, John Brown, An Address, 14.
6. Villard, Oswald Garrison, John Brown, 529, 530.

Northern States."[1] Still, as did the other Abolitionists in Philadelphia, felt that his hour might arrive at any time. Then, too, his peace of mind was considerably disturbed by the discovery of incriminating letters captured from Captain John Henry Kagi. Among these was the following memorandum, "Wrote William Still Wednesday."[2] This would, he feared, bring investigation to his very door, and might prove disastrous as he was living over the Office of the Underground Railroad at 107 North 5th Street.

Hurriedly he gathered together all of the papers, books and materials connected with the Underground Railroad and hid them in an obscure place in the loft of a building in the Lebanon Cemetery, which at this time was located at 19th Street and Passyunk Avenue. It was not too soon, for all anti-slavery workers were suspected and feeling ran high. Still's home was searched again and again and his position was rendered even more dangerous by a succession of visits from men who were identified with the expedition. These included Lieutenant Francis G. Merriem, who was followed by Captain Osborne Anderson. All were housed, fed and sent on to Canada. Then came three other persons, members of the party, whose mission was to secretely test sentiment as to the advisability of raiding the jail and rescuing the condemned man. These last were John Brown, Jr., son of the condemned, James Redpath, journalist, afterwards author of "The Old Hero, John Brown", and another of whose name

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1. Villard, Oswald Garrison, John Brown, 533-534; Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXII.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXII.

there is no record.[1] Thus Still and his home figured in this quickly-changing and thrilling drama. How different might have been the results for all concerned had he been less shrewd of judgment, less cool of head or less courageous of action. Tribute at this time is also due to his wife Letitia, whom he married in 1847, for her help in the time of crisis. Her shrewd intuitions, her patience and intense sympathy for the cause always made her a bulwark in the time of emergency. These virtues were put to the test many times for during the last decade of slavery -- when fugitives were arriving almost daily, full 95% of those coming through Philadelphia found rest and care under the Still roof.[2]

John Brown's wife also sought this haven, when she stopped through Philadelphia for a week, on her way from Elba, N.Y., to visit Brown in jail. An escort was wanted for her, but this was difficult to get because of the revengeful feeling in Virginia. The appeal, however, was made to Hector Tyndale, who was not especially interested in the anti-slavery cause. He responded and was afterwards subjected to much criticism in Philadelphia on account of his action. Along with him went J. Miller McKim and the latter's wife.[3] John Brown was hanged December 2, 1859 and after the execution the following letter was received by Still:

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXIII, XXIV.
2. Ibid., XXIV.
3. Philadelphia Ledger, Dec. 14, 1902, "General Mulholland's Recollections of a Tumultuous Period."

J.B. executed December 2 44

North Elba, Dec. 20, '59.

Mr. Wm. Still,

Dear friend,

Owing to some alteration in the mail route your letter did not reach here until last week, and I had no time to answer it. We are all well at present. Mr. McKim will tell all that happened during his short stay with us. Mother sends a lock of Father's hair which she promised to you.[1] She also sends her love to you and your family. Please accept my many thanks for your kindness and sympathy. Give my love to Mr. McKim and family.

Truly yours,

Annie Brown[2] Brown's wife

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1. Enclosed in letter.
2. Letter from Collection of William Still.

CHAPTER VI

WAR PREPARATIONS IN PHILADELPHIA

1. War atmosphere in Philadelphia.
    a. Union meetings.
    b. Organization and parade of Negro troops.
2. Still's resignation from Anti-Slavery Society - 1861.
3. Still becomes business man.
4. Still commissioned Sutler at Camp William Penn.

John Brown's action stirred the whole nation. These were restless times -- the country was inwardly seething with excitement and awaiting what, to them, seemed to be the inevitable.

> "Public feeling on the impending crisis was about evenly divided in Philadelphia until the threats of secession on the part of some of the Southern States had begun to be fulfilled. Lincoln was warmly received on his way to the inauguration. But the firing on Sumter was needed to awaken the people thoroughly. Then the complete revulsion came. The test of loyalty was exacted by a mob, it is true, but a mob that represented in the last analysis true respectability, and patriotism. Everybody of any account had to hang out his colors. The house of Wm. B. Read and a newspaper office were attacked. Great union meetings were held and the air was full of military preparations. When, however, Gen. Louis Wagner organized the first Negro regiment and wanted to parade it to show what a fine appearance it would make, the Mayor forbade him to march through Chestnut Street and he took it around by an obscure route and across Market Street bridge to West Philadelphia."[1]

This was the beginning of an extensive movement for the recruiting of Negro troops, with resultant difficulties for the ambitious Negro soldier, as the following letter indicates.[2] The welfare of the colored troops in the camp and on the field was always a matter of great concern to Mr. Still. He frequently gave very liberally for their benefit. On one

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1. Philadelphia Public Ledger, Dec. 14, 1902, "Gen. Mulholland's Recollections of a Tumultuous Period."
2. Appendix 6.

occasion when an appeal for this cause was made by Mr. Thomas Webster, chairman of the Supervisory Committee, Mr. Still gave a check for $500.[1]

Still had now been with the Anti-Slavery Office fourteen years. Money was scarce. The office found retrenchment necessary. So Still, regretfully, for he had learned to love the work and the association, handed in his letter of resignation.

The Committee responded through their secretary, Mr. McKim, as follows:

Philadelphia, June 1, 1861.

To William Still:

Dear Friend:-

I am directed by the Executive Committee to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of resignation and to express to you the regret they feel at the necessity which compels them without demur to accept it. The relations which have existed between them and you for so many years have been altogether satisfactory, and they most cordially reciprocate all the kind feelings in this regard which you are pleased to express in your letter. They desire me to testify to you their lively appreciation of the integrity, ability and uniform courtesy which have ever characterized you in the discharge of your duties, and to express the hope and belief that these qualities -- which have made you so acceptable in their service -- will insure you all reasonable success in the new line of business which it is understood you are hereafter to pursue.

Trusting that, though not bound together by any official tie, we may always continue united as coadjutors in the common cause, I

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, L.

am, on behalf of the Committee,

Yours most truly,

J. M. McKim,
Cor. Sec. of Pa. A.S.
Society[1]

Still's resighation from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, however, by no means severs his connection with the organization. He continued to be actively interested, and the Society's concern in the newly made freedmen was unabated. This we are told in a letter from the National Freedman's Relief Society at Washington.[2]

Still had to turn his attention, now, to other means of livelihood. He had bought a lot soon after entering the Anti-Slavery Office. The profit realized on the sale of this encouraged him to do the same thing again. This he did more than once with equal success. These and other things decided him to embark in business. The office which the Anti Slavery Society had occupied for nearly twenty years was about to become vacant. Still thought that this room downstairs could be used for his business, while the upper part would serve his family. Some experience and knowledge of stoves would, he thought, be a good foundation for dealing in new and second-hand stoves.

With a capital of less than three hundred dollars, this venture was entered upon. To this was added the selling of coal on a commission basis. In a single month this latter

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXIX, XXX.
2. Appendix 7.

enterprise more than paid his rent for three months. By the second year business was so flourishing, and the sale of coal had so increased, that he felt that he could expand his business and add the manufacturing of stoves and heaters. The third year was even more prosperous. Heeding the advice of business friends, he laid in a large stock of his wares before a prospective rise in prices on account of the war, and realized quite a profit on his investment.[1]

But an interruption to his business activities occurred. During the fourth year of his business he was visited by Edward M. Davis, son-in-law of Lucretia Mott, who informed him that he had come to offer him the position of Post Sutler at Camp William Penn, near Jenkintown, eight miles from Philadelphia. At first he was disposed to, and did refuse, not wishing to give up his now very lucrative business. But knowledge that he was in the draft, and that this service would be equivalent to that of regular enlistment, made him reconsider the proposition. An additional reason which swayed him was the information that the job would be given to a white man if he did not accept. So he consented for his name to go before the Supervisory Committee, which consisted of seventy of the staunchest Union citizens. His commission was obtained through Hon. W. D. Kelley, from Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, then Secretary of War.[2]

The position of Post Sutler seems to have been a branch of the Commissary department, and entailed not only a

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XLIX.
2. Ibid., L; Appendix 8.

general supervision of the Camp Store but a careful accounting of the type of articles and commodities supplied to the soldiers -- a sort of thing in which, heretofore, there had been much laxity and graft. So his situation at first was a hard one, as he had to break up several abuses which had seemingly been encouraged or ignored by his predecessor. These practices had been demoralizing to the soldiers and included the smuggling and sale of liquor, of deteriorated goods, of jewelry, etc. After a hard struggle he succeeded in breaking up these abuses and acquitted himself creditably in this position, which he held until the end of the War.[1]

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, L.

CHAPTER VII

WILLIAM STILL'S INTERESTS

1. Negroes' rights in Street Cars, 1859.
   a. Letters to press.
   b. Abolitionists in Campaign.
   c. Bill passed, 1867.
2. Work of Anti-Slavery Society during this period.
3. Still on Committee in Society to suggest amendments to Constitution for rights of Negroes, 1872.
4. One of organizers of Social, Civil and Statistical Society.
   a. Program - Lectures; Collection of information regarding freedmen; Suffrage for Negroes.
5. Freedmen's Aid Union - Member of Commission.
6. Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons - On Board of Managers and a life member.
7. Home for Destitute Colored Children - Trustee.
8. Storer College - Trustee.
9. Interest in struggling Negro authors.
10. Subscriber to stock in "The Nation" - a non-partisan paper.
11. Attitude regarding proposed establishment of Freedmen's Bank.
12. A consideration of Still's personality.

During all this period, even prior to the War, Still was actively engaged in matters affecting the welfare of his people. And, as is often the case, he was the object of their severe criticism. A pamphlet published "In the Defence of William Still"[1] gives an interesting account of his fight for their right to ride in the city railway cars.

He seems to have originated the struggle in 1859 when he wrote an article to the North American and United States Gazette. This letter was as follows:

> Colored People and the Cars.
>
> To the Editor of the North American and United States Gazette:
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> Sir:
>
> As a colored man, and constant reader of your paper, allow me a brief corner in your columns to make a few remarks on the sore grievance of genteel people in being excluded from the city passenger railroad cars, except they choose to "stand on the front platform with the driver."
>
> However long the distance they may have to go, or great their hurry -- however unwell or aged, genteel or neatly attired -- however hot, cold or stormy the weather -- however few in the cars, as the masses of the colored people now understand it, they are unceremoniously excluded.
>
> Of course my own humble opinion will weigh but little with yourself and readers (being, as I am, of the proscribed class) as to whether it is reasonable or unreasonable, just or unjust -- as to whether

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1. Pamphlet from Collection of William Still.

it is a loss or a gain to railroad companies, thus to exclude colored people. Nevertheless, pardon me for saying that this severe proscription, for some unaccountable reason, is carried to an extent in Philadelphia unparalleled in any of the leading cities of this Union. This is not imagination or an exaggerated assertion.

In New Orleans, colored people -- slaves as well as free -- ride in all the city cars and omnibuses. In Cincinnati, colored women are accomodated in the city omnibuses, but colored men are proscribed to a certain extent. In Chicago it may be safely said that not the slightest proscription exists in the public conveyances of that flourishing city. In New York, Brooklyn, etc. (except in one or two of the New York city passenger lines) there is not the slightest barrier to any persons riding, on account of complexion. There is no obstruction in the way of colored people riding in any of the Boston cars or omnibuses.

I need not allude to the cities of minor importance, whether favorable or unfavorable, North or South. Sufficient are the facts in the examples of the cities already alluded to, to make it a very painfully serious inquiry with intelligent colored people, whi it is so in Philadelphia, the city of "Brotherly Love", so noted as the bulwark of the "Religious Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers," so noted as one of the leading cities in the Union, in great religious and benevolent enterprises, so pre-eminently favorable to elevating the heathen in Africa, while forgetful of those in their very precincts -- those who are taxed to support the very highways that they are rejected from.

But, doubtless, on a hurried consideration of the claims of the colored people, serious objections would be found by railroad boards and others, under the erroneous impressions that the vicinity of St. Mary, Bedford, Seventh and Lombard Streets, etc. furnishes a sample of the

great body of colored people residing in Philadelphia.

I beg, Mr. Editor, to respectfully add, that the inhabitants of this ill-fated region are by no means a fair sample of the twenty thousand colored people of Philadelphia. The gulf between this degraded class and the great mass of industrious colored people, is well nigh as marked as was the gulf between Dives and Lazarus, in the parable; as I shall attempt to demonstrate here, besides volunteering further to prove, by ocular testimony, if any of your readers choose to condescend to accompany me to parts and places where the decent portions of colored people reside; to the eighteen or twenty colored churches, with their Sabbath schools, to at least twenty day schools, of a public and private character; to the dozens of beneficial societies, united for the mutual support of their sick and disabled members; to the neat and genteely furnished three-story brick houses, owned, occupied and paid taxes for, almost entirely by colored people -- on Rodman Street, Ronaldson Street, and Washington Street, to observe the extent of valuable property owned on South and Lombard Streets (in the most respectable part of these streets); to examine some of the stores (they may not be large) kept by colored men; (of which more will be said presently) to pass those living in respectable houses, elegantly furnished, houses alone worth from five to ten thousand dollars; likewise leaving out the many in various other parts of the city, where industrious, sober and decent people live and own considerable real estate. I think abundant evidence may be found in the directions alluded to, to convince the most prejudiced against the colored man, that he is by no means so sadly degraded and miserably poor as the public have generally been led to suppose, from all that has been said of him in connection with the degraded localities alluded to before.

But what avails all this? Why

further add in this direction? I fear you will say Mr. Editor. Suppose Stephen Smith, who is reputed to be worth a quarter of a million dollars, with his tens of thousands of dollars invested in bank stocks, railroad stocks, etc. etc., having for so many years been well known among business men as an extensive lumber and coal merchant, dealer in real estate, etc., with taxes amounting to nearly $2,000 per annum to pay, should enter a car; still being colored, he would justly be assigned the "front platform", to stand up by the driver. Again, suppose Miss Greenfield (the Black Swan) wished to enjoy a ride to Fairmount, never mind, she must stand on the "front platform" by the driver too. The fact that her extraordinary acquirements as a vocalist have won for her the very highest distinction both in this country and Europe, does actually weigh nothing when entering a City Passenger Railroad car -- the front platform is the place for all that the Creator chose to make with a dark skin.

But I will now relieve your patience, trusting, ere long, decent colored men and women will find the same privilege in the City Passenger Railroad Cars of Philadelphia that are extended to colored men and women in other cities.

W.S.[1]

Phila., Aug. 30, 1859

Still's letter attracted quite a deal of notice and comment, almost every anti-slavery paper in the country copying and commending him upon the timeliness and justice of the article.[2] In the same paper, on September 14, 1859, ap-

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1. Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 314; North American and United States Gazette, Aug. 31, 1859.
2. Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 4

peared another article beginning with the quotation "Happy is the man that can help himself." This was purported to have been written by one belonging to the class which had the "right to use freely the passenger railway cars in our city." The writer also commended Still and said, "If a similar intelligent and firm support of all their rights were characteristic of the colored race, it can hardly be doubted but that their condition in our community and in our country would be vastly improved."[1]

For some time Still continued, in this way to plead for the Negroes' rights, but two years passed, during which time the indignities and outrages which were daily inflicted upon them were constantly multiplying. In 1861, on a motion made by himself in the Executive Committee of the Social, Civil and Statistical Association, a committee was appointed to draw up a petition in favor or their rights to ride in cars. This committee, of which Still was chairman, consisted of Stephen M. Smith, J. C. Wears, and Rev. J. C. Gibbs.

To this petition Still was instrumental in getting the signatures of at least three hundred sixty of the most prominent white citizens. This monster petition was circulated by Still during his leisure time for three or four months among prominent men of every calling in Philadelphia. So great was their number and of such weight, that it was often called into requisition on other important occasions. As for instance

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1. North American and United States Gazette, Sept. 14, 1859.

"when a great meeting of leading citizens was held to denounce the proscription, when the Union League was about to be organized, and when afterwards members of the League sought to influence the minds of legislators against race discriminations."[1]

The work of getting up this petition was so great and it was considered so important that the secretary of the Pennsylvania Historical Society solicited it, and there it may be found, a curious relic of the struggle of a certain portion of the citizens for their rights.[2]

The petition was addressed to the Board of Presidents of the City Railways and was presented at the monthly meeting of Passenger Railway Presidents held at No. 25, Merchants' Exchange. Still read a communication embodying certain arguments in favor of the petition.

