

The
PALIMPSEST



The Old John Brown House—near Springdale

John Brown Among the Quakers

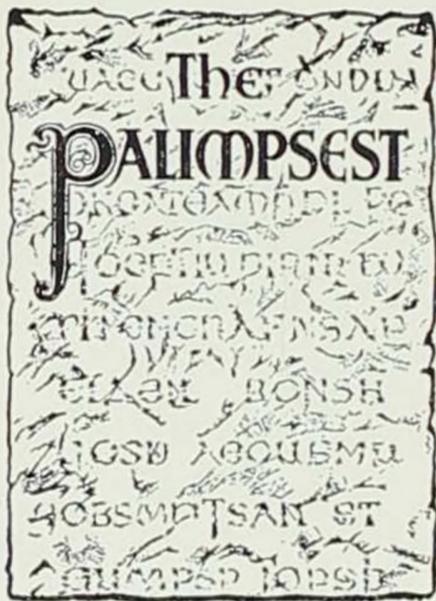
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The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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Illustrations

Front cover courtesy of Beth Mather Higbee.
 Inside back cover—The Execution of Edwin Coppoc; outside back cover, execution of John Brown, both from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

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Volcano in Eruption

The decade of the 1850's was marked by bitter political strife in the United States. The Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott Decision, the Underground Railroad, and the Fugitive Slave Law, these were subjects of bitter editorial debate in Iowa as well as in the nation. The tempo of this debate reached a climax with John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry and the subsequent execution of this fiery abolitionist and his followers in December, 1859. For Iowans the story continued into 1860 as the Governor of Virginia endeavored to extradite a young Iowa Quaker — Barclay Coppoc — who had participated in the raid on Harper's Ferry.

Between 1855 and 1859 John Brown was a veritable volcano in eruption. Born in Torrington, Connecticut, on May 9, 1800, Brown was fifty-five years old when he began his career of violence that ended on the gallows. His father, Owen Brown, of sturdy New England stock, had plied many trades, moved frequently, and was de-

scribed as a man of "much piety, an abolitionist, and an agent of the underground railroad." On his mother's side Brown's ancestry was not so good — Ruth (Mills) Brown was insane for a number of years and died insane, as did her mother before her. Other members of the Mills family were similarly afflicted.

John Brown was twice married. His first wife, Dianthe Lusk, appears to have had "mental aberrations" before her death in 1831. She bore him seven children, two of whom were of unsound mind. His second wife, Mary Anne Day, was sixteen and "of robust physique" at the time of her marriage in 1832. She bore him thirteen children in twenty-one years.

John Brown had little education, schools always meaning "confinement and restraint." He preferred the free life of the wilderness and was never happier than when permitted as a youth to drive beef cattle to military posts during the War of 1812. Later he worked at the tanners trade with his father. In 1825 John Brown moved to Richmond, Pennsylvania, where he set up his own tannery. This was the first of ten migrations before his adventures in Kansas. Between 1825 and 1855 he established and sold tanneries, speculated in land, and engaged in wool growing. From first to last his business career was replete with failures.

An abolitionist like his father, Brown had used

his barn at Richmond as a station on the underground railroad. He was well over fifty, however, before the idea of freeing all slaves by force obsessed his mind. The torch was ignited, perhaps, when five of his sons went to Kansas in the spring of 1855 to take up land and help win the territory for freedom. In May, 1855, John Brown, Jr., wrote his father, who was living in Akron, Ohio, pleading for arms to aid the free soilers. By August, John Brown was on his way to Kansas with a wagon filled with arms and ammunition.

Upon his arrival in Kansas, John Brown quickly became leader and captain of the local militia in Osawatomie. When the pro-slavery forces sacked Lawrence, Brown and his men determined to retaliate. A list of pro-slavery leaders was made out and on May 24, Brown and a party of six, four of whom were his sons, fell upon their five hapless victims without warning and hacked them to pieces with their sabers. From that time on "Old Brown of Osawatomie" became a terror to all pro-slavery settlers. Eventually, Brown and his men were beaten and Osawatomie sacked and burned. In this guerrilla war, Frederick, one of Brown's mentally unbalanced sons, was killed.

It was on his return from Kansas in the fall of 1856 that John Brown first stopped at the Quaker settlement in Springdale, Iowa. He returned again to this quiet community in November of 1857 and spent the winter with his Quaker

friends. Meanwhile his experiences in Kansas had greyed his hair and bent his figure and so warped his mind that he could think of nothing but freeing the slaves. One keen observer, John Murray Forbes, detected "a little touch of insanity about his glittering gray-blue eyes." Ralph Waldo Emerson, on the other hand, spoke of him as "a pure idealist of artless goodness." The Sage of Concord probably was ignorant of Brown's Kansas murders.

By 1857 both sides in Kansas had agreed to settle their differences with ballots rather than bullets. Brown accordingly dragged his guns, pikes, and cannon back East, staying with his Quaker friends at Springdale all winter for lack of funds. By this time he had determined to call a convention of his followers, both white and black, in Chatham, Canada, where he outlined his plan to free all slaves. The convention followed Brown's suggestion to: (1) establish a base in the mountains of Virginia and Maryland; (2) adopt a provisional constitution which should serve the new free state composed of abolitionists and Negroes; and (3) named Brown himself commander-in-chief. Many of these ideas, including the Harper's Ferry raid, were developed while crossing Iowa and while wintering among the Quakers.