Mr. Cambles, of the Chestnut and Walnut Street Road, moved that the petition be granted; but, after some discussion, it was decided to postpone the subject until the next meeting of the Board.[3]

Still continued his agitation in the press. In 1863, he sent a letter to the Philadelphia Press, relating his unpleasant experiences on one of the city cars. In this letter he said he decided to get off the car and walk "feeling satisfied that nowhere in Christendom could be found a better illustration of Judge Taney's decision in the Dred Scott case, in which he

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LIII.
2. Ibid., LIV; information from Miss Frances E. Still.
3. Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 5, 6.

declared that 'black men have no rights which white men are bound to respect', than are demonstrated by the 'rules' of the passenger cars of the City of Brotherly Love."[1]

This letter, to his surprise, created interest and comment outside of Philadelphia and even found its way into the columns of the London Times. He was made aware of its publication here by Mr. E. M. Davis, who advised him to go to the Merchants' Exchange where he would find the paper on file. He found it there, together with the correspondence of the Rev. Moncure D. Conway in which the gentleman stated that "it was one of only two American articles deemed worthy of publication in 'The Thunderer' of that issue, and that "it had done the Union cause more harm than a defeat in Virginia."[2] His comment as noted in a correspondence to the Boston Commonwealth was as follows:

> "There has been a singular dearth of American news lately, and we are eagerly looking for some this evening. Meanwhile, there are one or two things which, in the absence of anything more sensational in the military way, furnished something for the public to brood over -- for our foes to rejoice in and our friends to regret. The first of these is the letter of William Still (colored) of Pennsylvania, which is laid before the public in the Times, showing how he was made to ride out on the platform of a street railway in Philadelphia, in the snow, because of his color, and charged the full fare also. Such an incident does us more harm there

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1. Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 7, 8, 9; Still, William, Underground Railroad, LI, LII; Philadelphia Press, Dec. 15, 1863.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LII, LIII; Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 9.

> than a defeat in Virginia. It certainly must be illegal that such a thing should happen, and there ought to be public spirit enough to carry it before the courts. That statue of Liberty, lifted on the blessed John Brown's Day, Dec. 2nd, to the top of the capitol, should be pulled down, if there is still any law which would allow a negro to be treated thus. It makes us all hide our faces, and seems to make our fair representations to Englishmen of the improvement in these matters going on, lies.[1]

Many Englishmen were greatly interested in what was going on in the United States. An English writer in "English Opinion on the American War" said:

> "The great events which took place in the United States between the first election of President Lincoln and the accession of President Johnson, excited an amount of party-spirit in England greater than I recollect in connection with any other non-English occurrences and fairly proportionate even to that supreme form of party-spirit which the same events produced in the States themselves, -- the party-spirit which, in hostile and closing ranks, clenches teeth and sets life at naught, seeing no alternative, no possibility, save this only, to carry its point or die. 'I am a Northerner', and 'I am a Southerner', were, during the war, phrases as common on Englishmen's lips as 'I am a Liberal', or 'a Conservative,' 'I am a Protectionist" (this, indeed, has about become obsolete), or 'a Free-Trader'.[2]

On the whole, he continued,

> "A slight majority of the whole

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LIII; Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 9, 10.
2. Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 17, Feb. 1866, Rossetti, W. M., "English Opinion on the American War."

> British nation probably sided with the North, and that chiefly on anti-slavery grounds. A great majority of the more influential classes, certainly, sided with the South, and that chiefly on general grounds of antagonism to the United States."[1]

The Abolitionists now entered in the campaign. On September 28, Alfred H. Love proposed in a meeting of the Society, that the candidates for the Legislature should be addressed regarding the bill passed by one House to allow colored people to ride in cars. A committee was appointed to address communications to the several candidates for the Legislature, for the Mayorality, and for District Attorney, for their views on the subject. The Committee in its report made mention that "those candidates who replied promptly in favor of our cause were elected by increased majority."[2]

During the winter of 1864, the Car Committee continued its efforts by direct appeal, personal visits and interviews. The appeals were strengthened by calling attention to the creditable work being done by thousands of colored soldiers who were bravely fighting in the Union ranks.

That some progress was being made is shown by a circular issued by the Committee to the Board of Presidents of the City Passenger Railroads. It stated that:

> Since our petition was first presented, New York has removed every vestige of proscription from all the city passenger cars -- although the rules

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1. Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 17, Feb. 1866, Rosetti, W. M., "English Opinion", etc., 149.
1. Manuscript History, Book III, 310: Still, William, A Brief Narrative, 14, 15, 16.

> of her roads, long before this final change, carried colored people generally, without proscription, except two roads. In these exceptional cases they could ride in cars especially designated by the words "colored people are allowed", etc.
>
> Can it be possible that there is more prejudice and less humanity in Philadelphia than in New York? We cannot think so. ...
>
> In conclusion, permit us to express the earnest hope that our efforts will this time meet with a more favorable result than before, and that not many weeks or months shall have passed ere such changes will be made as shall remove the cause of complaint for the future.
>
> Respectfully yours,
>
> Wm. Still
> Isaiah C. Wears) Committee
> S. M. Smith
> J. C. Gibbs [1]

At this time, Still thought it was opportune to hold a tremendous public meeting at Concert Hall, and have it called by a large number of the eminent men who had signed the petition, those signifying their opposition to the "Railway Rule". He expressed this thought to G. M. McKim who readily and heartily entered into the project. The meeting was held on Friday, December the 13th. At this time resolutions were unanimously adopted, opposing the exclusion, and a committee was appointed to wait on the Railroad Officers and present each of the Presidents of the City Railroads with a resolution.[2]

Contemporary with the labors of the Concert Hall

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1. Philadelphia Press, Dec. 8, 1864; Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 10, 11.
2. Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 12.

Committee were those of Mr. A. H. Love and his friends. In a letter which he sent to Mr. Still on March 30, 1867, he related some of the incidents connected with their efforts for the equal rights of colored people in the Passenger Railway Cars.[1]

Active interest was also evinced by Senator Lowry, which elicited the following comment from the Independent of New York:

> "Hon. M. B. Lowry, Senator from Erie County, in the Pennsylvania Legislature, is one of the firmest and ablest Radicals in that State. For six successive years he has been trying to persuade the Legislature to vindicate the rights of the Negroes of Pennsylvania by making it unlawful to exclude them from public conveyances. It is a disgrace to the Republican Party of Pennsylvania that a law for this purpose was not long since enacted, and we hope the present Legislature will respond to the demands of justice and humanity in this particular."[2]

The matter itself was brought before the Supreme Court for its decision and the Anti-Slavery Society on March 29th, 1866 appointed two of its members, A. M. Love, and H. R. Warriner to confer with Benjamin P. Hunt, Chairman in charge of the case of Martin White, a discharged colored soldier, who had been ejected from a passenger car without authority. They were given the right to expend, if necessary, a sum not exceeding $50.00.

At a meeting the following 29th of September, the

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1. Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 14, 15.
2. Ibid., 20.

Society appropriated $16.50 toward the purchase of a pamphlet by B. P. Hunt in regard to colored people riding on the cars and it appointed Benj. Coates, Jos. M. Truman Jr. and Alfred H. Love to attend to their distribution.[1]

As a culmination to the various efforts put forth in its behalf, the bill, six years old, passed about midnight in the House of Representatives, March 18, 1867.[2]

Notwithstanding the joyous feeling that Negroes should have felt over the passage of this bill, many of them maliciously criticised Still. Some of this number went around trying to prevail on the colored people not to buy their coal from him and openly declaring "that they would prefer getting their coal from Copperheads."[3] In order to silence these disgruntled individuals, and to make clear his position in the matter as fighting for the masses, Still prepared "A Brief Narrative of the Struggle for the Rights of the Colored People of Philadelphia in the City Railway Cars; and a Defence of William Still, Relating to His Agency Touching the Passage of the Late Bill." This was read before a large public held in Liberty Hall, on Lombard Street, below Eighth, on April 8th, 1867. This address was printed in pamphlet form, with the above caption on the front cover. The back cover contained his own advertisement with two comments taken from two Philadelphia newspapers. It looked as follows:

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1. Still, William, A Brief Narrative, etc., 21.
2. Ibid., 23.
3. Manuscript History, Book III, 320.

COAL UNDER COVER!

Wm. Still,
Dealer in
Lehigh and Schuylkill Coal,

Office and Yard,
Nos. 1216, 1218 and 1220 Washington Avenue
Above 12th Street, South Side,
Philadelphia.

Orders received at 413 Lombard Street.

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"Deserving of Compliment -- Among our advertisers is one who has already made himself most deservedly popular by his earnest and well-directed efforts for the elevation of his race. We refer to Mr. Wm. Still. He was one of the prime movers amongst the colored people of this city to secure for themselves proper means of social and intellectual advancement, and on many occasions he had shown a most proper spirit of liberality. In his business transactions he has won a deservedly high reputation for integrity and promptness, and his coal yard on Washington Avenue is an evidence of the success with which he has met." -- North American and United States Gazette, Feb. 9, 1867.[1]

"A Good Place to get Coal. -- Mr. Wm. Still has now the finest coal-yard on Washington Avenue, fitted up by himself with an office, a stable, a car-track, and all the appurtenances and needs of a first-class coal depot. Everything seems to be constructed in the most substantial manner, wearing a neat, attractive appearance. His coal is of good quality, and is furnished to dealers on liberal terms." -- The Press, April 1, 1867.[2]

All during this period the Pennsylvania Society was continuing its work of helping and guiding the Negro and trying

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1. North American and United States Gazette, Feb. 9, 1867.
2. The Press, April 1, 1867; Still, William, Underground Railroad, LXII.

to improve his political status.

At its annual meeting December 31, 1866, it appropriated $200 to the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons. At the same time $200 was also appropriated for the holding of meetings and the spreading of information on the subject of the 15th amendment which had not been ratified at this time.[1]

Attempts were also made to help the Negro gain his political goal in Pennsylvania. At its June meeting, on the 27th, in 1872, the question of amendments to the Constitution of Pennsylvania was again taken up. A committee consisting of A. H. Love, H. R. Warriner and William Still was appointed to suggest amendments that would be necessary to make the Constitution exempt from proscriptions on account of color.[2]

This committee made its report November 11, and proposed the following changes in the Constitution which they thought were essential to the equal rights and welfare of its Negro citizens.

Art. I, Sect. 25. Amend by inserting after the word "corporators" at the end of the first clause or period "and no corporation shall be established within this Commonwealth which shall make any discrimination in the exercise of its public provisionsor franchises against any citizen of the United States on account of color."

Add as a new section to Art. 2, Sect. 27. "No public hotel or tavern and no theater or other place of

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 321.
2. Ibid., 323.

public amusement, which by the laws of this Commonwealth is required to be licensed shall exclude or deter any person from the fullest privilege and enjoyment of its entertainment by reason of Race or Color."

Art. 3, Sect. 1. Strike out the words "white freemen" in first line and insert "citizens."

Art. 7, Sect. 1. The Legislature shall as soon as conveniently may be provided by law for the establishment of schools throughout the State in such manner that the poor may be taught gratis, but that no person shall be excluded from any benefit or advantage of such schools on account of race or color, nor shall any person by reason of race or color be debarred from attending any public school supplied by taxation and opened for the instruction of any portion of the inhabitants of this commonwealth.[1]

The Constitution took effect on January 1, 1874, and is the present Constitution of Pennsylvania. Some of the proposed changes, particularly those which virtually amount to civil rights for Negroes, are still unmade and have since been the source of much agitation in the Legislature. An efficient system of public schools, wherein "all the children of this Commonwealth above the age of six years may be educated," was, however, provided for.[2]

Along with his continued activities in the Society,

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 324.
2. Constitution of Pennsylvania - Article 10, section 1.

Still maintained a constructive interest in his Race and contributed many helpful suggestions for their general welfare. He was one of the organizers of the Social, Civil and Statistical Association which had a broad constructive program. He became its corresponding secretary and was the chairman of arrangements.[1] It was to a committee in this Association in 1861, that Still had made his motion to draw up the petition in favor of their rights to ride in street cars.

This Association also gave four of a series of winter lectures, the first beginning in 1864-65. The topics were varied -- citizenship, race relations, human rights, etc. being some of the topics discussed. Many lecturers of note responded and were paid for their services, much of the money coming from admission fees which were charged. Among these lecturers were William Lloyd Garrison, General Howard, Frederick Douglass, Hon. Hugh L. Bond, Mrs. Frances E. Watkins Harper and others.[2]

These lectures at first met with great success, but unforeseen circumstances -- such as inclement weather, the non-appearance of a lecturer, etc. -- caused them to become a financial failure -- the burden of which Still assumed.[3]

This failure was most unfortunate as the proceeds were to have been used in furthering the collection of data, from every source, respecting the freedman. It was the intention of the Statistical Society to have this information compiled and printed in condensed form for presentation to senators, representatives and public men who might need it in advocating

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LVII; Financial Records of Statistical Society, in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LVII; Financial Records of Statistical Society, Collection of Wm. Still; App. 4.
3. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LVIII.

the cause of universal suffrage, protection of the freedmen or for use in originating any measure which might grow out of colored citizenship or which might tend to establish their rights. It not only encouraged favorable sentiment and collected much valuable data, but also raised money for the distribution of documents and spread of information regarding the right of suffrage.[1] A fund of $1,260 was raised exclusively from colored people for this purpose and forwarded to Judge Kelly.[2]

Another organization with which Mr. Still was connected was the Freedmen's Aid Union and Commission. Bishop Simpson was its president, and among its managers were such men as William Lloyd Garrison, Chief Justice Chase, J. Miller McKim and others. On the Commission, Mr. Still and Bishop D. A. Payne were chosen as the representatives of the colored race.[3]

Soon after this the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons was started and this organization also engaged Mr. Still's attention and cooperation. At this time it was located at 340 South Front Street. It was organized September 28, 1864 and Still was elected to the Board of Managers on January 12, 1865,[4] and later became its President.

At this time he was also made a life member, having contributed the sum of onehundred dollars.[5] For twenty-five years scarcely a Sunday passed that he did not visit the Home,

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1. Appendix 9C; 9D; 9E.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LVIII.
3. Ibid., LIX.
4. Ibid., LIX; First Annual Report of the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons, 1.
5. Ibid., 14.

where he read to the old folks or found some way to cheer them up.[1] He repeatedly solicited[2] and made donations and at one time gave an entertainment to all the inmates which was so outstanding that it was recorded in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Home.[3]

He used his influence also in soliciting contributions, and in 1871, a new home was built on its present site near Belmont and Girard Avenues. The lot was the gift of a Negro, Stephen Smith, who was its first Vice-President. The new building was to accommodate about 150 persons and was to cost $30,000. Of this amount, Smith himself subscribed over $20,000, and by 1871 had already paid three-fourths of the subscription. The securities that he gave amounted to over $28,000 which, together with the estimated value of the lot, made his gift around $38,000. This represented the most munificent gift made by a Negro.[4]

That Still was ever ready to help all worth-while projects is evidenced by a Stock Certificate which certified that on May 10th, 1872 he had bought one share of stock in the Mercantile Library of Philadelphia.[5]

Still also was of help in organizing the Colored Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphans' Home. He was a liberal contributor in the purchase of the property and was made one of

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LIX; Recollections of Miss Frances E. Still. Appendix 10.
2. Appendix 11.
3. Constitution, By-Laws and Rules of the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons; Seventh Annual Report, 17; Newspaper clipping in Seventh Annual Report at Old Folks Home, opposite 17; Ninth Annual Report, 7.
4. Seventh Annual Report of Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons, 6.
5. Appendix 12.

its trustees.[1]

He served on the boards of trustees of other philanthropic organizations and maintained an active interest in the Home for Destitute Colored Children[2] and the Shelter, -- homes for boys and girls respectively which at that time were located on 53rd Street near Woodlyn Avenue, but which are now at Cheyney and are used as practicing schools for students at Cheyney.[3] He was also actively interested in Storer College built at Harper's Ferry in honor of John Brown.[4]

Mr. Still's schooling I have before stated was very limited; but this he supplemented by reading; and he became an inveterate reader of books and of the magazines and newspapers of his day. From his former employer, Mrs. Elwyn, he had learned to read with discrimination and from a wide variety of subjects.

It may be clearly seen that he had taken advantage of every opportunity, and become a self-educated man, one who had made great progress along educational lines. This is very evident when we make a study of his handwriting, and of the composition of his notes and letters as contained in the original files of the history of the fugitive slaves arriving via the Underground Railroad,[5] beginning December 25, 1852 and of a letter press copy book which contains (in his handwriting)

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LX.
2. Ibid., LX.
3. Recollections of Rev. Henry L. Phillips.
4. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LX, Appendix 13.
5. Original records from which the Underground Railroad was written.

a copy of every letter he sent out, beginning about 1872[1] (nearly nine hundred).

That he was progressive, a man of vision and a pioneer in welfare work among his people, we may learn from a study of his views and activities. His native capacity is shown by his recording the history of each fugitive and keeping a financial record of every expense. This was done of his own initiative -- a thing which no one else in the office had thought of doing. And just the same way as he gave aid to the fugitive slaves in their struggle for freedom, even so did he give his moral support to the Freedman in his ambitious endeavors.

He had a strong sympathy for those of his race who were struggling to enter the fields of literature, and every effort which attracted his notice met with his encouragement and nearly always with his material aid. It is said that he would correspond for the papers, secure subscriptions, and help introduce books, for no material benefit, but only for the great pride in the accomplishment of one of his race.[2]

He aided Dr. William Wells Brown, able advocate of freedom and temperance, from whom he bought 100 copies of his book, "The Black Man.[3] Similarly, Mrs. Frances E. W. Harper (then Miss Watkins) gained his aid when she came to Philadelphia, a stranger without any letters of introduction and bearing her

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1. Ledger in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXX.
3. Appendix 14.

book of prose and verse. He was able to help her in a private way, gain literary recognition from among his anti-slavery friends. When they doubted her authorship, he, knowing her great oratorical gifts, would get her to appear in the Assembly Building before an audience of abolitionists. Her appearance on this occasion left no room to doubt her wonderful powers.[1]

Nor were his efforts confined to literary enterprises which were directly intended to benefit his own race. An instance of this occurred just after the war when many of the able men who had worked for abolition thought the time was opportune for the establishment of an independent paper which would give an impartial review of politics, science, literature, art, etc., and yet remain fair and faithful to North, South, East and West.