John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry was undertaken with only twenty-two men, six of whom were Iowans — Edwin Coppoc, Barclay Coppoc,

Stewart Taylor, Jeremiah G. Anderson, George B. Gill, and Charles W. Moffatt. Hailed by his followers as a martyr and by his enemies as a vicious murderer, Brown preferred to call himself "an instrument in the hands of Providence." He was jailed in Charlestown, Virginia, and indicted for "treason to the Commonwealth," and for "conspiring with slaves to commit treason and murder." His trial was conducted with "exemplary fairness" but the decision was inevitable — death by hanging, which took place on December 2, 1859. Edwin Coppoc and John E. Cook were executed on December 16.

While the nation still buzzed with excitement over Harper's Ferry, Abraham Lincoln referred to it in his Cooper Union speech of February 27:

That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon, and John Brown's attempt at Harpers Ferry were in their philosophy precisely the same.

Richard Realf, who wintered with John Brown among the Quakers in Springdale in 1857-1858, left a soul-searching evaluation of John Brown and the Abolitionist crusade that might well give Americans pause for thought a century later. One of Brown's most ardent followers, Realf had been



Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper

Richard Realf

delayed in England by business and had returned after Brown was executed. *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* of February 4, 1860, carried the following from Washington:

"FRANK LESLIE, ESQ. — Dear Sir — From personal observation I became convinced that gradual emancipation is the only form of Abolition that will not disastrously affect the slave. I sincerely believe that, in spite of scourges and chains, and spite of statutes and laws, the bodies and souls of the colored population are treated with more kindness, charity and love, as from man to man, in the Slave South than

in the Free North. Wherefore, until the North has given better evidence of the sincerity of her professions of love for the slave than she has ever yet manifested, I have no desire to assist in placing them there. When an Abolitionist, it was because I loved my enslaved brethren; now that I oppose it, it is by reason of the same feeling. The South is better, nobler, than her laws — the North in nowise reaches to the measure of her professions. I cannot, therefore, bid its aggressive agitation God speed. When her deeds of love keep pace with her sounding speech, I shall be with her. Not until then.

My estimate of the character of John Brown is this: He was single-hearted, single-minded, single-idead. 'Much study had made him mad.' The enterprise in which he died was the passion that swayed all his life; it possessed him like a frenzy, he did not possess it as an idea; it was not his servant, it was his master. I abhor that deed, but I bow myself reverently before his otherwise high nature. Stale calumnies have been hoarsely echoed over his grave by men who were not worthy to unloose the latchet of his shoes. He was not a martyr, because he was possessed by a passion rather than by a principle; he was no moral malefactor, for he believed that passion to be a principle. It was an intellectual error which precipitated him upon a cruel and wicked deed — he stood upon his own frenzy when he thought he stood on the high truth of Heaven. There is a wrath of conscience, and there is a wrath of idiosyncrasy, with which it is sometimes confounded. This was the mistake of John Brown. He is at rest now. I repudiate his foray. Yet, now that the law has asserted its supremacy, I declare that I loved him in his life, and yield to no one in honor of his memory now.

My residence is in Texas. After a brief lecture tour in the North, I return thither. You will please use this scrawl, if you use it at all, not in the precise form in which it is written. My opinions in regard to Slavery and Brown may be given verbatim et literatim.

With much respect, obediently yours,

Richard Realf.

Leslie's quoted the above without comment.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

The Lay of the Land

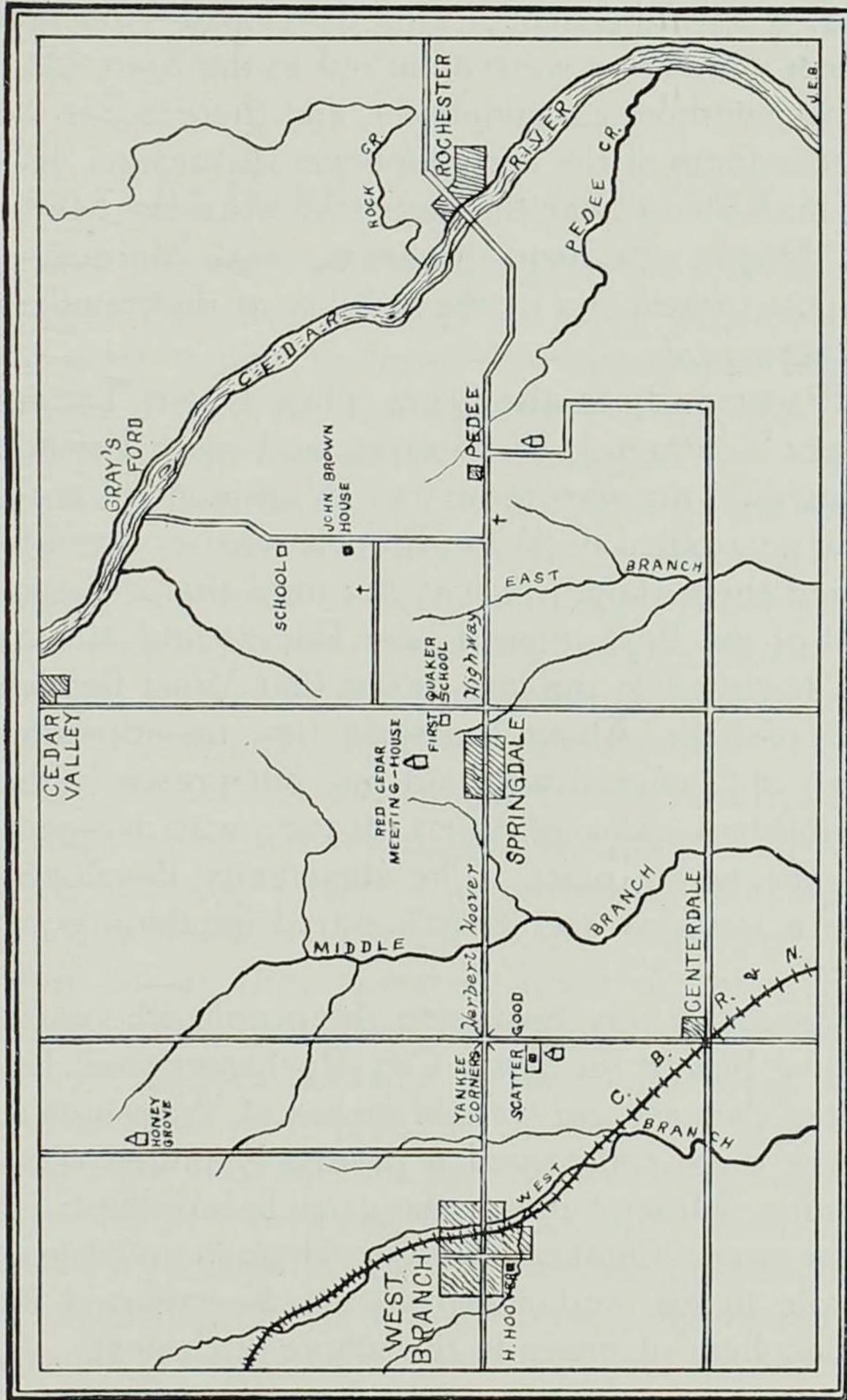
When the capital of the Territory of Iowa was located at Iowa City in 1839 a land rush took place in that direction. From Muscatine and Davenport the settlers moved westward to the Cedar River and beyond into the very heart of the rich prairie. It was natural that they should follow the most direct routes. Taverns were built at convenient places and settlements developed along the way. The old stage road from Davenport to Iowa City crossed the Cedar River near the mouth of Rock Creek about five miles north of the Cedar County line and thence ran directly west to the capital. Along this road (Highway 1), named for Herbert Hoover, the pioneers established their homesteads.