$100,000 was thought a sufficient sum to establish such a paper and it was decided to have it subscribed on regular stock principles. Mr. Still subscribed $1,000 of this amount, and the paper appeared as the "Nation".[2] It was edited by Edwin Godkin and "in the course of a few years set a new standard of free and intelligent criticism of public affairs."[3]

Another enterprise was proposed at the close of the war which may be cited as another laudable instance of Mr. Still's sound judgment and good common sense. At this time citizenship,

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXXI.
2. Ibid., XXXI; Appendix 15A; 15B; Letter from Office of The Nation, written by W. P. Garrison, enclosing receipt for subscription to The Nation.
3. The Cambridge History of American Literature, Part II, 1920, 326.

suffrage and the rights and advancement of the Negro were some of the conspicuous topics of the day. Mr. Still was visited by Mr. Thomas Webster in the interest of establishing a bank in which Negroes could invest their money and get representation in the management. Mr. Webster proposed a bank in which one half of the directors would be white and one half colored. He said no doubt there were some prominent colored men who would be glad to take stock in it and thought it would add to the business prestige of the colored race.

Mr. Still, himself, was at first elated with the idea and determined to delve deeper into the matter for further information and to test sentiment regarding it. To this end, he invited twenty-five colored men to meet a number of white men in order to discuss the proposed project. As a result of this meeting, a committee was formed, with Mr. Still as Chairman, to make further inquiry into the subject.

He invited Mr. John W. Torrey, the President of the Corn Exchange Bank, to meet the committee at the house of Mr. Stephen H. Smith. At this time the entire subject of banking was discussed, including the responsibilities of directorship, the necessary qualities for successful management, the importance of capable and honest clerical assistance, and other intricate details involving training, experience and talent -- All of which greatly enlightened and surprised the committee.

Therefore, to the great regret of Still and the rest of the committee, an adverse report to the project was framed. Granting all arguments that the bank would be highly beneficial

to his race, even if it were established on a firm foundation he saw a lack of colored men in his midst who had by that time developed sufficient business capacity to be able to manage such a project.

He thought that the "scheme was in advance of the talent essential to its success. So his report said, in substance, worthy as to conception, plausible as to argument, but inopportune as to time."[1]

This ended the matter where Philadelphia was concerned. The same idea, however, was proposed in other parts of the country. "In Washington, it took the form of the Freedman's Bank, whose after history and failure confirmed Mr. Still's previous judgment -- a judgment he was often rebuked for giving expression to."[2]

Mr. Still's deductions were always based on sound logic and common sense; hence his opinions were always deferred to -- that is by the level headed. He was systematic in all his habits and methodical in all his affairs. A record was kept of everything, which was neatly filed away for future reference.[3] Letters were carefully cut open, the name of the sender, date and in some cases, content matter, carefully written on the envelope. A survey of his letters was therefore greatly helped by this methodical system -- for instance all letters that he received relative to his address on voting, etc., were

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LIX.
2. Ibid., LIX.
3. Recollections of his daughter, Miss Frances E. Still.

banded together with his inscription of the content matter neatly written on the band. ~~And a record of every letter he sent out has been carefully preserved in a letter press copy book (nearly nine hundred).~~[1]

In considering the various characteristics of Mr. Still, however, we must not get the idea that this sober-minded business man, of keen and critical judgment, was altogether devoid of those human qualities which make for good fellowship. Quite the contrary was true.

He possessed a very pleasing personality, was extremely fond of young people and never neglected the opportunity of having them around him, getting a great deal of pleasure out of their association. For Society he cared nothing -- never bothering to participate in any way in the social functions that were the order of his day. Nevertheless, both he and his wife were always hospitable -- their door was always open to friends or to those whose special attainments merited them entrance. Indeed, scarcely a meal was eaten that some one outside of the family circle was not present and was not made welcome in the happy family.[2]

Mr. Still did, however, once depart from his time worn rule. This occurred soon after the close of the war when the great question of emancipation had been settled. Out of admiration and gratitude for the noble work of William Lloyd Garrison, Still held a reception in his honor at his house. To

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1. ~~Ledger~~ in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.
2. Recollections of his daughter, Miss Frances E. Still.

this he invited a host of Mr. Garrison's friends and admirers, irrespective of race or color. Many outstanding abolitionists and Negroes were on hand to pay homage to the distinguished guest and the evening was most enjoyably spent.[1]

But Mr. Still's gratitude for Garrison's servides did not end here. When the "Executive Committee of the National Testimonial to William Lloyd Garrison", headed by Governor John A. Andrew of Massachusetts, was making an effort to raise a purse of fifty thousand dollars, unknown and unsolicited by Mr. Garrison, Still contributed one hundred dollars. This "was duly receipted for by Samuel May, Jr., Secretary and assistant treasurer of said committee."[2]

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LX; Recollections of Miss Frances E. Still.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LXI.

CHAPTER VIII

WILLIAM STILL - AUTHOR

1. Abolition Society's resolution regarding Still's records of Underground Railroad.
2. Compilation of Records.
3. Observation trip South to investigate conditions and needs of Freedmen.
4. Letters of Introduction given Still.
5. Various requests to Still for Book.

All this time, the Records which Still had compiled in the course of his duties at the office of the Abolition Society lay neglected, but not forgotten. Various members had been approached by different publishers on the matter of furnishing data pertaining to the Underground Railroad matters. But all had to confess that they had kept no such records.

Finally, the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, at its closed meeting in May 1871, proposed and unanimously passed the following resolution:

> "Whereas, The position of William in the Vigilance Committee connected with the 'Underground Railroad', as its corresponding secretary and chairman of its active sub-committee, gave him peculiar facilities for collecting interesting facts pertaining to this branch of the Anti-Slavery service, therefore,
>
> "Resolved, That the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society request him to compile and publish his personal reminiscences and experiences relating to the 'Underground Railroad'."[1]

That same year (1871) there was a seven months' strike among the coal miners of Pennsylvania, which made the retail coal business, in which Mr. Still was then engaged, very dull. This was unfortunate from a business standpoint, but fortunate in that it afforded Mr. Still that leisure which he felt was necessary for such an undertaking. The work was begun and one by one

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1. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXXV.

the various problems relative to its publishing were considered and solved.[1]

The final task of reading the proof was undertaken by Dr. W. H. Furness, "so widely known for his sympathy with the slave, and his large-hearted aid in making sure the fugitive's passport to freedom." This greatly helped and facilitated the publication of the book. And when the Doctor went off on a journey, his son, Horace H. Furness, who has since won world-wide recognition in letters, continued the proof reading with all of his father's interest and attention. This invaluable endorsement and "voluntary aid thus afforded by these estimable friends made Mr. Still's debt of obligation so great as to place requital far beyond his reach save in so far as the highest appreciation and warmest thanks may serve to show the spirit of the beneficiary."[2] We must, also, at this time, give credit to the invaluable assistance of his elder daughter, Dr. Caroline Still, a graduate of Oberlin, who greatly helped Mr. Still in gathering together and compiling his Underground records.[3]

On the completion of his literary labors in 1872, Still made a visit to Washington and other places in the border states of the South to investigate the condition of the freedmen and find out particularly what was being done for them in the way of providing facilities for education.

Various letters of introduction were given him by many of his influential and best known friends. From the dates of

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1. Appendix, 16A; 16B.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, XXVI.
3. Information given by his younger daughter, Miss Frances E. Still.

some of these it is evident that he had had this tour in mind for several years. There is no record or recollections that he went more than once. However, a sample of these reads as follows:-

Penn'a. Freedmen's Relief Association,

No. 424 Walnut St., Philada.
8 Mo. 8, 1865.

To Col. O. Brown,
Asst. Commt. Bureau Refugees for Virginia.

Dear Friend,

Allow me to introduce to thy acquaintance William Still of Philadelphia, one of our own citizens whose success in business, intelligence and worthhave won him universal esteem among our friends here.

He visits Virginia to see for himself the condition of the freed people and is especially interested in the matter of education. Any facilities extended to him by thee, to secure the object of his visit will much oblige thy sincere friend,

James E. Rhoads.

Col. O. Brown,
Asst. Comm.
Refugees Freedmen etc. Bureau
for Virginia.[1]

He took along with him advance sheets of his book and submitted them to his friends at the capitol. All spoke approvingly of the work and many gave him encouraging letters regarding it. In fact, when the book was finally put in circulation, it received favorable comment and approval everywhere, and many letters were sent Still commending him for his effort. From the

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1. Letter from Collection of William Still; similar letters in Appendix 17A; 17B.

time of its publication, it was in great demand and sales were made throughout the country.[1]

As its author, Mr. Still became widely known and was the recipient of many letters indicative of conditions, needs, and thought throughout the various sections of the country. The following letter is a type of one of the many requests received for the book:[2]

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
Office of
Secretary of State

Jackson, May 15, 1874.

Hon. Wm. Still,
244 So. 12th Street,
Philadelphia.

My dear Sir,

Herewith enclose find five dollars ($5.00), for which you will forward me per return mail your valuable work on the "Underground Railroad."

Be kind enough to tender to Mr. and Mrs. Wiley my best regards. Mr. Wiley and myself were former classmates at Oberlin. Direct this office.

Respectfully,

G. C. SMITH,
Asst. Sect'y of State.

G. C. Smith,
Superintendent Public Instruction,
Bolivar County,
Floreyville.[3]

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1. Copies of letters sent out by Mr. Still; Letters from various agents throughout the country, now in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.
2. Also Appendix 18A; 18B.
3. Letter from Collection of William Still.

He also received a letter from Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. It was written just prior to Mr. Still's southern trip and is extremely interesting because it shows her viewpoint as to the conditions among Negroes and what she felt was needed to help them.[1]

She herself was a writer and poetess who gained recognition because of the marked ability and originality evidenced in her poems and prose writings. Her public career began in August 1854 when she was invited, in New Bedford, Massachusetts, to make a speech on the subject of "Education and the Elevation of the Colored Race."[2] She acquired such a reputation as a lecturer and her talents were so universally recognized that she was engaged as lecturer by the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society.[3] In this capacity, and later on her own account, she traveled all over the different sections of the United States and in Canada lecturing in the interest of the cause and on matters pertaining to the Negro. For a year and a half she traversed the Eastern States, speaking in most or in all of them with marked success.[4]

To Frances Harper, while on her tour, and to other friends, for example Peter Lester in Victoria, Still found time during his busy career to write. Aside from gathering and compiling records for his Book, correspondence shows that his friends, particularly Lester,[5] recognized Still's broad,

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1. Appendix 19.
2. Still, William, Underground Railroad, 758.
3. Executive Committee - Pennsylvania Abolition Society Minutes Book, 4, 85.
4. Appendix 20.
5. Appendix 21A, B.

unswerving attitude of loyalty to the ideals of his country, even in the face of perplexing problems, and discouragements.

CHAPTER IX

STILL'S POLITICAL ATTITUDE

1. Political attitude of Philadelphia Negroes.
2. Philadelphia election, 1874.
3. Meeting of Prominent Negroes.
   a. Letter to William Still.
4. Still's Public Address.
5. Letters to Still showing varied opinions.
6. Survey of opinions of various newspapers regarding Philadelphia election.

When the war was over, Negroes, generally, felt themselves obligated as a matter of gratitude to vote for the Republican Party. Philadelphia Negroes, as a mass, were no exception to this rule. And in the election of 1874,[1] when W. S. Stokley, Republican and A. K. McClure, Democrat (running from the People's Party), were candidates for Mayor -- Negroes naturally expected all their votes to go to the former. And Still exploded a veritable bomb! To their great astonishment and consternation he cast his vote for McClure, deciding after much deliberation that he was the better candidate.

This brought down upon his head the wrath and condemnation of his community, and efforts were attempted to make him feel their ire.

At this time, by his industry and business acumen he had developed a very lucrative coal business located at 1216, 1218, 1220 Washington Avenue, with privately owned cars for shipment, etc.[2] He had established an identity as a worthwhile citizen and a solid business man -- clearly defined and free from all limitations. As a member of the coal fraternity he had made casual trips, with the group, to the coal regions for the purpose of business and pleasure. He had also received the usual letter of solicitation from the Executive Committee, to become

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1. Philadelphia Press, Feb. 18, 1874.
2. Still, William, The Underground Railroad, LXI. Picture in possession of Miss Frances E. Still; Recollections of Rev. Henry L. Phillips and many other persons; Philadelphia Press, Apr. 1, 1867.

associated with the Philadelphia Board of Trade and was afterwards "duly notified that he was a unanimously elected member."[1]

With this degree of prominence, therefore, his above-named action was bitterly criticized. Threats were made to burn down his coal yard; people were urged to buy no more coal from there and the colored people would have lynched him had it not been for the civil authorities.[2] Negroes held an indignation meeting in Liberty Hall, at which time Still and Robert Purvis (colored) a member of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, were abused for having turned traitors to their principles. The following letter was sent to Mr. Still.

Philadelphia, March 2, 1872.

Mr. William Still:

Dear Sir:

In view of the conflicting rumors relative to your vote for Col. A. K. McClure, for Mayor, and also in view of the fact of having known, for a long time, of your labors and deep interest in the Anti-Slavery cause, and the welfare of our race, we would be pleased to hear a public address from you on the topic of voting, etc., in reply to the charges preferred against you, at such time and place, as may suit your convenience.

This communication was signed by twenty of the leading colored citizens of Philadelphia and elicited the following reply.

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1. Still, William, The Underground Railroad, LXI.
2. Still, William, An address on Voting and Laboring, 1, (in possession of Miss Frances E. Still).

Philadelphia, March 5, 1874.

Rev. Theo. Gould, W. C. Banton, Dr. David Rosell, Chaplain Hunter, and others:

Dear Sirs:

In reply to your kind letter of the 2nd inst., to the effect that you "would be pleased to hear a public address" from me, on the "topic of voting", etc., I would say that it would afford me much satisfaction to make my views publicly known in the manner suggested, at Concert Hall, on Tuesday evening next, 10th inst., at eight o'clock. Admission free to all.

Yours respectfully,

William Still.[1]

The Philadelphia Press of March 11, 1874, carried the following notice:

"At Concert Hall a large audience assembled last evening for the purpose of hearing Mr. Wm. Still, one of Philadelphia's most prominent and well-to-do colored citizens, upon the subject of 'Laboring and Voting'. The hall was well filled, and the interest as great as has ever been noticed at any other lecture. There were many white people present who have been acquainted with the gentleman for a number of years, and for whom they entertain the greatest respect ..."[2]

In his address Still very frankly said that he had no hopes of satisfying mere partisans or politicians but that as far as he was concerned, Politics had no charms for him -- that he was more interested in seeking the means to elevate his race than "playing" politics, altho he did not decry the man who

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1. Still, William, An Address on Voting and Laboring, 1.
2. Philadelphia Press, Mar. 11, 1874; North American and United States Gazette, Mar. 11, 1874.

urged his fellow citizens to take an interest in elections. He made use of the following quotation from one of his articles as epitomizing his stand:

> "For one, I am simple enough to think that the acquisition of knowledge, the pursuit of business enterprises, good trades and comfortable homes, where a more healthy and reputable existence may be secured, are of infinitely greater consequence than to be in any way connected with Politics."

Still felt that benefits would not come to the race through voting the Republican ticket as a matter of "gratitude", nor by waiting for offices from the Republican party. He said,

> "To my mind the work of our elevation, after all, must come mainly through our own exertions and self-reliance. Honest earnest counsel is very much needed on this subject; and hard and steady toiling, economical habits, with a single eye to business, character and integrity, are of incalculable importance as instrumentalities to be employed by every intelligent colored man desiring to see his race elevated."[1]

Gratitude, he continued, belonged to God and to those friends of Freedom who endured the greatest sacrifices and sufferings in adhering to the "higher law" and obeying the "commands of Christ to help undo every burden and let the oppressed go free."[2]

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1. Still, William, An Address on Voting and Laboring, 5.
2. Ibid., 7.

In stating his reasons as to why he voted for Col. McClure, he said that he had made up his mind that he would not vote for the "Ring" because of election frauds, high taxes, etc., and the strenuous efforts made by this power to defeat the new Constitution. Also that Col. McClure had very actively co-operated with the Reformers of this City; that he had advocated the Constitutional Convention, attacking defects of the old Constitution and advocating important improvements of the new. And the very fact of his running for Mayor as a non-partisan on an independent ticket afforded an opportunity for all independent thinking citizens, whether they were Democrats or Republicans to vote according to their honest convictions; that this right was self evident under a republican form of government. Their attention was called to the fact that many Republicans and prominent Abolitionists were against the "Ring" and had voted for Col. McClure. As to the "leading colored men" who had addressed the indignation meeting and abused him for "having turned traitor" he recommended that they utilize their energy in some of "those needed fields of industry and reform"[1] to which he had made allusion. Not only did Mr. Still's independent action precipitate a local storm of indignation and comment but many letters from different parts of the country, and even from Canada, were sent him regarding it.[2]

A survey of the leading newspapers of the period affords us very interesting, but nevertheless, uncomplimentary

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1. Still, William, An Address on Voting and Laboring, 16.
2. Appendix 23A; 23B; 23C; 23D; 23E; 23F; 23G.

sidelights on their opinions of the results of the Philadelphia elections. These may also serve to vindicate to a still greater extent Mr. Still's political attitude.[1]

That he was still "more interested in seeking the means to elevate his race than in bowing at the shrine of politics"[2] may be even further confirmed in the light of the events which follow.