As early as 1836 Stephen Toney and George McCoy settled near the mouth of Rock Creek on the Cedar River, established a ferry, and laid out a town which they named Rochester. During the next three or four years others came to live in that vicinity, a mill was built, a tavern erected to accommodate travellers on the stage route to the new Territorial capital, a post-office called Rock Creek was located there, and Rochester became the principal village in Cedar County, serving as

the county seat until 1840 when Tipton was officially designated. Being strategically located, Rochester prospered for a time, but even before the Civil War the decline began. By 1870 the population was only one hundred and seventy-four, and in 1903 the post-office was discontinued. Today a vague legend persists that Rochester was the childhood home of Sarah Bernhardt.

During the two decades preceding the Civil War other settlements developed along the old road west of the Cedar River — Pedee, Springdale, and West Branch. Pedee, locally known as Stringtown because the cabins of the settlers bordered the road for nearly a mile, was the first to develop and for many years lent its name to the countryside for miles around. By 1845 the community had risen to the importance of having a post-office, located about two and one-half miles west of Rochester, and in December, 1849, a Presbyterian church was organized.

While Pedee seems to have been chiefly Presbyterian, most of the settlers who arrived during the fifties were of the Quaker faith. Gradually the village of Springdale, almost wholly composed of Quaker families, took form and a post-office of that name was established in 1851, though it was originally located two miles farther west near Yankee Corners. This peaceful village has always been regarded as the center of the Quaker community. There the first meeting was organ-



Past and Present Map of the Springdale Community on a Scale of One-Half Inch to a Mile

ized, a splendid school was developed (the first whose graduates were admitted to the State University without examination), and thereabouts the descendants of the early pioneers still reside. Rural mail-boxes bear the names of Maxson, Mather, Negus, Branson, Pearson, and Varney — eloquent testimony of the stability of the founders of Springdale.

It was early in the fifties when David Tatum, James Townsend, Eli Hoover, and other Friends located on the west branch of Wapsinonoc Creek. The post-office of West Branch was soon established there though it was not until the construction of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railroad in the late sixties that West Branch was platted. About the same time an adjoining town of Cameron was laid out, but presently the established name of West Branch was accepted for the whole place. The community developed into a town of over four hundred inhabitants by 1880.

From the very beginning the people who came to live beside the Iowa City-Rochester road between the east and west branches of Wapsinonoc Creek have constituted a peculiarly united community. Most of those who came before the Civil War were Quakers whose religious tolerance, simple living, and moral standards imparted an atmosphere of peace to the whole settlement.

JOHN ELY BRIGGS

The Coming of the Quakers

Few movements better illustrate the restless energy of American life than the rapid settlement of the vast region west of the Mississippi River. Under the French and Spanish regimes this land had lain almost untouched by white men — a land of quiet, disturbed only now and then by the passing war cry of the red men of the plains, or the mighty stampede of the bison herds. Then came the Anglo-Saxons — restless, eager, thrifty — looking here and there for homes. As if by magic all was changed within a single century.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the settlement of Iowa was well advanced. By this time also the Quakers were rapidly making a place for themselves in the young Commonwealth. Until about 1850 the busy town of Salem had served as the chief point of entry for the stream of Quakers which poured into the southeastern part of the State and settled in the fertile valleys between the Des Moines and Skunk rivers. While settlements were thus rising one after another in quick succession, a new gateway was opened, and at Bloomington (now Muscatine) the ferrymen became familiar with the Quaker salutations, "thee" and "thou."

The first Friend known to have entered at this new gateway was Brinton Darlington, who bought a farm near Muscatine in 1843. Then came Laurie Tatum in 1844, who pressed on about thirty miles to the northwest and settled beyond the Cedar River in the southwest part of Cedar County. Close upon his coming followed J. H. Painter and family in 1845. Thus, as at Salem, hardly had the waving prairie grass been touched by the first Quaker until it was pressed by the foot of the second. The track then made was soon to become a beaten path across the prairie, then a well defined road, and finally a veritable highway for immigrants.

During the next five years seven or eight Quaker families settled in the community, then called Oakley. Homesteads were established on both sides of the road, now known as the Herbert Hoover Highway — Iowa Highway 1, from the west branch of the Wapsinonoc Creek to the east branch, between the present site of West Branch and the old Pedee settlement near the Cedar River. Meetings on First-days, that is, Sundays, were held at the homes of various Friends, usually in silence because there was no minister in the settlement. In January, 1850, two Quaker ministers from England, Robert Lindsey and Benjamin Seebohm, visited Oakley. They had arrived at Burlington on the nineteenth and after spending a few days at Salem proceeded across country with

Joseph and Amos Hoag to the new settlement of Friends in Cedar County eighty miles to the north.

Having picked their toilsome way over the hills and dales and intervening plains of Henry and Washington counties and the southern part of Johnson County, the group of Quaker travellers crossed the Iowa River on the morning of January 25th and entered Iowa City, the capital of Iowa. Passing almost directly to the eastward, in the afternoon as they were "within 5 miles of the end" of their journey they suffered the misfortune of a broken axletree of the carriage and "had to leave it in the midst of the prairie." Thus discomfited, the two English Quakers were given "Joseph D. Hoag's 1 horse buggy," while he and Amos mounted their friends' horses and so came on to the home of Laurie Tatum. There they were "cordially received & kindly welcomed into their humble dwelling by him & his wife, an agreeable & interesting young woman, who has recently ventured out into this new country to share in the toils of her husband in providing a home on these western prairies."

Two very pleasant and profitable days were spent in the Oakley settlement visiting with the Friends. Of Sunday the 27th Lindsey records:

A fine bright winter's morning. The thermometer at 10° above zero. At 10 o'clock attended the usual first day morning meeting at Oakley held at the house of Laurie Tatum. Nearly all their members, & some of their neigh-

bors were present, & it was a satisfactory meeting. At 6 in the evening we had an appointed meeting in a school-house 3 miles from here, which was very crowded & the forepart of it in consequence thereof a good deal unsettled; but thro' patient waiting a precious calm was mercifully vouchsafed, & dear Benjamin was strengthened to labor among them in right authority, & the meeting concluded to good satisfaction.

A year later in the month of August, William Evans, a Philadelphia Friend, on a religious visit to the meetings in Iowa, came into the Oakley settlement which he described as follows:

The residences of the settlers in this place, scattered over prairie land, are chiefly log buildings; the settlement being several miles in extent. In the summer season, while the grass is green, the country, with the cabins and little surrounding improvements dotted over it, has a picturesque appearance; yet to a stranger, it gives a sensation of loneliness.

The first collective religious meetings to be held among this new group of Friends began in the "fore part of 1849," and were held as the occasion suited at the homes of Laurie Tatum or J. H. Painter. By the year 1852, however, the community had increased in numbers to such an extent that it became necessary to erect a building for "meeting" purposes; and to that end a "gravel" house with a flat roof was built about one-half mile north of the present village of Springdale. On April 9, 1853, in this the second house erected in Cedar County for religious purposes, was es-

tablished the Red Cedar Monthly Meeting. Less than a year later the Quakers who lived west of Yankee Corners organized a meeting and in 1856 the Honey Grove Meeting, four miles north of West Branch, was established.

The composite nature of this new center of Quakerism in Iowa and the rapidity with which it grew are well shown by the records of the Monthly Meeting for the first eight months of its existence. At the time of its organization in April, 1853, the committees appointed show that there were no less than thirty-four men members of the meeting. By the close of the year there had been received by the Red Cedar Monthly Meeting sixty-six certificates of membership, representing three hundred and twenty-two men, women, and children. These certificates show that the new arrivals came from Maine, Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Canada. For the next four or five years the movement continued strong. In the year 1854 alone eighty-four certificates of membership were received, likewise from very divergent sources. The Red Cedar Meeting was over-crowded, and then the immigrants moved on to the northwest, settling the region to such an extent that for many years the fertile divide between the Iowa and Cedar rivers to the northwest of Springdale for some miles was known as "Quaker Ridge."

LOUIS T. JONES

John Brown's Band

One day late in October, of the year 1856, there rode into the town of West Branch an elderly man, weary and travel-stained. He was mounted on a mule and led a horse. He made his way to the only tavern in the place, over the entrance to which hung the sign, "The Traveler's Rest." This tavern was kept by a genial, rosy-cheeked Quaker by the name of James Townsend. On dismounting the traveler asked his host: "Have you ever heard of John Brown of Kansas?" According to the story, Townsend, without replying, took from his vest pocket a piece of chalk and, removing Brown's hat, marked it with a large X; he then replaced the hat and solemnly decorated the back of Brown's coat with two large X marks; lastly he placed an X on the back of the mule. Brown in this way having been admitted to the tavern free list, Townsend said: "Friend, put the animals in that stable and walk into the house; thee is surely welcome."