William S. Stokely, the Republican candidate, had been elected, altogether, three times as Mayor. He had been approached by Still who was greatly interested in having colored policemen placed on the force. Still had previously talked the matter over with Reverend Phillips and got him to accompany him when he went to call on the Mayor. When the committee of two had left, the Mayor is reported to have said that he did not need to make any move -- that he had the colored vote and they would vote the Republican ticket anyhow. But citizens generally got tired of "gang rule." They wanted something else.[3] The Democrats selected as a candidate Samuel George King, a man who for more than twenty years had served as a member of Select Council, and one whose "clear judgment, integrity, and spirit of progress gave him a commanding influence which was ever used for the public good."[4] He was by birth and education a Lutheran, but was influenced by the teachings of the Friends' School where his education had been completed.[5]

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1. Philadelphia Press, Feb. 19, 1874.
2. Still, William, An Address on Voting and Laboring, 4.
3. Recollections of Rev. Henry L. Phillips.
4. National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 6, 195.
5. Ibid., 195.

Mr. Still and Reverend Phillips made another visit -- this time to the candidate Mr. King, to see if he would put colored men on the force, and he told them that he had no objections and would appoint colored men if he were elected.[1] He was duly elected Mayor (1880), the first Democratic one for many years, and in his inaugural address he took a firm stand in favor of a non-partisan police force.[2]

"The most radical act of Mayor King was the appointment of colored men as members of the police force; as previous to his term no colored men had ever worn the uniform of a policeman of Philadelphia, and his appointment of them (he appointed three)[3] raised such a storm of indignation such as no previous mayor ever encountered; but conscious of the justness of his act, he went on in the even tenor of his way, resting his vindication to time and public opinion."[4]

Plans were now rapidly materializing for the Centennial Exhibition which was to be held in Philadelphia in 1876, and the city was in the midst of preparations for the celebration of its centennial anniversary. Numerous articles and exhibits along every line of endeavor were being assembled from many states throughout the nation and countries throughout the world.

For some time Mr. Still had been deeply concerned as to how the thirty thousand colored citizens of Philadelphia

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1. Recollections of Rev. Henry L. Phillips.
2. National Cyclopedia, Vol. 6, 195; Public Ledger, Apr. 5, 1881.
3. Recollections of Rev. Henry Phillips.
4. National Cyclopaedia, Vol. 6, 195, 196.

should be represented in the Centennial exhibition by their achievements in Mechanical Science, Literature, and by proofs of their material advancement."[1] Desirous of making a contribution which would reflect credit on his race, Mr. Still decided that he, himself, would make an exhibit of his book, "The Underground Railroad." It was bound in various styles of binding and was exhibited in a handsome, heavy glass case[2] where it attracted much attention as it was one of the few exhibits made which showed what the Negroes were doing in the arts and industries.[3]

We are again reminded of Mr. Still's interest in worthwhile projects of the Negro, when he became a member of a company of prominent colored men, including William Whipper and others. They bought a building on Lombard Street between Sixth and Seventh, which at one time was The Institute for Colored Youth. (This school was later removed to Bainbridge Street between 9th and 10th).

The company went bankrupt; all of its members died and Still, to save his capital, bought it in. The building was done over, fitted up as a hall and named by him Liberty Hall. It was the scene of many meetings.[4] Here it was that Still held a reception for the newly appointed colored policemen.[5]

Reminders of other meetings are recalled to us by the Public Ledger of November 15, 1930, which stated:

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1. Still, William, An Address on Voting and Laboring, 4.
2. Case is in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.
3. Still, William, Underground Railroad, LXIII; Recollections of Miss Frances E. Still.
4. Recollections of Miss Frances E. Still.
5. Ibid.

Fifty Years Ago Today

> The Rev. S. P. Roundtree, of Kansas, at a meeting in Liberty Hall, Lombard street above 7th, discussed the Negro colonization of Kansas, particularly the establishment and growth of the settlement of Nicodemus, and urged his hearers to join the exodus of their race.[1]

The next matter engaging the attention of Mr. Still was in the interest of establishing a mission to Lombard Street Central Presbyterian Church of which he was a devout member and officer. The advisibility of starting a mission was a subject which had long engaged the minds of the church members. North Philadelphia seemed a likely section as there was a population of about six thousand colored people in a district which was unoccupied by any church, except by a small Methodist Mission.[2]

So on the 6th of January 1878, the Session of Central Church, consisting of Dr. John B. Reeve, and Elders William Still and Robert Jones, with several lay members, proceeded to Milton Hall, 1914 Fairmount Avenue,which had previously been secured for this purpose, and organized a Mission Sabbath School to be known as Gloucester Presbyterian Mission. The original officers and teachers of the Mission were the Executive Committee, Rev. John B. Reeve, D.D., and Elders William Still and Robert Jones.[3]

In connection with the regular work in his own church,

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1. Public Ledger, Nov. 15, 1930.
2. Anderson, Matthew, Presbyterianism, Its Relation to the Negro, 6.
3. Ibid., 15.

Mr. Still labored tirelessly in the Mission, holding for a time the position of Superintendent of the Sabbath School.[1] At times it seemed as if the mission would go under. The number of workers was small, money to carry on the enterprise was limited and there were many discouragements. But they struggled bravely on. Finally the mission became independent and continued to grow. And to-day the efforts of that little band of pioneers is represented by the beautiful buildings at 19th Street and South College Avenue, known as Berean Presbyterian Church. Beside it is its equally pretty parsonage and another large building -- its outgrowth called Berean School.

Another matter brought to the attention of the thoughtful Negroes of Philadelphia was the difficulty which colored people experienced in securing desirable homes. Landlords generally seemed committed to the idea that Negroes should occupy only certain districts -- these being situated, as a general rule, in the slums or on the smallest and most undesirable streets.[2] Any attempt to obtain more desirable homes met with a blunt refusal. And what was still more discouraging there were but few colored people who were able to accumulate sufficient capital to buy their own homes. What could be done to help them attain this desired end?

The only practicable scheme was brought to their attention as a result of working in the Gloucester Mission in Milton Hall. While these zealous workers were conducting their

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1. Anderson, Matthew, Presbyterianism, 17.
2. Ibid., 24.

activities here, they noticed the regular monthly meeting of an organization which was held in a room in front of the one occupied by the Mission. Some of the members of this organization who came to pay their dues were dressed in working clothes. On inquiry, the Mission workers found out that it was a Building and Loan Association and that its object was to secure homes for its members. Many of these were of the poor, hard working type, and quite a few of them were paying for their homes in this way. This, they decided, was just what the colored people needed, especially in the northwestern part of the city.[1]

The matter was referred to Mr. John McGill, a large-hearted citizen who devoted much of his time and energy to the improvement and general welfare of the colored people. Through his cooperation and wise advice, plans were made and on the 12th of February 1888, a meeting was called at Berean Presbyterian Church for the purpose of considering the advisability of organizing such an association. And after a most enthusiastic expression in its favor the Berean Building and Loan Association was formed with William Still as its first president.[2] In 1910 the following statement was made by Mr. John H. Clower, one of the founders of the Building and Loan:

> "There have been purchased through the Association since its organization, in 1888, two hundred and fifty homes for its stockholders, at an average valuation of $1,800, making the entire valuation of the homes owned now by the

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1. Anderson, Matthew, Presbyterianism, 242.
2. Ibid., 245.

> stockholders to be $450,000. ... These two hundred and fifty homes are now for the most part excellently located on good streets, and it is quite possible that not one of them would have been purchased by these families had it not been for the assistance they received from the Association."[1]

This Association is still in existence and in a flourishing condition.[2]

Yet another organization owes its existence to the thoughtful consideration of Mr. Still. This is the Christian Street branch of the "Y.M.C.A." The time came when he felt that this type of welfare activity was sadly needed for Negroes. There was no opportunity afforded them to join the white "Y". So he again approached Rev. Phillips in reference to the matter, and also a group of influential "Friends", to see if such a project could be started. It was finally decided to have a public meeting at Association Hall, which at that time was located at 15th and Chestnut Streets. This resulted in the organization of the colored "Y" about 1880.[3]

It was placed in charge of Lewis Moore, a student, at that time, of the University of Pennsylvania, but who afterwards became Dean of the School of Education at Howard University. Attention was given to the physical and moral development of men and boys; many pleasant social hours could be profitably spent here; talks and lectures were encouraged and promoted, and on the whole, the project was a perfect success,

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1. Memorial Service to John McGill - late Treasurer of The Berean Building and Loan Association, 28, 29.
2. Information from Miss Frances E. Still and Mr. W. Basil Webb, Secretary.
3. Recollections of Rev. Phillips.

during this period.

After Mr. Moore's graduation he left Philadelphia and the regular Committee, which looked after the white "Y", selected a clergyman to take charge. To this appointment Rev. Phillips objected. He felt that the clergy as a whole were unfitted for such work; that their previous education made them unfit to grasp the needs of the people. (Throughout this entire period, both he and Mr. Still were consulted in regards to the program for the "Y".)

The clergyman was, however, appointed and things started going badly. The work lagged, attendance decreased and the project appeared unsuccessful. The Committee at Association Hall complained and withdrew their financial support.

Then the "Y" was housed in the Parish Building of the Church of the Crucifixion, when it was completed in 1887. Here it remained until the "Y" at 1724 Christian Street was built, and it was this nucleus that formed the organization. Therefore it is to the foresight and thoughtful consideration of Mr. Still that Negroes owe this beautiful building.[1]

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1. Recollections of Rev. Phillips.

CHAPTER X

CHANGES IN PROGRAM OF ABOLITION SOCIETY

1. Altered Program because of reconstruction and diminished income.
2. Centennial Celebration of Society - Still Chairman.
3. Still's subsequent activity in Abolition Society.
4. Resume of Still's welfare work.

The Reconstruction Period brought some changes in the program of the Anti-Slavery Society, but Still's interest in its work was not diminished. The war was over, the slaves freed, schools for them had been established, reconstruction plans for their aid put into operation and the members saw less need of their continued fervent activities.

At a special meeting called September 10, 1864, the subject of the removal of the Anti-Slavery Office was discussed. This was made necessary on account of a diminished income and business. This made retrenchment necessary and it was decided to secure simply desk room.

On September 24, 1864, the committee which had been empowered to investigate this matter reported that the only place that the committee could find besides that of William Still, who had offered his home, 107 North 5th Street, over the Anti-Slavery Office, free of charge, was that of T. Ellwood Chapman, No. 5 South 5th Street, which could be had for $75 a year. Still 's offer was the one accepted.[1]

The meetings of the Society were now held farther and farther apart. The last one of the Executive Committee was held May 3, 1870 and Still was in the chair. At this time arrangements were made for a commemorative meeting of the Society. It was also decided to give the books belonging to the Society to the Philadelphia Historical Society except the last

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1. Executive Committee Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Minutes, Book 4, p. 85.

volumes of the National Anti Slavery Standard which were to be given to the Philadelphia Library.[1]

On April 14, 1875, the Society celebrated its Centennial Anniversary in Concert Hall. William Still, as chairmen of the Committee of Arrangements, presided. Many eminent Abolitionists and national officials were present, as Hon. Henry Wilson, Vice-President of the United States, Frederick Douglass, Lucretia Mott, Robert Purvis, Abby Kelley and others. Rev. W. H. Furness, D.D., gave the invocation and Henry Wilson delivered a commemorative oration which was eloquent in its appeal of sympathy for and aid of the Association.[2]

A letter was received from William Lloyd Garrison regretting his inability to be present, and stating:

> "This celebration is certainly as suggestive as it is unique. An Anti-Slavery Society a century old. And of that long period only the last ten years have witnessed the abolition of that inhuman slave system, in opposition to which the Society was organized."[3]

On the whole, the meeting was highly creditable -- one that was a fitting public close to an organization which had labored nearly a hundred years to achieve one of its goals.

That the Association still considered a part of its work unfinished is shown by a study of the minutes of one of the meetings following the Centennial Anniversary. At this time a letter was read which had been sent to William Still

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1. Executive Committee, Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Minutes, Book 4, p. 85.
2. Manuscript History, Book III, 327.
3. Ibid., 330.

from E. Webb, Financial Secretary of Lincoln University. It represented the financial needs of that institution and, upon motion, one hundred dollars was appropriated for this cause and was to be sent as soon as funds would permit.[1] Help was extended to other institutions also, as may be seen in the letter of acknowledgement received from Wilberforce University.[2]

It was at this same meeting that mention was made of the death of Vice-President Wilson who had spoken at the Centennial Anniversary. Thereupon, Alfred H. Love, William Still and Joseph M. Truman were appointed to prepare a minute for the record in reference to his faithful service in the Anti-Slavery cause.[3]

The matter of leaving some written historical evidence of its activities was now discussed by the Association at its meeting on December 12, 1878, and the Committee on Records was asked to have the books of the organization properly labeled. This was to be done to have a compilation of the history of the Association, beginning from its origin down to the present time and made from its own records and manuscripts.

William J. Buck of the Historical Society was employed to make selections and to compile a history of the Society. The Committee on Records composed of Dillwyn Parrish, Joseph M. Truman and William Still was continued in order to supervise this work. At the same meeting, also, officers for

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 340.
2. Appendix 25.
3. Manuscript History, Book III, 340.

the Society were unanimously elected, and, of this number, Still was placed on the Board of Education and Acting Committee.[1]

The work of the Association, therefore, still went on as heretofore, but its general meetings were held annually, while the various board or committee meetings were held oftener. Evidences of continued meetings, however, are shown by various letters sent to the Society.[2] One sent by Booker T. Washington in 1888 is of especial interest as it expresses the Negroes' appreciation for the "brave, generous and unselfish work" of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.[3]

Still's active interest in the organization also continued. He is now recognized as a source for all sorts of information relating to the Negro and at the same time he is endeavoring to diffuse and preserve such information.[4] His capability is recognized by others,[5] and the fact that the Society appreciated his worthwhile qualities is shown by a study of the Minutes of 1847-1916.[6] Here it is recorded that he served as Vice President of the organization continuously from 1887 to 1895. On December 26, 1895 he was elected President, which office he held until 1901.

The outstanding event of his term was an open letter, printed, directed and sent to President McKinley regarding lynchings in Southern States.[7]

Now the stress and strain of Still's strenuous life

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1. Manuscript History, Book III, 344.
2. Appendix 26A, B, C, D, E, F.
3. Appendix 27.
4. Appendix 28A, B, C.
5. Appendix 29.
6. Appendix 30.
7. Appendix 30.

was beginning to take its toll. It became increasingly difficult for him to attend even the meetings of his beloved Abolition Society, and he could no longer serve in the capacity of President. The following note copied from the Minutes explains the condition when on April 25, 1901, Howard Jenkins was elected president:

> "A minute expressive of our appreciation on the extended services of our friend William Still, as President of the Society, and of our regret at his extended condition of disability, was directed to be sent to him."
>
> Howard Jenkins,
> Secretary.[1]

This brought to an end Still's life-long active interest of fifty-four years in the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery. Having faithfully served in that organization from 1847 to 1901, on July 14, 1902 he came to saw the end of his earthly life.

But it is interesting to note that the Society is still in existence; that it has a membership of less than fifty members and still holds its annual meetings, although the Board meets every three months.[2]

From time to time the Pennsylvania Society received certain bequests, the proceeds of which it has distributed according to its best judgment for the improvement of the people of color in Philadelphia and elsewhere.

In 1894, in addition to its other obligations, this

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1. Minutes, 1847-1916.
2. Information given by Mr. Ellwood Heacock who for fifteen years was secretary of the Abolition Society, and whose father was secretary for forty years.

Society became the trustee of the Laing School at Mount Pleasant, South Carolina"[1] which had been founded in 1866 by Cornelia Hancock of Philadelphia.[2]

For a number of years the bulk of the Society's activities has been the distribution of its own income, and the administration of the Laing School fund. This has helped to keep the members together.[3]

And so continues the work of the organization. An organization which in the one hundred fifty-five years of its existence, has seen the fulfilment of one of its main objectives, namely, the abolition of slavery. An organization which in striving to improve the condition of the African Race, has seen this motive exemplified in the career of one of its protegees, William Still.

His work in the Anti-Slavery Office, alone, preserving the records (in many cases the fugitives changed their names) and helping the escaping slaves -- should endear him in the hearts of all his people. First and foremost were they his consideration; in the beginning, as bedraggled fugitives, seeking aid and refuge;-- then as newly created freedmen, needing advice, encouragement, and material aid. Of all these, he freely gave, -- oftimes receiving censure and thankless condemnation.

Many questions have been asked and numerous conjectures made as to the reputed large fortune left by Mr. Still.

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1. Wilbur, Henry W., The Oldest Abolition Society.
2. Laing School Visitor, 1.
3. Information given by Mr. Ellwood Heacock, former Secretary, and Miss Arabella Carter, present Secretary.

To all these we may say that materially, his bequests were much smaller than estimated. His greater significance showed itself in the fact that he was an untiring welfare servant, ever laboring for the public good. This is evidenced in the following tangible ways:

1. His untiring work in the Anti-Slavery Office, and his preserving records which but for his initiative and foresight, might have been lost.