Brown had just come from the stirring scenes of Kansas Territory: from the battle of Black Jack, fought in the preceding June, and from Osawatomie and the Lawrence foray, events that then were but a few weeks past; and the suggestion has

been made that in Brown's narrative of his Kansas adventures worthy James Townsend received a full equivalent for the buckwheat cakes and "sorghum" for which his hostelry was famous, and to which on this occasion John Brown doubtless did ample justice. Be that as it may, it is certain that, during Brown's short stay in West Branch, he heard of Springdale and of the strong anti-slavery sentiment of its shrewd, thrifty, Quaker population; for henceforth this village became one of his places of frequent resort.

Late in November, 1857, John Brown, accompanied by several men who had fought with him in Kansas, came to the Quaker settlement on their way east where Brown planned to establish a military school preparatory to making "a bloody spot at another place to be talked about" like "bleeding Kansas." It had been his purpose to stop at Springdale merely long enough to sell his teams and wagons, and then to proceed by rail to Ash-tabula County, Ohio. But the panic of 'fifty-seven had begun and money was scarce. He was nearly out of funds, and unable to raise any. Under these circumstances he decided to spend the winter at the village.

Brown was more than welcome, and so were his men. To the Quakers he and his band stood as the embodiment of the sentiment against human slavery which that sect so firmly held. To be sure, John Brown and his followers were not men of

peace; they, one and all of them, had fought hard and often in the Kansas war; but much was pardoned to them by the Quakers because of the holiness of their object; for, while the Quaker would not concede that bloodshed ever was right, it was with extreme leniency that he chid him who had shed blood to liberate the slave.

Brown's band, composed of John H. Kagi, Aaron D. Stephens, John E. Cook, Richard Realf, Charles P. Tidd, Luke F. Parsons, Charles W. Moffat, William H. Leeman, Owen Brown, and a negro, Richard Richardson, who had been picked up at Tabor, were given quarters in the house of William Maxson which was situated about three miles northeast of the village. Maxson himself was not a Quaker, and the direct responsibility of housing men-at-arms was thus avoided by this Quaker community. Brown, however, was received into the house of the good Quaker, John H. Painter, who became his ardent supporter.

The time spent in Springdale was a time of genuine pleasure to Brown's men. They enjoyed its quiet, as also the rural beauty of the village and the gentle society of the people. There were long winter evenings to be passed in hospitable homes; evenings marked by discussions of slavery or by stories of perils and escapes on the border.

Then, in turn, there was the pleasure — not unmixed with a certain wonder and awe — which was afforded to the villagers by the presence

among them of men of such striking parts and individuality as were these followers of John Brown. It was not every village that was favored with the society of a John Henri Kagi, for instance, a man of thought and of varied accomplishments — a stenographer, among other things, and, at one time, correspondent in Kansas for the *New York Post*; or of an Aaron D. Stephens, a man who had served in the United States Army, been sentenced by a court-martial to be shot for assaulting an officer who it was said was brutally chastising one of the men, but had escaped and was now enlisted with Brown under the name of G. Whipple; or of a Richard Realf, elloquent, poetic, impetuous, claiming to have been the especial *protégé* of Lady Noel Byron, and suspected of having been mixed up in foreign political troubles; or of a John Edwin Cook, also poetic, handsome in flowing hair, a masterly penman, lily fingered perhaps, but courageous and a crack shot.

It was not all play for Brown's men while in Springdale. Brown himself never for a moment lost sight of the great end which he had in view. Aaron D. Stephens was appointed drill-master, and a regular daily routine of military study and drill insisted upon. Five o'clock was the rising hour; immediately after breakfast study was begun and continued until nine or ten o'clock; books were then laid aside and the men drilled in the school of the soldier on the broad sward to the

east of the Maxson house. In the afternoon a sort of combined gymnastics and company maneuvers were practiced, the object of which apparently was to inure the men to the strain of running, jumping, vaulting, and firing in different and difficult attitudes. Among other exercises was a sword drill which was performed with long wooden sabres, one of which — the one used by Owen Brown — is still preserved in the Maxson family.

Tuesday and Friday evenings were set apart for the proceedings of a mock legislature of the "State of Springdale" which had been organized. The sessions were held either in the large sitting-room of the Maxsons, or in the larger room of the district school building, a mile and a half away. There were a speaker, a clerk of the House, and regular standing committees. Bills were introduced, referred, reported back, debated with intense earnestness and no little ability, and finally brought to vote. Some of the measures were "to render operative the inalienable right of women to the elective franchise," "to make null and void the Fugitive Slave law of this State," "to appropriate 50,000 acres of land, to be divided into small farms for the benefit of fugitives from slavery," and "to establish a college for classical, physiological, and political education of women." Other questions debated were: "*Resolved*, That a prohibitory liquor law is both wise and practical"; "That the law for the organization of the grand

jury be and hereby is repealed"; and "That John Brown is more justly entitled to the sympathy and honor of this nation than George Washington." Kagi was the keenest debater, and Realf and Cook orators of very considerable powers.

The other evenings of the week were passed by each one according to his fancy. There were the good substantial homesteads of the Painters, the Lewises, the Varneys, the Gills, that could be visited; or Richard Realf had consented to address the Lyceum at Pedee, and all Springdale was going to hear him — this in part for the pleasure there was in listening to so good a speaker, but more perhaps because of the anti-slavery views to which in all probability he would give utterance, to the dismay of the Pedeeites.

It is perhaps not surprising that, under conditions such as these, some of the hardy fellows of Brown's command should have been visited by thoughts of love. All were bachelors, and, moreover, all were young — between eighteen and thirty. Even Owen Brown, who seems to have been a bachelor from principle and who never married, went so far as to divulge the fact that there was one maiden near Springdale whom he would marry, if he ever married at all, but to whom, out of abundant caution, he had resolved never even to speak.