2. By going into Canada, investigating the conditions in places to which fugitive slaves were being shipped; thereby reassuring the Abolition Society as to the wisdom of this continued activity; and by writing extensive letters to the newspapers whereby he was able to refute by first hand knowledge the damaging rumors which were then being disseminated against these fugitives.

3. By inaugurating and maintaining the struggle for colored people to ride in the Street Cars, a privilege which they, due largely to his efforts, subsequently obtained.

4. In helping to organize, in donating time, service, money and otherwise helping to cheer and make more comfortable the inmates of the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored People.

5. By helping to organize and working with the Social and Statistical Society. This organization attempted to strike at the roots of prejudice. It secured famous lecturers on topics of citizenship, race relations, human

rights, etc., and did everything to press the cause of universal suffrage.

6. For serving in the position of Post Sutler at Camp William Penn during the Civil War; accepting the position at a time which meant his financial loss, as he was engaged in a lucrative coal business.

7. For his material aid to worthwhile projects such as giving a check of $500 for the welfare of the colored soldier; $100 to the "Executive Committee of the National Testimonial to William Lloyd Garrison"; buying a share of stock in the Mercantile Library Company of Philadelphia, and subscribing to $1,000 worth of stock in the "Nation".

8. By encouraging and helping those of his race whose literary efforts were brought to his attention. Some of these were William Wells Brown, author of "The Black Man" and Mrs. Frances Watkins Harper of "Sketches of Southern Life", etc.

9. By helping to organize the "Colored Soldiers and Sailors Orphan Home"; liberally contributing toward the purchase of their home.

10. By his active interest in the "Home for Destitute Colored Children" and the "Shelter", both of which are now located at Cheyney Normal School,- the practice schools for Normal School students.

11. For his work as trustee of "Storer College" at Harper's Ferry, instituted in honor of John Brown.

12. For his literary labors. These lay in his

extensive correspondence to the Press on every question relating to the needs and problems of Negroes; for his authorship of "The Underground Railroad", a book which is still an authority on this subject; and for his preparation and publication of his two pamphlets, the one, "A Brief Narrative of the Struggle for the Rights of the Colored People of Philadelphia in the City Railway Cars, and a Defence of William Still," and the other, "An Address on Voting and Laboring." Both of these pamphlets show that he was far in advance of his time and, as is often the case, evidence the fact that he carried on his work in the face of opposition and censure.

13. For his business ability, in building up an extensive and lucrative coal business at 1216, 1218, 1220 Washington Avenue, -- a business of which Dr. Thomas Wistar wrote in 1895, "He has supplied the Dispensary, myself and father before me, honestly for thirty years."

14. By creditably representing Negroes at the Centennial Exhibition -- a thing which gave him some concern, as he thought that they should be exhibitors. He endeavored to show what Negroes were doing in the arts and industries and displayed a beautiful exhibit of his book "The Underground Railroad" in various types of bindings.

15. By trying to contribute to every worthwhile venture which Negroes undertook and becoming associated with a company which attempted to buy a hall. The venture failed; Mr. Still bought it in, fitted it up, redecorated it, and named it Liberty Hall, at which place many famous meetings

were held.

16. By helping to organize and work toward the development of Berean Presbyterian Church, an outgrowth of which resulted in the establishing of Berean School, both still located on South College Avenue.

17. By being one of the founders and first president of Berean Building and Loan Association; an organization which is still flourishing and which has been the means of enabling many Negroes to buy their own homes.

18. By instigating and working for the development of the "Y.M.C.A.", an activity which resulted in the beautiful building at 1724 Christian Street.

19. By his attempt to show Negroes that they should not adhere to the Republican Party out of mere gratitude, but should vote thoughtfully, for men and principles according to their better judgment.

20. By being the first to advocate that colored men be placed on the Police Force -- a measure which, when accomplished, provoked widespread disapproval.

21. By his untiring interest and service for fifty-four years in the program and activities of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, an organization which has labored long and untiringly in the interest of Negroes.

So for all these unselfish acts of love and benevolence, Negroes may point to William Still with pride, and the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery may well consider him a worthy exponent of the ideas and ideals for which it has so long striven.

APPENDIX

(Collection of William Still in possession of Miss Frances E. Still)

1. Goodwin, A., Salem, May 23, '55.
2. Still's Letters of introduction for Canada
   - A. Rhoades, Samuel, Phila., 9, 4, '55.
   - B. Taylor, Geo. W., Phila., 9, 10, '55.
   - C. Grew, Henry, Phila., 9, 10, 55.
3. Letters from New York Anti-Slavery office.
   - A. -- Nov. 26, '56.
   - B. Leonard, Wm. H. (no date).
   - C. Leonard, Wm. H. (no date)
   - D. Leonard, Wm. H., Feb. 6, '58.
   - E. Leonard, Wm. H., Mar. '59.
   - F. Leonard, Wm. H., Dec. 10, '59.
4. Hayes, Esther, Kennett Square, 1, '58.
5. Lester, Nancy, San Francisco, June 4, '58.
6. Stephens, Geo. E., Morris Eland, S.C., 9, 16, '63.
7. Baker, Geo. E., Washington, D.C., Nov. 16, '62.
8. Copy of William Still's Commission, Feb. 4, '64.
9. Letters to Statistical Society.
   - A. Garrison, Wm. Lloyd, Boston, Sept. 29, '65.
   - B. Day, William Howard, New York, Feb. 14, '66.
   - C. Stearns, Geo. L., Boston, Apr. 29, '65.
   - D. Stearns, Geo. L., Brevoort House, N.Y., Apr. 30, '65.
   - E. Stearns, Geo. L., Boston, Feb. 12, '66.

10. Bacon, Leonard W., Phila., Dec. 21, '85.

11. Wistar, Thos., Phila., 3, 13, '95.

12. Copy of Stock Certificate of Mercantile Library Company, May 10, '72.

13. Brackett, N. E., Storer College, Dec. 18, '76.

14. Brown, Wm. Wells, Cambridgeport, Mass., July 10, '63.

15. Letters referring to "Nation"

    A. McKim, J. M., New York, May 26, '66.

    B. Garrison, W. P., New York, Sept. 28, '71.

16. Information for "Underground Railroad"

    A. Hunn, Jno., Beaufort, S.C., 10, 19, '71.

    B. Hunn, Jno., Beauford, S.C., 11, 2, '71.

17. Letters of Recommendation.

    A. Aaron, Samuel, Phila., May 24, '60.

    B. Davis, E. M., Phila., 8, 8, '65.

18. Requests for Book.

    A. Bleby, Henry, Bahamas, July 27, '71.

    B. Thompson Lewis, Fort Ellis, Montana, 6, 10, '72

19. Harper, F. W., N.C., Mar. 14, '72.

20. Additional information on Frances W. Harper.

21. A. Lester, P., Victoria, May 12, '71.

    B. Lester, P., Victoria, Apr. 30, '72.

22. Grimke, F. J., West Chester, Dec. 13, '73.

23. Letters on Political question.

    A. Newby, J. A., Camden, Mar. 11, '74.

    B. Grimke, F. J., West Chester, Mar. 18, '74.

    C. Williams, E. K., Chatham, Can., Mar. 24, '74.

    D. Williams, E. K., Chatham, Mar. 29, '74.

    E. Tomlinson, Reuben, Charleston, S.C., Apr. 14, '74.

F. Marshall, J. F. B., Hampton, Va., Apr. 30, '74.

G. --- Washington, May 11, '74.

24. Love, A. H., Phila., 12, 19, 85.

25. Payne, D. A., Wilberforce University, June 22, '75.

26. Letters referring to Quarter Century Celebration.

A. Washington, B. T., Tuskegee, Ala., Nov. 18, '88

B. Douglass, Fred'k, Anacostia, D.C., Nov. 30, '88.

C. Armstrong, S.C., Hampton, Va., Dec. 9, '89 ('88)

D. Washington, B. T., Tuskegee, Ala., Dec. 14, '88.

E. Armstrong, S.C., Hampton, Va., Dec. 21, '88.

F. Douglass, Fred'k, Anacostia, D.C., Jan. 4, '89.

G. Douglass, Fred'k, Anacostia, D.C., Jan. 9, '89.

27. Washington, B. T., Tuskegee, Ala., Dec. 30, '88.

28. Letters to Still - Information re Negro.

A. Douglass, Chas. R., Santo Domingo, Sept. 25, '75.

B. Scovel, Sylvester F., Wooster, Ohio, Feb. 6, '89.

C. Austin, Benj. W., Dallas, Texas, Jan. 20, '89.

29. Gibbons, C. J., Phila., Mar. 18, '89.

30. This record of the Minutes 1847-1916 has not as yet been turned over to the Historical Society. Its pages are not numbered and it may be found at the Y.F.A., 152 N. 15th St., Miss Arabella Carter, Secretary.

31. Open letter sent to Pres. McKinley, 6, 29, '99.

One or two of the oldest letters have some illegible words, owing to their being faded. This is due to the fact that many of them were kept in a box in the yard and became rain soaked.

Salem, May 23/55

Dear friend,

I have for some time intended writing to ask thee to excuse me from taking the Provincial Freeman, as I cannot do half as much as I wish to for the slaves -- shall have to let those blessed with freedom do for themselves, and I have often read of their prosperous condition in Canada -- however thee did not ask it out of charity for the paper I presume; and it is well worthy of support, and I hope obtains it especially from colored friends as its aim is for their improvement and elevation. I know so few here who would make any good use of it, or I should like it to circulate among our colored friends but they are too uncultivated -- they have schools among them and many of their children are in a way of improvement.

Does thee know John Rock the celebrated dentist and lecturer in Boston? It is only a few years since he was a teacher in a small colored school for children -- a native of this place and educated here also -- studied dentistry here too -- his case is encouraging.

The last Freeman thee was so kind to send me contained an interesting account of the freed Carolinians.

I never knew before that it has been so long in hand, three years must have seemed an age to them -- I wonder E. Moore did not get interested in it before as she must have heard of it -- but the first time she wrote about it to me was about a year since -- she was then so full of zeal in the Cause. I

became very much interested in it too. It seems shameful to sell the flesh and bones of that old woman of 80 -- she ought to have been emancipated and allowed to live there in comfort if she chose to -- but they were all highly favored for slaves in having a kind master and willing them their freedom. I thought there was a father among them -- he is dead I suppose as thee did not mention him -- not left behind it's to be hoped.

Friend Scott must have been a very uncommon slave holder to have withstood the offer of so much money for them and he being poor too.

I hope thee will make a journey into Canada this summer -- it would be a very pleasant tour in warmer weather and one of great interest to behold the prosperity of those formerly in bondage. Thee must go to the Buxton Settlement. I have read a great account of that as being very flourishing, and I am partial to it on account of its name.

The poor fugitives thee says do not come as fast as formerly. I hope there is no lack in their getting away -- but take another way of getting to the land of freedom.

In haste thy friend,

A. GOODWIN[1]

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1. Letter from Collection of William Still.

Appendix 2-A

Philadelphia 9 mo. 4th 1855

Dear friends,

As my friend, William Still, of this city, is about to visit Canada, and it may fall in his way to call upon you, I have much satisfaction in furnishing him with an introduction, believing you will gladly extend to him such kind attentions as may be in your power. He goes to visit our brethren and Sisters who have escaped from a land of wrong and oppression to one of freedom and security, and to many of them he will not be a stranger.

Very truly and respectfully,

Your friend

SAMUEL RHOADES.

To

George Hill) Pelham-near-Niagara
John Atkins)
Gervas Cornell, Pickering.
Leonard Baker, Norwichville, Oxford Co.
Adam Spencer, Port Robinson, Welland Co.
Ira Clark, Bondhead
Alexander Fulton, Toronto
Wm. Spread, Toronto
Thos. Clark, Haldimand
Levi Varney, Bloomfield, Prince Edward Co.
John Harris, Rockwood, Wellington Co.
Thos. Waring, Picton, Prince Edward Co.

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Original letter in possession of Miss Frances Still.

Phila., 9th mo., 10th - 1855

To my friends

in Canada and elsewhere

The Bearer Wm. Still is well known to me as a worthy and useful man. Any attentions shown to him will be well bestowed. In haste,

Sincerely,

GEO. W. TAYLOR

N.W. Cor. 5th & Cherry St.

Ira Clark, Bonhead, Lime Co.
R. Birchard Oakwood, Maripon
Gervas Cornell, Pickering, Ontario Co.
Henry Widdifida, New Market
Rich. H. Clark, M.D., Conbusg P.O.
Thos. Clark, Holdemand P.O., North Co.
R. Jones Williams, Pastor Congl. Church Alton P.C.
John Ferris, Ferris Point, Kingston

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Original letter in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.

Philadelphia,
Sept. 10th, 1855

To All whom it may concern,

This is to certify, that the bearer Mr. William Still, my esteemed friend and a sincere practical advocate of the cause of human rights against the oppression of a selfish world, is worthy of the confidence of all the friends of righteousness and human freedom, and as such, is commended very cordially to their kind hospitality by their respectful friend,

HENRY GREW.

Anti Slavery Office 138 Nassau St.

New York, Nov. 26th 56.

My dear Still:-

Your favour of Thursday last was rather inopportune. It was only by chance that I was in the office. They had no person to pilot them to the office, Napoleon not being on hand -- nay not at home --

On all such days we are closed I happened to have a job on another paper that day called me over to the office.

Napoleon has given up going to the wharf, because the last 2 or 3 lots you sent came by the Amboy, when your dispatch directed us to Jersey City -- How does it happen?

Dear Fn'd,

I send you herein a list of new Sub,. stoppages and changes which have occurred since I have taken charge of your mail. There are those among them which have come from you and their sources. I think it contains them all.

I think it would be as good a way as any to have a list weekly made out at this office, that we may compare them often, and thus keep our books as near alike as possible.

Yours

WM. H. LEONARD.

Stop

Abigail Wolston	Rancocus Del.
E. Fish	Morrisville Pa.
James Lewis	Reading "
Dan'l Bertolet	" "
Margt Speakman	Thompson "
Priscilla Reynolds	Fountain Green Pa.
Jas. Ashton	Byberry "
M. F. Hannum	Kennett Square "
John Gallager	Penningtonville "
F. Hawkins	" "
Wm. Smith	Mt. Hollgy N.J.
C. Steward	Norristown Pa.
J. Mann	" "
T. McKiblin	" "
L. Clarke	" "

Cash

Femar Thorn	Selma O.	2.00
Franklin Taylor	Kennett Square	4.00
A. and M. W. Pugh	Oxford	2.00
Clarkson Brosnir	Cockranville	4
Rachel W. Leeke	Avondale	2
J. Williams	N. Easton	1
And David Spears	Vandalia Ill.	

Change

Rev. John Crawford from 118 Broadway to 414 Saratoga St. Baltimore Md.

Send

Isaac S. Longshore	Attleboro, Pa.
Seth Hillman	Beachwoodstown N.J.
Thos. Atkinson Jr.	Three Sons Pa.

Has Mr. McKim recovered yet? When he was here at the Annual Meeting and brought his Mail Book I was in a great hurry and had very little time to say anything in reference thereto. I have been thinking he wanted to ask me how much it was worth to mail them. If he should say as much to you will you drop me a line?[1]

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1. On the last sheet of this letter was the following statement which had been crossed out: We affirm that the Abolitionists of the period referred to did not advocate any unconstitutional interference with slavery.

Anti-Slavery Rooms
138 Nassau St.

Dear Still:-

Won't you please send to this office a copy of Solomon Northrups Narrative, should you have any on hand, or if you can find any in your city. There are none to be had here for love nor money. I want to send it to our friend Wm. P. Powell, now in Liverpool.

You will direct the am't from the bill I sent your office last week.

Yours truly

WM. H. LEONARD

P.S. What is the matter with the Under-Ground passengers -- none since I wrote you last?

In haste

WM.

A. S. Rooms 138 Nassau St.

N. York Feb'y 6, 1858.

My dear Friend-

I rec 'd the accompanying letter from one of our friends who has been the recipient of your kindness and care with the request that you wd send it to its destination and ask the answer be directed to this office through you --

By doing so you will oblige a lady -- a pleasing duty, no doubt judging from the reports they invariably bring of your deportment towards them --

Have you received the full complement of Greeley's Pamphlets 50 copies?

Have not seen any notice in our exchanges of your letter to the Tribune.

Did you see that item published -- or now going the rounds of our papers -- in reference to the manner in wh Myers -- does business in Albany?

What remedy is there -- no one there but him to do it.

Yours truly

WM. H. LEONARD.

Anti-Slav. Rooms

138 Nassau St.

My Dear Fnd:

On and after the first May next you will direct passengers to us at some other place than the office to wh we are going to move. -- to be hereafter mentioned of this more anon

We have a tub in your city which your carrier will please deliver

Mrs. S. Reinick

211 No. 10th St.

After this week will you please see to it and

oblige

Yours &c

WM. H. LEONARD.

March 1859

Anti-Slavery Office

5 Beekman St.

Dear Still,

I send you, by today's express 50 cops. Helper's Compendium for wh. I shall have to charge you 30c. I enquired of Birdick at what figure he wd let you have 500 copies. He wanted $27 per 100 -- but finally concluded to sell me them for $25. cash.