At the time John Brown's band was staying at Springdale, there were living with their mother in

a quaint frame house in the village, two young men of strong character, Edwin and Barclay Coppoc. Edwin was twenty-four years old and Barclay twenty. Barclay, being in danger from consumption, had found it necessary to travel, and for a time had served with a Company of Liberator's in Kansas. They both took much interest in Brown, his men, and his cause, and at length enlisted under his leadership.

On April 27, 1858, Brown returned from the East with some funds in hand and more promised, and gave orders for the expedition to move. He wrote to his wife: "We start from here to-day, and shall write you again when we stop, which will be in two or three days." Their destination proved to be Chatham, Canada West.

The leave-taking between them and the people of Springdale was one of tears. Ties which had been knitting through many weeks were sundered, and not only so, but the natural sorrow at parting was intensified by the consciousness of all that the future was full of hazard for Brown and his followers. Before quitting the house and home of Mr. Maxson where they had spent so long a time, each of Brown's band wrote his name in pencil on the wall of the parlor, where years afterward, the writing could still be seen. The old house, which was built of cement and gravel in 1839, stood for almost a century before falling in ruins.

IRVING B. RICHMAN

Springdale Recruits

John Brown and his little band of ten men straggled into Springdale one day late in December, 1857. They planned only to rest awhile in the quiet Quaker community, sell their teams and wagons, and then proceed by rail to Ashtabula County, Ohio. But the panic of 'fifty-seven had begun and money was scarce. They were out of funds and temporarily unable to raise any, so they decided to winter among these kind people who were friendly to the cause of liberating the slaves.

Springdale, in Cedar County, was one of the principal Quaker settlements in Iowa. An air of peace and contentment hovered over the neat houses that bordered the public highway for a distance of half a mile. The calm, industrious inhabitants seemed to be more interested in spiritual welfare than worldly needs — people who profited by long hours in silent meeting even though none of the company was moved to speak; people who dared to make their peculiar costume and mode of address the badges of their convictions. But the Quakers of Springdale were thrifty and shrewd withal. They welcomed John Brown and his men, yet they took care that the belligerent band was quartered at the farm of William Max-

son who was not a Quaker. Thus they avoided direct responsibility for sheltering man-at-arms.

If the old hero of Osawatomie and his followers commanded the respect of the leaders in the community they appealed no less to the romantic inclinations of the young people. To Barclay and Edwin Coppoc the activities of John Brown's men were particularly alluring. Barclay, the younger of the boys, had previously made the acquaintance of Brown in Kansas. When the little band settled down in Springdale for the winter, it was quite natural that this acquaintance should be renewed and that Edwin Coppoc should also form a strong attachment for his brother's friends and their noble cause. The boys deepened the channels of friendship until they gained the old leader's confidence and could avow their allegiance to his undertaking.

John Brown was fortunate. He could not have enlisted better men than these two. They were not as mature or as well educated as some of the others in his company, but they had native intelligence, sturdy character, and a staunch belief in his cause which steeled them to face death itself without misgivings.

Edwin, at the time Brown and his men were roiling his emotions, was a young man of twenty-two, fair of skin but brown eyed and dark haired. His fondness for athletics had given him a strong and agile body, while his studious nature had lent



Courtesy of Davenport Academy of Science

EDWIN COPROC



Courtesy of Davenport Academy of Science
BARCLAY COPROC

a quiet "oldness" to his bearings which was accentuated by his rather large head and intelligent countenance. He had been born in a Quaker community near Salem, Ohio, on June 30, 1835. When he was seven his father had died, and the family of six children was scattered. For a time he had lived with his maternal grandfather, and then was taken by John Butler, a worthy Quaker of the community. There he had lived for eight years, working on the farm for his board, and trudging off to school when the weather and the farming permitted. "He was a very industrious and careful boy," wrote Mr. Butler in November, 1859, "more careful and particular that everything was kept in its proper place on the farm and about the buildings and to have his work done well and prompt to have it done in a given time, than is common for boys of his age."

Barclay, born in the same place as Edwin, on January 4, 1839, was taller than his brother, but of a more slender, delicate build. He had large, heavily lidded eyes, and a determined mouth. From early childhood he had been threatened with tuberculosis, and had, in 1857, just returned from a trip to Kansas where he had gone in an effort to improve his health. There he had witnessed the strife between the free and the slave State factions, and become imbued with the idea of abolishing slavery by force. Of venturesome temperament, he formed a deep attachment for John

Brown and became eager to cast his lot with the old crusader against slavery.

The Coppoc boys had been reared in the Quaker faith. Their mother, Ann Lynch Coppoc, a Quaker by birth and a woman of strong and "exemplary" character, was one of the early settlers in Springdale. She had not had her children with her all of the time, but she had done her best to implant the love of God in their hearts. The boys were dutiful sons. Edwin had worked hard on his mother's prairie farm and she had grown to depend upon him, even after her second marriage. She often said she "felt sure of a good crop under Edwin's care." He had a reputation for being honest, straightforward, and industrious. Barclay was not as steady, perhaps, while his ill-health prevented regular and laborious employment.

Like most Quakers, the Coppoc boys had acquired a strong antipathy for slavery. The community in which they lived was opposed to it, and their mother herself had done much to deepen their convictions along this line. As an institution it was abhorrent to their religion — a faith based upon the fundamental right of every man to be his own keeper. They had also been taught that it was wrong to carry firearms, but the former belief was stronger than the latter. These impulsive young men were not inclined to quibble, as some of the older folks in Springdale might, about the means to the end.

Indeed, it appears that several tenets of the Quaker faith were held in light esteem by these boys. They had developed "wayward tendencies discomfiting to their mother and to the church." Edwin had been known to dance, and for this cause was "disowned from membership in the Society" on May 6, 1857. Barclay also had given the Friends grave concern and had refused to heed the "spirit of restoring love." After the Harper's Ferry episode, the Monthly Meeting reported that "Barclay Coppoc has neglected the attendance of our religious meetings & is in the practice of bearing arms." In January, 1860, he too was formally disowned. Of their courage, integrity, and devotion to the cause of abolition, however, there has never been the slightest doubt.

Brown and his men left Springdale in the latter part of April, 1858. During the following year and a half, the little band encountered lean times and depressing circumstances. The men were scattered in various parts of the country, working by the day, while their leader went east and attempted to raise funds for the execution of his plans. Edwin Coppoc spent the summer of 1858 in Kansas, where he bought some land, but he took no part in the slavery conflict there. In February, 1859, Brown and a few of his followers passed through Springdale with a group of eleven negroes whom they were smuggling into Canada. To many of the townspeople this was an occasion

for rejoicing. Here was splendid service in the cause of freedom. The Coppoc boys were particularly pleased to see the hero of their dreams. And before Brown departed with his human contraband, he promised to call upon them when his grand scheme was ready for consummation. In the meantime the boys should quietly make preparations to join him at a moment's notice.

After the final departure of Brown from Iowa, Edwin and Barclay Coppoc went to visit friends and relatives at their old home in Ohio. Later in the spring they returned to Springdale. Saying nothing to their mother, they sold most of their stock and hired a negro to take care of the crops. About the middle of July they received the expected message from Brown, and on the twenty-fifth Barclay said to his mother, "We are going to start to Ohio, to-day."

"Ohio!" she exclaimed, not fooled by his obvious intention to spare her feelings. "I believe you are going with old Brown. When you get the halters around your necks, will you think of me?"

"We can not die in a better cause," Barclay answered bravely.

And neither lived to find a greater one.

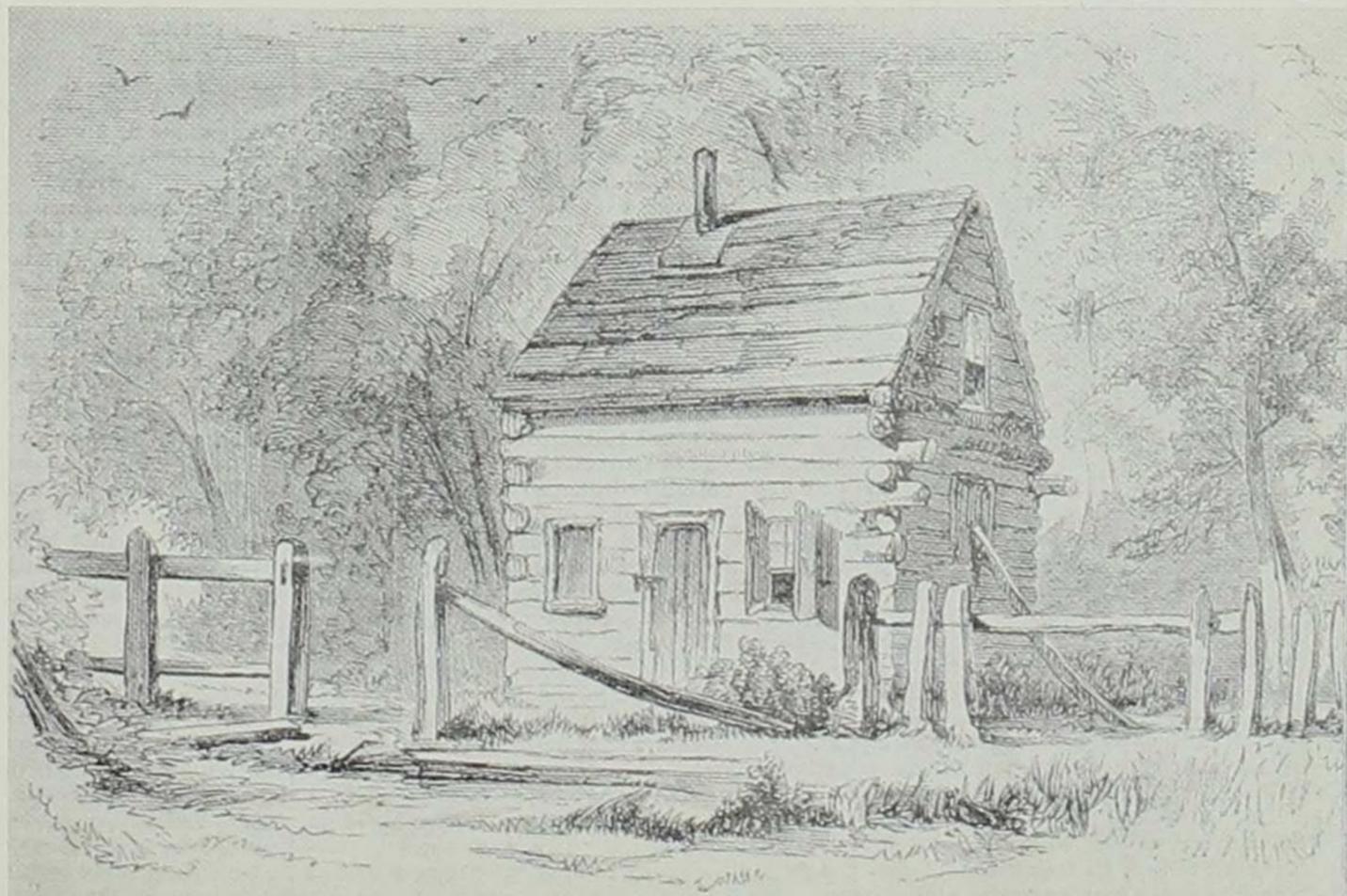
PAULINE GRAHAME

At Harper's Ferry

About five miles north of Harper's Ferry, on the Maryland side of the Potomac River, lay the Kennedy farm which John Brown and his sons Oliver and Watson, assuming the name of Smith, had rented in July, 1859. The "improvements" consisted of a large, two-story log cabin and another small log building capable of housing a number of men. A dense forest surrounded the place and the road which ran past was rarely travelled. To this secluded spot large stores of arms and ammunition were secretly brought from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and during the course of the summer Brown's "provisional army" quietly gathered by ones and twos.