The other edition to be published by Helper himself, will not be so well got up and the price not marked on the cover.-- They will not be ready either till two weeks hence. Burdicks will readily sell for 50¢ the price printed on the cover. While the other, not so swell looking -- and costing the same -- without the printed price, will probably bring less.

We are selling them readily for 50¢ and paying 30c in smaller quantities than 500.

If you conclude to take that number drope me a line by return mail, as the binders hardly keep up with the demand and I will get them, as soon as ready.

I have partly examined the files of Tribune for the paper you want, but as yet without success. I will make it my duty for tomorrow (Sunday) and send as soon as I get it, if I have to cut my file.

This $25 is the cash price and $27 at 30 days.

Yours truly

W. H. LEONARD

New York

Dec. 10th '59

Kennett Square 1st mo. 1858

Dear Friend,

I regret that I cannot return a more satisfactory reply to thy letter. Its contents interested me deeply. But with "shame and confusion of face" I must acknowledge that I am not acquainted with a family in this vicinity where the dear child could be placed, that he would not be degraded. Nor do I know a school where he would be received on an equality with white children, or where conduct and not color would be the test of respectability.

I am not situated as I once was; when my means was equal to my desire to do such things; and cannot possibly take him myself. And if I could there is no school that would receive him and that not unless he were permanently settled within limits. "Jackson's" school receives none of the proscribed race; tho himself a progressive friend. That thee will say is progress with a vengeance. Such a state of things is deeply humiliating to own in a quaker neighborhood and in the heart of Chester County famed for its reformatory influence. There is one school however that I had overlooked, in West Bradford where no distinction is made in color by the proprietor "Jonothan Gause", who has some of that class under his care at all the time. Some of the students are disposed at <u>first</u> to make invidious remarks but that feeling soon subsides; as Jonothan never fails to lecture them on the impropriety, injustice and cruelty of such a course. Jonothan's school stands

like Lot in Sodom a saving redeeming influence amongst the rest of the Chester County Schools. Indeed I am not aware that there is another in the State where a colored child can be received. It is possible that Jon. school may be full this winter. I will write to him; make the inquiry and let thee know the result. Or perhaps thee prefer corresponding with him on the subject thyself.

His address will be

Marshallton

Chester County

Pa.

Thy friend; and the friend of the suffering.

ESTHER HAYES.

San Francisco June 4, 1858.

Dear friend Still,

Your very interesting epistle of May 4th come duly to hand. It afforded me much satisfaction to hear so generally from my absent friends, and also to hear that your family were enjoying good health.

I tender to you my sincere thanks for the pains you took to deliver those trifles to their respective recipients.

Mr. Seals and his bride, Mrs. Simmons and Mrs. Topps arrived safe in the last steamer, and are well as far as I know. I am living out of the way of the people, and am never in a hurry to cultivate the acquaintance of strangers, consequently I have not seen them. As to Mr. Seals between you and the post, I think he is rather a poor chance.

The excitement relative to the Frazer river "gold mines" prevails here to a considerable extent. Many colored persons have left for that region, and "many" more are making preparations to go. Indeed it seems to be a Providential provision for us who are so oppressed. I feel somewhat encouraged to believe that ere long, we may find a home for our children in the right place. Those who have gone tisere[1] "Vancouver" were delighted with the hospitable reception they met there from Gov. Douglass.

Some of the newspapers here have been taunting the "colored people" and say they are going from here because they

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1. This word was not understandable.

cannot become citizens, there to become subjects, however our enemies are never willing that we should emigrate to a place where we will be benefitted.

We see in the papers many accounts of the religious revivals in the East, if it is genuine, I hope soon to hear of many among the converts laboring with whole souled vehemence to undo the heavy burden and "let the oppressed go free,"[1] then my faith will be strengthened, and I shall believe the hand of the Lord is in it.

Our friend Newby, with all his intellect lacks energy, for my part I think, in the bowels of the earth, digging for the precious metal, is the best place for him. I am pleased to hear that some of the Pupils of the High School are progressing. I can scarcely bear to talk about schools.

Tell Caroline that I shall look with much anxiety for her epistle. As respects the house I am glad you had those little matters of repairing done. If the tenant pays the rent and takes care of the place it will be well to grant such requests, as it will beget in him an interest, and he will give you less trouble.

The papers you sent Sarah, and the Standard were received -- we are much interested in them and thank you kindly for sending them. I regret to hear of the death of Dr. Tyng. There are so few who are willing to advance liberal views in the cause of humanity that we are not willing to lose one such. It is true the Bible says, "The wicked shall not live out half

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1. Quotation from one of the spirituals, "Go Down Moses".

their days", but to human observation they appear to live the longest. I am sorry to hear that the colored people persecute Miss Greenfield, but as it was with the Prophet so it as with her, "not without honor save in her own country and among her own people". Remember me affectionately to your family and to all enquiring friends. I remain your sincere friend

NANCY LESTER.

Morris Eland Sept. 19, 1863.

Mr. Wm. Still

Dear Sir, I have learned through the daily papers that there is an extensive movement in New York, for the enlistment of colored troops in the North and West, and that the sum of Fifty thousand dollars has already be subscribed by Patriotic parties to aid such enlistments. All movements of this character you certainly know, have my hearty concurrence and, I wish to do all in my power to aid them in fact I believe as you do that the arming of every available cold man North and South the spediest method which could be devised to eradicate that semblance of inferiority of our race, which cruel slavery has created, if there is one spark of manhood now rising in the bosom of the slave that has resisted the surging waves of oppression, the school of the soldier will fan it into a glowing flame. And it is the means -- only means by which the collective power of the Negro race can be brought to bear on the civil and political affairs of the country. The purpose of this note is to ask your kind offices in my behalf in a matter which I think is of the greatest importance and interest to me. I propose to associate with my own the name of Mr. Frederick Johnson, one of the most accomplished soldiers in the 54th Mass. Vol. Infantry. He is a sergeant of Co. (C) and acting Sergeant Major (Sergeant Lewis Douglass being absent on leave) We desire to apply to Major Stearns or who ever else may be the proper authorities, for the positions of "drill

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sergeants". We can obtain from the officers of our Regiment satisfactory testimonials of our qualifications for the position. Sergeant Johnson is a member of Rev. Wm. Grimes Church Boston, is personally acquainted with Gov. Andrew. The most important letter Gov. Andrew has addressed to our Regt. was directed to Segt. Johnson. I cannot speak in terms too glowing of Sergeant J. when I say he is a Christian and a soldier. I think it not an uncreditable ambition not an over-reaching one, to ask a position of this kind. The recommendation of the officers might be sufficient to secure us this. But I am a Philadelphian in a Massachusetts Regt. In making my application I wish to vindicate, if necessary my social character. Will Mr. Still, Mr. Jacob C. White Jr. and Rev. I. Gibbs aid me? I expect to be in Phila. Providence willing, sometime about the first or fifteenth of Oct. on thirty days furlough.

Now in explanation I will say that evidences teach us that col^{d} men have nothing to hope for here in the way of promotion. Since the disaster of the 18th July, vacancies among the commissioned officers of the Regiment have been steadily filled up by Whites from other Regiments. Only a few days ago a white drum major and a sergeant of the 26th Mass. Vol. were honored with commissions as 2nd Lts. in the 54th and, more than one officer here has expressed himself as opposed to commissioning col'^{d} men. The matter of commissioning col'd men says Gov. Andrew "Lays in the hands of Company and Regimental commanders". In more than one case the sergeants have been compelled to take command of companies, the commissioned

officers were so few. The sergeants (myself among the number came out on "dress parade" and took their posts as if they had been commissioned officers (whose duty they were compelled to do while in command of their companies) but to my indignation an order, was read commanding sergeants, not to take the place of commissioned officers in line. The order was signed by Col. TITTEFIELD. The 54th is not a Regiment of soldiers, but, ditchers, and, the spade and shovel is their only implement of warfare. We have not had a company drill since the death of Col. Shaw, when he lived predudice (prejudice) and self-sufficientcy hid their mean and spiteful heads. The Regiment is in a state of demoralization. The men are compelled to perform the heaviest kind of fatigue duty with no pay and impressed with the idea that the officers care nothing for their welfare. They (the off.) even desire to curtail the number of men allowed by Genl Gilmore, per month "on leave of absence." When we left Readview, my company 94 men. We have now total of 71 men left. We are entitled to 2 men according to the apportionment. But we have sent but one. These are some of the reasons which has led us to desire this new field of service, and made us lose heart with the 54th. Trusting you will favor me with an early reply.

I remain very truly yours for the liberty and progress of our Race.

G. E. STEPHENS

Sergeant Co. B. 54th Regt.
Mass. Infantry
Morris Eland S.C.

National Freedman's Relief Society

Washington Nov. 18, 1862.

William Still Esq.

Dear Sir. It is with much sorrow that I announce to you that Mr. Hamlin the President of our Society is dead. Among the letters he received during his last days was one from you enclosing a check for seventy dollars and stating that a like amount would be sent in clothing.

This letter was read to our Society last evening having been put into my hands, by a friend of Mr. Hamlin's at his death.

The Society in Committee voted unanimously their hearty thanks to your Society for its liberal and welcome donations.

The Committee hope to send some one to confer with your Society at some future time.

Mr. Hamlin, you will observe, did not endorse your check owing to his sickness. I therefore enclose it to you with the request that you will exchange it for one payable to "Geo. E. Baker Treas. or order" and send it to me.

The Box or Boxes of goods may be marked

Camp Barker
Washington,
D.C.

For Contrabands
Care of Miss Patten.

Please notify me when and how they are shipped.

Your friend
GEO. E. BAKER
Treas. N.F.R. Ass.

Direct letters to me simply
Geo. E. Baker
State Department
Washington, D.C.

Adjutant General's Office

Washington Feb. 4, 1864

Sir,

The Secretary of War appoints you temporary sutler at Camp William Penn.

You will report to the Commanding Officer without delay.

By order of the Secretary of War,

James W. Hardie

Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.

William Still Esq.

Care of Hon. Wm. D. Kelley

House of Reps.

Washington,

D.C.

Boston, Sept. 29, 1865

Dear Mr. Still,

It will give me the greatest pleasure to lecture before your Statistical Society, at such time as may be mutually convenient, in accordance with the invitation contained in your letter.

Yours, for liberty and right,

WM. LLOYD GARRISON.

N. Y. City

Feb. 14th 1866.

To Wm. Still Esq.

Chrmn. Com. of Ar.:-

Dear Sir:-

Your letter is awaiting a reply.

I haste to say that my subject for the 8th of March will be -- "The Colored Soldiers of the Wars -- What they did, and how they did it."

If you wish me to take something else, intimate it.

Yrs. as ever Very Truly,

WM. HOWARD DAY.

Boston April, 29, 65.

Wm. Still Esq.

Secretary of the Social, Civil and
Statistical Soc. of Colored News
for Pennsylvania

Phila.

Est. friend,

Your letter of the 10th inst. enclosing thirty dollars for One Thousand copies of my pamphlet on the "Equality of all men before the Law" was received in course, and as soon as possible the number of copies forwarded to you.

Please tender my thanks to your Society for their early encouragement of my efforts to bring this question before the public and believe me always the friend of equal rights to all men.

Respectfully,

GEO. L. STEARNS.

Brevoort House

New York, April 30, 65.

Mr. Wm. Still,

107 North Fifth St. Phila.

Est. friend,

Yours of 26th is before me, and I thank you most heartily for your donation. It was the first real encouragement I received and coming to me while stretched on a Sick Bed was a great joy for you should know I always doubt the success of my plans until they have received the popular sanction.

Since your letter came I have had quite a number of donations and orders, and am printing an edition of 40,000. Another pamphlet will follow this in a fortnight.

If you cannot use the 700 sent you to advantage, send them to D. S. Southworth U. S. Aniner 4th District Pa. and say they came from me. His office is 427 Chestnut St. Farmers & Merchants' Bank Building.

Write me on receipt of this whether you keep or send them to him.

Let me know the you paid on the two lots and I will remit to you.

Truly your friend,

GEO. L. STEARNS.

Boston Feb. 12, 1866.

Dear Sir,

Yours containing $10 from B. C. Hoppin is at hand.

Accept my thanks for it. We need all we can raise to counteract the crablike tendencies of the President and his Cabinet. I do not recollect that you wrote me about Gen'l Butler, but I have been ill so long that it was probably mislaid when I could not read my letters.

I hope to be in Philadelphia Saturday and Sunday next and then will call on you

Truly

GEORGE L. STEARNS.

Wm. Still Esq.

Phila.

Leonard W. Bacon
511 South 42nd Street
Philadelphia, Penn'a.

Dec. 21, '85.

My dear Sir:

I can not refuse your invitation to address the friends of the "Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons", on the 2nd of January. It is a sort of speech-making in which I do not excel; but I will gladly do my best.

I am already under obligation to you for your courteous response to my friend Mr. Peirce's request, in my behalf, for an opportunity to consult the files of "The Liberator." I have been delayed, by many pressing duties, from availing myself of your kindness. But I shall not be much longer hindered, I trust.

With great respect, I am,

Yours truly

L. W. BACON

William Still Esq.

THE PROVIDENT LIFE AND TRUST COMPANY
OF PHILADELPHIA

N.W. Cor. Fourth and Chestnut Streets (401 to 409)

Thomas Wistar, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner

Hours; 1 to 3 P.M.

Philadelphia, 8/13/1895.

Dear Isaac,

My friend William Still wishes to see you about rates for coal for the "Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons" an excellent institution of which he is President. He has supplied the Dispensary myself and father before me, with coal honestly for thirty years, and desires all you can for him.

Yours very truly,

THOS. WISTAR.

Gen[l] I. J. Wistar

MERCANTILE LIBRARY COMPANY
OF PHILADELPHIA

No. 21302 Ten Dollars.

This Certifies that William Still is the owner of One Share of the Stock of the MERCANTILE LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA

Transferable with the consent of the Directors on surrender of this certificate.

Witness the Corporate Seal of said Company at Philadelphia May 10th 1872

T. MORRIS PEROT President

JNO. H. WATT Treasurer

Storer College,

Harpers Ferry W. Va. Dec. 18, 1876

Wm. Still, Esq.

Philadelphia, Pa.

My dear Sir:

I sent you today a catalogue of our school, also a paper on the first page of what you will find a report of our closing exercises last summer by one of our teachers. It is rather long, but I hope not too long to read. -- Tomorrow I will send you a little more definite statement of our present wants.

Very truly,

M. C. BRACKETT

Principal and Treasurer.

Cambridgeport Mass.

July 10, 1863.

Dear Still,

You have my thanks for the letter which came to hand today, also the contents $16.60 making $26.60. The remainder of the books can stay with the book-sellers. By the Standard package next week, you will get a copy of the new edition. Please call at your A.S. office for it. We are just on the point of going to the country till September.

The weather here is very hot, we can scarcely live under it.

You no doubt felt like smiling as you read my article in last "Anglo" on the "critics".

By the by, did you know that I have been for many years reading medecine? For the past three years I have spent all my spare time with doctors and their lectures. I give medical advice to all my neighbors who are green enough to ask it. At any rate they get it free, as well as medecine.

Last month a lady told my wife that she had piles, very badly little dreaming that I could give her any relief. On learning the facts, I gave my wife some medicine for her. She took it, and in four weeks, reported herself well. Many of my friends want me to adopt the profession, but I study for the love of it.

I have some valuable books on the subject and three medical magazines. While I was in England, Dr. Erslin gave

me some good books, and much advice on the profession. I have just cured a bad case of scrofula of 10 years standing.

But you will say "enough of this.

Wife joins me in love to you and Mrs. Still.

Please remember me kindly at home.

Hastily yours,

W. WELLS BROWN.

76 John St. New York
May 26/66.

Dear William:

You are aware I presume that our "Nation" enterprise has had a troublesome customer in Major Stearns. It has been apparently his purpose from the beginning either to rule or ruin it. We were determined that he should not do the first and were not much afraid of his doing the second. But he has made such determined opposition and continues to do so, that there is reason to fear that the paper cannot succeed as things now stand. It is not not getting on satisfactorily. It is proposed to wind up the concern as a corporation and either continue the paper in the hands of individuals or discontinue it wholly. Our Phil[a] friends and our Boston friends and our New York friends with the exception of Major Stearns and a few others -- want the paper continued. The matter will be decided at a meeting to be held in this city -- of the stockholders -- next Wednesday.

Mr. Godkin has written to Mr. Clark stating the whole case and Mr. Clark has kindly undertaken to explain it to the stockholders. Please call on him and learn from him, more fully than I can tell you in a letter, the facts of the case. His office is 35 S. 3rd St.

I feel a good deal discouraged at this unexpected turn in the affairs of the paper but I trust that all will come out right at last.

Yours truly

J. M. McKIM

Office of THE NATION

No. 3 Park Place,

New York, Sept. 28, 1871.

Dear Mr. Still,

I enclose with thanks the receipt for your subscription.

If I had leisure and the requisite information, it would give me pleasure, without thought of compensation, to contribute something to your book. But I am indeed overworked, and as for biographies of any of the anti-slavery pioneers I am too young to speak from my own knowledge of them.

In the case of Mr. McKim there is a peculiar reason why I am not the fit person, which comes of the relation in which I now stand to him, and which will always, during his lifetime, prevent my speaking or writing all that I could of his character and past services.

The choice of Mr. Johnson seems to me a very good one, and I think wd be very acceptable to Mr. McKim. In case he is unable to gratify you, perhaps Rev. Sam'l May, of Leicester Mass. would do so.

Very truly yours,

W. P. GARRISON.

Beaufort S.C.

10th Mo. 19th 1871.

Wm. Still

Dear Friend

Thy letter of 30th ulte was received asking for "such papers as you might deem essential for the contemplated sketch of your labors, sufferings and sacrifices in the cause of humanity"; also desiring that such papers, together with an account of my trial for assisting fugitive slaves; might be forwarded at an early day.

I find myself unwilling to comply with thy request.

Not from any false modesty or desire to hide the part taken by myself in forwarding the cause of Truth and Human Freedom; but because I have done nothing in the cause worthy of public record.

All that I did was actually necessary for my own comfort and peace of mind. Such being the case, I cannot see the propriety of anything appearing from my pen to enlighten the public.

When I made the remark in one of my letters; that some of my papers might be serviceable to thee; I had no reference to those concerning myself; but to such as related to the fugitives with whom I became acquainted; while in the exercise of my position as engineer of the Southern Line of the Under-Ground-Rail-Road.

There can be no necessity for an account of my trial;

as my dear friend Thos: Garrett and myself were tried at the same term of Court; a history of his trial will be a history of mine.

Nor can I give an account of the Trial and conviction of Samuel D. Burris, another dear friend of mine; nor of my connection therewith; as it would be a repetition of his account.

Believing that I have "rendered a reason" for not complying with thy request; I will further state; that I doubt the propriety of calling those things "sufferings and sacrifices" which occur to individuals who are engaged in any course of action, which they believe absolutely necessary for them to pursue; in order to fulfill their duty toward their fellow men.

My family and myself are well; hoping that thyself and family are enjoying the blessing of health,

I remain

Very truly thy friend,

JNO. HUNN.

Beaufort S.C.
11th mo. 21st 1871.

Wm. Still

Dear Friend

Thy very kind letter was duly rec^{d} and felt glad that thee was pleased with the articles sent. Enclosed I send another sketch; which thee can publish or not, as seems best.

Molly was the slave of Richard Blackston of Smyrna Delaware; he had a fine farm in Cecil County Maryland to which he was accustomed to resort when on a "spree".

He is dead long since and I have left out his name from regard to his surviving relatives. They will know who is meant in the account, but, others will not be likely to recognize the individual except they were intimately acquainted with the family, I trust that thy enterprise may be crowned with success and that thee may receive a solid proof that thy labors have not been in vain.

With much love to thyself and family,

I remain very truly thy friend

JNO. HUNN.

Philadelphia, May 24, 1860

To All Whom it may concern:

I have had a good deal of friendly confidential intercourse with Mr. William Still; and I feel about as well persuaded of his plain, good sense, - thorough integrity and genuine philanthropy - as one man can be convinced of the character of another.

The perfect confidence felt towards him on the part of some of my best and wisest friends, for many years has greatly strengthened my assurance of his good principles.

SAMUEL AARON.[1]

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1. This was evidently obtained some time before contemplated trip was made.

My dear friend,

Capt. C. B. Wilder,

I send this to you by a highly valued friend William Still of the city, a self made man, a true and enlightened friend of Human Rights. He is on a tour of observation and you will confer a great favor on me if you will show him all the facilities you can in his journey.

I remain as ever

Your

E. M. DAVIS

C. B. Wilder

Philad. 8/8/1865

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Original letter in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.

Napan New Providence
Bahamas July 27,- 1871.

W. Still Esq.

My Dear Mr. Still,

I have always remembered with profound interest my visit to Philadelphia and the friendly intercourse I had with you and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, Mary Grew and other friends. I should like very much to pay a visit to Philadelphia and hope to do so if I am spared for a year or two more.

After my visit to America in 1858 I remained at Barbados until 1864 when I went as General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Missions and British Guiana to Demerara South America. In 1857 family reasons compelled my return to England. In 1868 I accepted the appointment of General Sup'- of Missions in the Bahamas and here I am at present not very far from the shores of the United States after forty years of service in the Mission field and I am thankful to say still healthy and vigorous.

Mr. Powell sends me the Standard in which I read the other day that you are preparing a book entitled "The Underground Railway". I am sure it will be a profoundly interesting volume and I wish you to send me one of the earliest copies and I will send you a draft on the agents of the Methodist Book Concern in New York where I always keep a balance for such purposes. Please do not disappoint me. Send the book directed thus.

"T. P. Moore Esq.
Care of L. M. McBean Esq.
29 Peek Str't.
New York

For Rev. H. Bleby.

I should be very glad if you would write me a few lines to say the book will be sent -- I am sure from the position you have occupied you can send out a work of thrilling interest.

I should be glad if you would present my loving remembrances to Dr. Child and his family and to Lucretia Mott. If I am not mistaken Mr. McKim has ceased to belong to the earth. If you have an opportunity give my loving regards to Mary Grew.

I am

My Dear Mr. Still

Very truly yrs

HENRY BLEBY

Fort Ellis Montana

Dear Friend,

I want you to send me your book about the U.G.R.R. I suppose I could buy it although I see it is published by subscription only.

But I want you to send me an author's copy and write in it that it is to a friend who will never forget the old days of the Anti-Slavery office --

Yours truly,

LEWIS THOMPSON

Captain 2^{n} Calvary

Wm. Still Esq.

Philadelphia.

6/10/72.

Mar. 14th 1872

My dear friend,

The last letter I received from you left or found you on the eve of going to Washington; I should like to hear how you have succeeded. Did you meet any of the colored Magnates and if so did your work receive a good generous recognition from them? Do please write to me as soon as possible and let me hear what is the prospect and if you found Grant and Colfax all right. As to my part I have been working in perhaps one of the most ignorant and poor districts as far as colored are concerned that I have been in lately. Some one or more or the white women here have said that I ought to be paddled, rode on a railroad. One said so I hear if I did not mind I would be put on a sharp stick. One said I ought to be tarred and feathered. Then it was said I was a man in woman's clothes, however I spoke and if nothing prevents will appear again tonight as I have done every night this week.

Let me give you some idea of matters and things in this part of the country. I have been to a place called New Berne. Opposite is a large community of Colored people living in little low cabins, generally speaking poor and ignorant. I should judge the place was a refuge after the evacuation of a place called little Washington. A number settled down there and perhaps many of them have very little idea of bettering their condition. Some time since a teacher who has been a kind of missionary as well as teacher wanted to get up a sister's

prayer meeting. It was met with opposition and a church meeting held on the subject. Fifteen were for it, fifteen against it. The minister or some one gave the casting vote for it provided they would have a deacon to lead it. And one of the brethern was quite opposed and said who ever was for it whether they were white or black, come from the North or South, East or West were devils and they were going to hell, and he was so glad of it, he didn't know what to do. Not very long since I heard of one of the ministers speaking in reference to a dead person, that another sinner's soul had gone to hell and he thanked God for it. I heard from the teacher although she got it second hand a new version of the story of Adam and Eve. That Adam heard Eve a choking. At first I rather think the account was he didn't go to her but however he went and she had a fig in her throat or mouth and it flew out of her into him or his mouth and so of the blame was on poor women.

Oh friend Still you have perhaps little idea of the deep darkness under which some of these poor have lived, and this winter I have had some chance to see something again of the graduates of the patriarchal institutions. The house where I am now stopping has not a single window nor even a place for a window. How do I see? By day, by the door being opened. At night by the fat pine wood, and so I sit here and read Carlyle and can send my mind into the busy haunts of your civilization. Of course I am poorly paid generally for my work but when I come to Philadelphia if nothing prevents, I shall prob-

ably get some cheap furniture and live somewhat economically and then perhaps I shall have my freedom (?) to visit or notice me except my friends, and that will give me more time for culture. Than if I had to have instant demands on my time from common place people with more money than brains, and more fuss and feathers than real live warm hearts.

But soberly friend Still our people need something else besides politics and unless we can do something to build up better home lives, better characters and teach the women to respect themselves more, perhaps there will be a great many who will sink down and dreg others along with them. Oh it is so sad to hear of the young women who drift into sin, and the want of chastity that still remains. My work may seem humble, there may be no glitter nor eclat about it, but today perhaps it is most needed work than any person with my ability to impress can do, Strong people can help themselves but for the poor crippled children of our common humanity, who will care for them?

To write, write to Wilson, North Carolina.

F. E. W. HARPER.

"The following extract clipped from the Portland Daily Press, respecting a lecture that Mrs. Harper was invited to deliver after the war by the Mayor (Mr. Washburne) and others, is a fair sample of notices from this source:

> She spoke for nearly an hour and a half, her subject being 'The Mission of the War, and the Demands of the Colored Race in the Work of Reconstruction;" and we have seldom seen an audience more attentive, better pleased, or more enthusiastic. Mrs. Harper has a splendid articulation, uses chaste, pure language, has a pleasant voice, and allows no one to tire of hearing her. We shall attempt no abstract of her address; none that we could make would do her justice. It was one of which any lecturer might feel proud, and her reception by a Portland audience was all that could be desired. We have seen no praises of her that were overdrawn. We have heard Miss Dickinson, and do not hesitate to award the palm to her darker colored sister."[1]

From such vantage, therefore, Mrs. Harper was eminently able to know and understand prevailing conditions. Her whole life was one of self-denial and of diffusing encouragement and inspiration. During this time she gave liberally of her time, money (that is sharing the little that she had) and of her energy in lecturing and in helping others.[2]

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1. Still, William, The Underground Railroad, 760.
2. Recollections of Rev. Henry L. Phillips who in 1925 was tendered a special service commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination as Archdeacon of the Colored Work in the Diocese of Pennsylvania; Appendix 5 and 6.

Victoria, May 12th 1871

Dear friend,

I have acknowledged your letter of March 23d in mine of April 30th no. 5. I will not be like my friend Still make a hop, scip (skip) and a jump, but will reply to each of your letters as they come to hand. Do tell me something about the Schools in Philadelphia and whether it is your privilege to send your child to the Free School nearest yowr door, Come, Come I know you are Taxed to Sujest (suggest) all the Free Schools in the City of Brotherly Love. Now I wish you to remember that it is my privilege and not only mine but ever (every) other colored man in this free country as your call it and very justly so too.

...

Yours as ever

P. LESTER.

Mr. Gibbs left here some time ago. He had been dealing in Black Dimonds (diamonds) for the last six years - but not with the same success as you had, he was one of a company of eighty who had spent about $100,000 in a coal mine (it was mortgaged for $6000. when he left within the last month it was sold for $5000 to Twenty of the Share holders, who had to make up the balance to cover the mortgage. Now G. was a large share holder but it has all past (passed) from him now

P.L.

Apr. 30 Victoria 1872

Dear Friend,

Of course I have no letter from you, but I have concluded to continue my monthly letters - letter of Jan. 24th you you perceive that Old has been at work an over in our free country , you say this might not have been a matter of notice if we had been over with you barbarians in the United States. I am not sure but I think you will not be able to find in any letter of mine when I have spoken in praise of this Colony with reference to Freedom but I will challenge you to show me anything in British Columbia or any other place where the English flag floats that will compare with the outrages that are being perpetuated upon your brother and mine every day in this one slave state. I see accounts any day that is enough to make one's blood run cold. I was reading an account where six men in North Carolina had their ears cut off close to their head. One had his tongue cut out. Another had spikes driven through his body into a log of wood and then left to die. All of this has taken place within light of my friend Still's door. Yet he tells me he is treated well. Even the Irishman is polite to him. I think you have got to fight your battle over. You know that it is as much as a colored man's life is worth in money of the Southern States to accept an Office I am truly sorry to say it but it is nevertheless true. You are in the hands of an intolerable Despotism with the Democratic party on

one hand against you and half hearted Republicans on the other. Now when you think of these two parties (?) at the South with what you are pleased to call the Ku-Klux tribe to back them up in all their meanness Please tell me what chance has the colored people? You tell me that Mrs Harper is in Alabama and that she is well received but you say nothing about the outrages that are being committed every day in Alabama Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Texas. Surely you must hear of these things. I know all about them.

Say what you will of John Bull, every man, woman and child is free under the old flag. So far as the freedom of the subject is concerned the law cannot be changed. Not so with you your freedom depends entirely upon your ability to fight.

Since the close of the last month at which time this letter was to have

I have of Mar. 23.

I am glad to hear that your daughter was getting on so well. Give our kind regards to her and present the same for your self and Mrs. Still and believe me as well,

P. LESTER

West Chester,

Dec. 13th, 1873.

Mr. Wm. Still:

My Dear Friend

Some time ago we had a talk if you remember on the condition of society -- on that occasion I said if you would take the lead in effecting a change I would follow you. Since then I have learnt with great satisfaction of your address before the Young Folks Association on "Reforms and Reformers." And now I have myself prepared a lecture on the Inherent Moral Forces in Society, which I offer as a kind of reenforcement to yours. This I propose I deliver in the city on the 22nd or 23rd of this month. Will you be kind enough to give me your influence in exciting an interest in it? Hoping that you are well, with my regards for yourself and family, I am,

Respectfully,

F. J. GRIMKE.

Camden N.J. March 11th, 1874

Mr. Wm. Still Esq.

Dear Sir,

I listened with intensed interest to your very excellent address on the eve. of the 10th inst. in the Concert Hall. Subject; "The ballot, and its uses" (and I might add very properly its abuses.) Throughout your entire remarks it was but a simple vindication of the rights guaranteed to you by the Constitution. Yourself and Mr. Purvis have but taken the initiatory steps in this direction which is destined ultimately to convulse this great nation. There is no use of shutting our eyes to the fact "it is so plain that the wayfaring man although a fool may not err therein". This New Departure that you and Mr. Purvis have had the distinguished honor to be the Pioneers is but the entering wedge of other and more startling innovations and Reforms. The Colored People should be proud that there was to be found among us colored men who had the moral courage to assert their God giving rights. This issue is to be meet and there is no better time than the present to begin, and as yourself and Mr. Purvis are under no particular obligations to any Political Party no pledges to fulfill and no offices to seek you are at perfect liberty to make such a Departure as Mr. Purvis very justly remarked that there were no rights or liberties of colored men to be put in jeopardy by the late municipal election and chalenged successful contradiction of the same.

Your fidelity to your race is to be tested by your life both in the pass, present and future, rather than to whom you bestow your vote for municipal honors. Your recommendation to the colored people to acquire means, become property holders, encourage mechanics, arts, professions and to identify themselves with the commercial interests of the community in which we live, to foster and encourage mechanic and artistic as well as agricultural contributions to the comming Centenniel Exposition, was highly commendatory and which at once placed you about a quarter of a century in advance of our race, we have got to come to it and the sooner we come to it the better for all concerned, this pre disposition to be eternally apeing after persons of high social and pecuniary standing without the essential elements necessary to entitle them to such rank or distinction is absurd in the extreeme, and the sooner that Farce is ended the better it will be for our people. The lesson learned by the two great political parties especially the Republican in the late political conflict will be of incalculable benefit to the white people of this country as showing ourselves apt Scholars under the immediate supervision of the "Superior Race."

Yours Truly J. A. NEWBY

737 Kaighn's pt. av. Camden N.J.

West Chester
March 18, 1874.

Mr. Wm. Still,

My Dear Friend,

... And now in conclusion, my dear friend, allow me to extend you my congratulations, for the manly and independent spirit exhibited in your earnest and eloquent address, delivered at Concert Hall on the 10th inst. explanatory of your course during the last mayoralty election. I read the account of it in the "Press" with the deepest interest, and was only too sorry that I could not have been with you. The Right of Private Judgment in all matters, whether religious or political, is as sacred as life itself, and until our colored brethren come to comprehend what this means, they will never be able to understand that a man may differ with them and yet be honest. So far as I am concerned I have absolutely no patience with a miserable despotism that would frown a man down, simply because in the exercise of his rights as an American Citizen, and as a free moral agent, he chooses to support one man in preference to another. Thank Heaven we are no longer responsible to men for our opinions -- they are between us and our God. I hope you will not allow this hubbub, among the people of Philadelphia, to disturb you in the least therefore. You are no political aspirant and therefore not dependent on them. And all that they may say or do cannot I apprehend effect you in the least, in the estimation of your friends. I shall look anxiously for your address. With much love for your self and family,

I am as ever,

Your friend

J. J. GRIMKE

The following two letters from Chathan, Canada, written by the same writer are interesting for more reasons than one.

Chatham Mar. 24 74.

To Mr.

Wm. Still, Sir I never was more surprised than I was the other day by a letter from a youth in your city to his Mother in Chatham informing her that you had turned tail to your Republican friends and voted with the Democrats -- You are the last man I would of thought would of done such a thing -- Your intelligent friends both colred and white must feel ashamed to think that a man that has stood as high and shard as much of their confidence as you have done, should prove rotten at the core, what will become of your Uncle toms Cabbin now. Who will bye Book now that you have distroid public confidence in your principles, now I am sorry for you but you have done the dead yourself and will repent it when too late

Yours in Sorrow

ELIZABETH K. WILLIAMS

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Original letter in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.

Chatham, Mar. 29th 74.

To

Mr. W. Still, My Dear friend, I here with acknowledge the recept of the Pamphlet and Papers you were so kinde as to send me, and to beg your forgiveness for the unkind manner in which I wrote to you instead of waiting untill I heard ferther, but we often do and say things on the spur of the moment that we are glad to take back and so it is with me, that Pamphlet has given me more heart felt delight than anything I have read lately and I em handing it around amongst others, for there is so much in it that every Col[d] man and woman ought to know and be governed by. My Brother Abraham D. Shadd has taken it in the contry to reade amongst the people in the Bush and I do hope the information it contains and the directions it gives may take root and spread amongst our People all over the American continent and especially the Unted States and Canada, but the Colred People having bin kept so long like children by slavery, it makes them slow to learn to think and act for themselves in the rite direction therefore it will take time and patience on the parte of the well informed to make them understand what is for their best intrest and besides as a mass, preference for the superier knowledge over that of persons of couler no matter how intelligent they may be leades many of our people astray but the greate hope is in the rising generation, so you will have to work and waite, as for me altho I would gladly be in field but my time has gon by, Age and

infirmeties has made me not only powerless but helpless, the speaches made at the Bethel meeting by the speaker, certenly does honer boath to the heads and heads of those gentlemen who addressed that Esembly, no Nation could of spoke in loftier strains of prais of any of their graite men that has departed than did those colred oritors of the Hon. Charls, Sumner if it be true that the dead know what the living are doing and in sprit are with us the Sperit of Sumner must of bin gratifide to know while it was in the body it had not labourd for an ungrateful people, and the name of the hon. Charles Sumner as you have said will live, for all comming time when the names of such men as Filmore, Buckhanon, Tiler, Johnson and others will be forgetten, you must not be surprised that I send letters by the hand of my Nephew, I have lost your Address and dont know how to direct to you is my reason for so doing --

You must forgive my sins and believe me now as ever your sincere friend and well wisher.

E. K. WILLIAMS

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Original letter in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.

D. T. Corbin, President Reuben Tomlinson, Treasurer
B. C. Herd, Secretary

Office
No. 5, Hayne Street
R. R. Osgood,
Superintendent

THE MARINE AND RIVER
PHOSPHATE MINING AND MANUFACTURING COMPANY
OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston, S.C., April 14 -- 1874.

Wm. Still

Dear friend

I have just rea'd your address, delivered in Concert Hall, and received this morning, and I desire to express my sympathy, with its spirit and purpose. I had not seen any of the attacks on you, for the reason that I do not see Phil[da] papers, but I can imagine the kind of men making the attacks, and the nature of the attacks themselves; seeing that I have gone through the same dispensation here. The creatures who assail us old time friends of freedom and good government as Democrats, have no more idea of true Republicanism than a pig has of music. Republicanism and politics to them are means simply of getting a living without doing any work and of course they stand by the "Party" long after it ceases to represent, or inforce a single principle of honesty or decency; solely because it feeds them, shares its plunder with them; thrusts them into notoriety, and thus tickles their vanity. Your words are timely, and I am glad that a man, who, has made his position as you have done, is willing to speak manly words of truth and soberness, when they are so sorely needed. The political and social outlook in

this state is sorry indeed, for the immediate future, but my faith in the ultimate success of decency and good government is unabated.

Very truly your friend,

REUBEN TOMLINSON.

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Original letter in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.

S. C. Armstrong Principal J. F. B. Marshall, Treasurer

THE HAMPTON NORMAL AND AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE

Hampton, Va.,

April 30, 1874.

Dear Sir,

I have delayed replying to you letter addressed to Gen. Armstrong respecting the employment of some of our Students as canvassers for your interesting book, The U. G. R. Road, in hopes that Gen. A. would be here to select the names to recommend to you. He will be here on the 10th and by that time we can give you a list of reliable agents, who will be recommended to you. I have examined the work with much interest. It is a valuable acquisition to our Library. I have also read with much interest the pamphlet containing your speech on Voting and Laboring, and wish the sentiments expressed could be widely disseminated. We should have better men in office and true independence --

Yours very truly

J. F. B. MARSHALL.

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Original letter in possession of Miss Frances E. Still.

Washington, May 11th '74

Wm. Still, Esq

Dear Sir,

I have written you three letters every one of which remains here through some fiat of other, of inexorable fate. I do not know that I have ever had just that experience before. I received the pamphlet for which I thank you very much; but do not admire the facility with which old time abolitionists excuse themselves for voting the Democratic ticket. Only put Democrats in the local positions and you have no trouble to surrender the country generally into their hands. I am troubled more at this tendency of colored men to centre around the despotism than any other thing. Why they fight for and offer up their lives for Democrats in Louisiana and Arkansas. The saddest feature in this free life is to see colored men looking at Democrats conceived in corruption for integrity and fair-dealing to the colored race and making haste to join hand with them and give their "lifes" for them. White men would not. Robert Purvis claims I think to be other than colored though I knew his old mother a tight headed Negro lady and a dear good women. I am not surprised at him. They would marry their great-grandmother if white (_____) talk so much of gifts to the cause -- in a way which helps whites only. I can see how the rabble and designing men would act against you for voting for democrats and I think I see "to" how through a mistaken notion

of obligations and regrets you and Purvis wounded the colored cause at heart by such voting. There now I've done it: paid you for sending that old negro "Dingy" or Dingie to insult me in my own house. He "neve" should have done it had I been a man. ...

THE UNIVERSAL PEACE UNION

"Remove the Causes and Abolish the Customs of War."

President
Alfred H. Love, 219 Chestnut St. Philad'a Pa.

President's Office: 219 Chestnut St.

Philadelphia, Pa. 12/19/1885.

William Still

Philad.

My dear friend:

The Memorial Peace Meeting of Lucretia Mott has been regularly held in one church after another every year since her death. Never in the good Liberty Hall. Now it will come this year on Janry 3 (Sunday) so we will have to take Monday the 4th. May we meet this year in your Hall. It seems to us it is but fair to have one Memorial Meeting there and to hear you, Mrs. Harper too and it may be we can do each other good.

I would say meet at 8 O'cl'k -- You suggest any speaker you please and if any expense we will try to raise it -- or suppose we agree to take up a collection and divide the result. Our people will contribute and we can get a good large meeting.

Your assured fnd A. H. LOVE.

Wilberforce University

Near Xenia, Greene County, Ohio.

June 22nd 1875.

Wm. Still, Esq.

My Dear Sir,

Your card of enquiry has just come to hand, and this is to inform you that your check, for eighty-four dollars and ninety one cents, sent by the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, to aid our struggling Institution was received, the 20th Ult.

The said amount of $84.91 was immediately paid over to the Secretary of W. U. and reported to the Board of Trustees at their last meeting on the 10th inst. Grateful for your agency in this business and thankful for the generosity of the Society you represent, I am yours fraternally,

D. A. PAYNE.

P.S. This tardy response to the letter enclosing the check was occasioned by an overwhelming amount of College and other business.

P.

B. T. Washington
Principal

Warren Logan
Treasurer

TUSKEEGE NORMAL SCHOOL
For Training Colored Teachers.

25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

Nov. 18, 1888.

Dear Mr. Still:-

I telegraphed you a few days ago that I would accept your kind invitation to speak at the Quarter Century Meeting Jan. 2-89. A letter has been delayed owing to great press of business.

I agree with you that the occasion is one that should not pass unnoticed and it furnished food for thought.

You deserve the gratitude of the race for providing for such a celebration.

If I do not notify you to the contrary my subject will be

"Some Signs of Progress".

Thanking you for the honor I am with great respect

Yours truly,

B. T. WASHINGTON.

Cedar Hill
Anacostia D.C.
November 30, 1883.

Mr. William Still

My dear Sir

I have duly received your invitation requesting me to be present on the occasion of the Quarter Century Celebration of Freedom, to be held in Philadelphia January 2, 1889.

I hope to find it convenient to be present upon that occasion, but if I attend, I shall do so, as I have usually attended such meetings, leaving myself free to speak upon such aspects of the great question of our freedom and enfranchise-ment, as shall seem pertinent at the time. Thanks for your kind invitation, and best wishes for the success of the proposed meeting.

Respectfully yours,

FRD'K DOUGLASS.

S. C. Armstrong, Principal F. N. Gilman, Treasurer

HAMPTON NORMAL AND AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE

Hampton Va. Dec. 9. 1889[1]

Dear Mr. Still,

I am glad to accept your kind invitation of the 7 and providence permitting, will make a brief address before your Society on the 2 day of January 1889.

You ought to celebrate so great an occasion.

Yours sincerely,

S. C. ARMSTRONG.

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1. This date should evidently be 1888.

B. T. Washington
Principal

Warren Logan
Treasurer.

TUSKEGEE NORMAL SCHOOL
FOR TRAINING COLORED TEACHERS,
Tuskegee, Ala., December 14, 1888.

Mr. William Still,
Vice Pres.
244 So. 12th St.,
Philadelphia, Penn.

Dear Sir,

On the 7 Nov. I received your letter inviting me to speak at the quarter century celebration to be held January 2. In that letter you said that the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the abolition of Slavery "contemplated" holding a quarter century celebration.

I replied accepting the invitation. Since then I have heard nothing from you as to whether the celebration would actually be held.

Please let me know at once if the matter is definitely arranged,

Yours truly,

B. T. WASHINGTON,

Prin.

S. C. Armstrong, Principal F. N. Gilman, Treasurer

HAMPTON NORMAL AND AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE,

Hampton Va. Dec. 21, 1888.

Dear Mr. Still:

Will you kindly tell me 1st the precious time and place of the meeting for Jan. 2 -- when I with others am to speak.

2nd. Will the speech need to be written out with a view of being printed (I hope not)

3. As there are to be many speakers how long is it advisable for me to prepare to speak. I would suggest not over 15 minutes.

4. Do you propose to time speakers, and stop them when their time is up or let them run on as long as they choose?

I intend to be on hand and would be glad to be informed on these points.

Yours sincerely,

S. C. ARMSTRONG.

Anacostia D.C. Jan. 4, 1889

Wm. Still Esq.

My dear Sir:

I am obliged by your favor just to hand and in reply beg to state, that eleven dollars will cover my expenses in attending the recent celebration of the 25th Anniversary in Phila. under the auspices of the Penn. Anti-Slavery Society. It was a most useful demonstration. I am only sorry that I was not in better condition on the occasion. My kind regards to Mrs. Still and best wishes for the safety of Mrs. Anderson.

Truly yours,

FRED'K DOUGLASS.

Cedar Hill,
Anacostia, D.C.

Jan. 9th 1889.

William Still Esqr.

Dear friend, I have just now received your remittance in payment of my travelling expenses to and from Phila. to attend the late meeting of the Society for the Promotion of the Abolition of Slavery. I see that what was said on that occasion has attracted a large degree of attention in the South. I wish it were possible to have such meetings in our large cities oftener. ---

Very truly yours

FRED. DOUGLASS.

B. T. Washington
Principal

Warren Logan
Treasurer

TUSKEGEE NORMAL SCHOOL
FOR TRAINING COLORED TEACHERS.

Tuskegee Ala. December 30, 1888

Mr. Wm. Still,
244 So. 12th St.
Philadelphia,
Pa.

My Dear Sir:-

I cannot describe to you how painful and disappointing it is for me to send you this letter just when my plans are completed to be with you January 2, at the Quarter-Century Celebration. My wife's health is in such a condition that I cannot leave her even for the few days required for the trip.

Now, my dear friend, I am sure I express the sentiment of every black man and woman in the black belt of the South when I say that not for a single day or hour has the brave, generous and unselfish work for the race of those connected with the Penn. Abolition Society been forgotten.

What message do we send you? Let Dr. A. G. Hazgood, himself a Southerner and ex slave-holder answer, For he is devoting his life to watching our progress. Says Hazgood, "The progress of the Negro during the last 25 years is the marvel of history". We are not discouraged for every day brings new hope and faith. We are daily gaining faith, not only in ourselves but the faith and respect of those who enslaved us.

Quiet and patient work is telling in every part of our lines.

Yours truly,

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

U. S. Consulate at
Puerto Plata Sto. Domingo.

September 25, 1875.

Wm. Still, Esq.,

Dr. Sir,

William H. Sharp of this place has requested me to write you and inquire whether you can inform me for him, of the whereabouts of Miss Louisa Williams, sister of Mrs. Margaret Sharp, of Nassau N.P. William H. Sharp is a son of Mrs. Margaret Sharp, and Miss Williams is supposed to be living in Philadelphia.

I am, Sir, your obd's Sev't.

CHAS. R. DOUGLASS

Consul.

Address

Consul of U.S. at Pto. Plata Sto. Domingo

Wooster, Ohio, Feb. 6th, 1889.

Mr. William Still,
No. 244 S. Twelfth Street,
(Near Locust), Philadelphia.

Dear Sir and Brother:

I learn from Dr. Richard Allen that you can probably obtain for me all that was printed of the Emancipation Celebration. May I ask you kindly to do so. I will gladly pay any expenses if you will let me know what they are. I am in full sympathy with all that promises to be of advantage to those whom our country has so long oppressed, and to whom it still seems inclined to do justice so reluctantly.

I had a pleasant letter from Dr. Allen, who is just now preaching every evening to the Mary Allen Seminary, with most encouraging indications of revival.

Yours sincerely,

SYLVESTER F. SCOVEL

(President of the University of Wooster)

TRINITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dallas, Texas

Secretary's Office

Jan 20, 1889.

Mr. Wm. Still,

244 S. 12th St. Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:-

We have received the pamphlets sent us and are glad of the opportunity to place them in our collection. The future of the colored people now rests with themselves -- I look to see them make great changes for the better in their condition and position in the South during the next 20 years.

Very Respectfully Yours,

BENJ. W. AUSTIN

Sec't'y.

THE FRANKLIN REFORMATORY HOME

Philadelphia March 18th 1889.

Dear Mr. Still,

We are preparing for publication a life of our late President and your friend, Mr. Samuel P. Godwin. As you know, he was the earnest and unflinching friend of your race and the strong advocate of equal rights. We should be pleased to have from you for publication in the "Life" a letter. You might make the letter as one to me, stating that you have heard that such a "Life" is being prepared and would like to bear your testimony to Mr. Godwin's labours and worth, as far as you have had opportunities of knowing him.

As we hope to get the matter into the printer's hands this week, we shall be really thankful for such a letter at your earliest convenience.

I am

Yours respectfully,

C. J. GIBBONS,
Superintendent.

Philadelphia, 6th mo. 29, 1899.

Wm. McKinley

President of the United States.

Esteemed Friend:

We address thee in the name of "The Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage and for Improving the Condition of the African Race."

(Then followed a resume of the origin of the Society.) The letter continued:-

We ask a hearing in behalf of the hundreds of Negroes who have lately suffered violence, outrage and "lynching" in North and South Caroline, Texas, Arkansas, and other States during thy administration, and to earnestly invoke thy direct and energetic efforts for the suppression of these outrages against our fellow citizens who deserve protection under the law, not only because they are the victims of persecution on account of their color, but because they are fellow men.

... Not only will this tend to save the good name of our nation and help to justify its claim to civilization, but it will prevent sufferings that threaten the future. We therefore earnestly invoke thy interposition.

On behalf of the said Society,

W. STILL, President
ALFRED H. LOVE
SAMUEL S. ASH, Vice-Presidents
JOSEPH M. TRUMAN, Jr.
LUKENS WEBSTER, Secretaries
WM. S. INGRAM, Treasurer.

This letter was sent to the President on suggestion of the Committee on Southern Race Troubles.[1]

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1. Minutes, 1847-1916.

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*4. Manuscript History of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Book I.

*5. Manuscript History of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Book II.

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**7. Still, William -- Personal Record of History of Fugitive Slaves, expense account etc.

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**9. Letters (about one hundred) from Collection of William Still.

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***11. Minutes of Pennsylvania Abolition Society 1847-1916.

°12. Memorials for Abolition of Slavery, Jury Trial etc.

**13. Letter Press containing nearly nine hundred copies of Letters sent out by Still.

**14. Ledgers of Still's Coal Business.

**15. Picture of Still's Coal Business.

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*May be found at Pennsylvania Historical Society.
**In possession of Miss Frances E. Still - Daughter of William Still.
***In possession of Pennsylvania Abolition Society (Young Friends Association, 152 N. 15th St.) Other material may be found at Swarthmore College.
°In Anti-Slavery Repository in Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons.

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°°°21. Memorial Service to John McGill - (Late Treasurer to Berean Building and Loan Association) -- Philadelphia -- 1910.

***22. The Oldest Abolition Society, Philadelphia, 1911.

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°°In possession of Mr. Ellwood Heacock - former Secretary of Pennsylvania Abolition Society.
**In possession of Miss Frances E. Still.
°°°In possession of Mrs. Matthew Anderson -- widow of late Founder of Berean School and one of founders of Berean Church.
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°*In possession of Miss Lucretia Miller.

°°°In possession of Mrs. Matthew Anderson.

1. There is much available material on the Negro, the property of the Negro Historical Society (now out of existence) in the hands of Mr. Theodore Richardson, 1931 Bainbridge St.

2. This material was at one time housed at Church of the Crucifixion (8th and Bainbridge Streets). I was unable to locate any here, as much of it was lost or destroyed and remainder was removed to Mr. Richardson's care.

3. Letters written by Mr. Still to an ex-fugitive slave formerly living in Norristown, Pa., whom he had helped, have been temporarily misplaced or destroyed. They were the property of Wm. Griffin, grandson of fugitive.

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