The Kennedy Farm—Arsenal and Mountain Hideout

Harper's Weekly

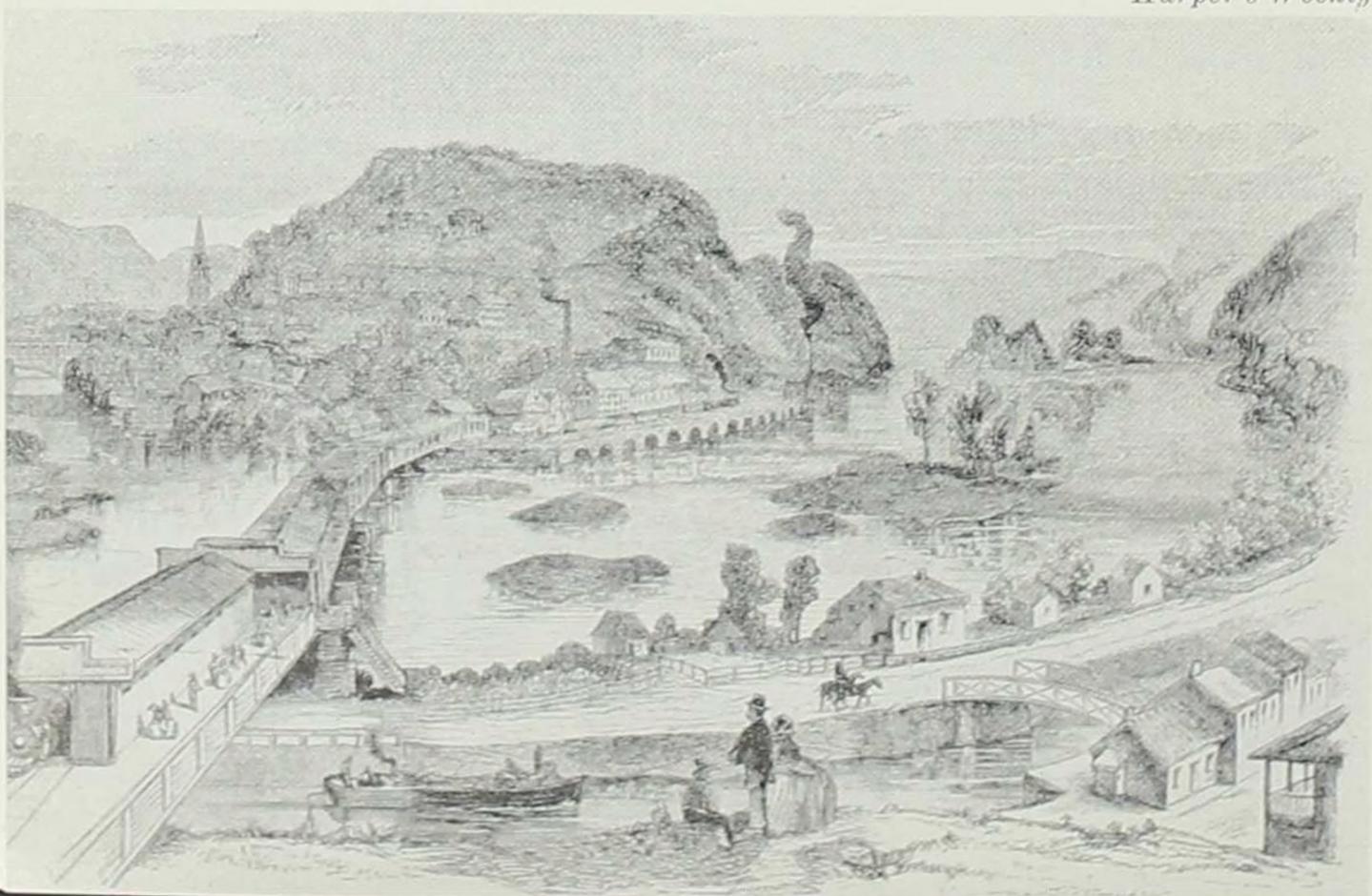


Toward this rendezvous the Coppoc boys made their way from Ohio, and were classed as "regular boarders" sometime during the first week in August. Life at the Kennedy farm was serene and pastoral, filled with discussions of religion and politics, games of checkers, and spirited "sings" of favorite hymns. John Brown often read the Bible to the company, sitting on a three-legged stool in the corner.

But beneath this outward appearance of contentment ran a feeling of impatience. The men were abolitionists gathered to strike the "shackles of bondage" from the black man. As August passed, and then September, they grew more and more intolerant of delay. Would the time for action never come? The early days of October dragged by with leaden feet while, under the authority of the "Provisional Constitution" adopted a year before, the men were formed into a little

Harper's Ferry—Looking across Potomac from Maryland

Harper's Weekly

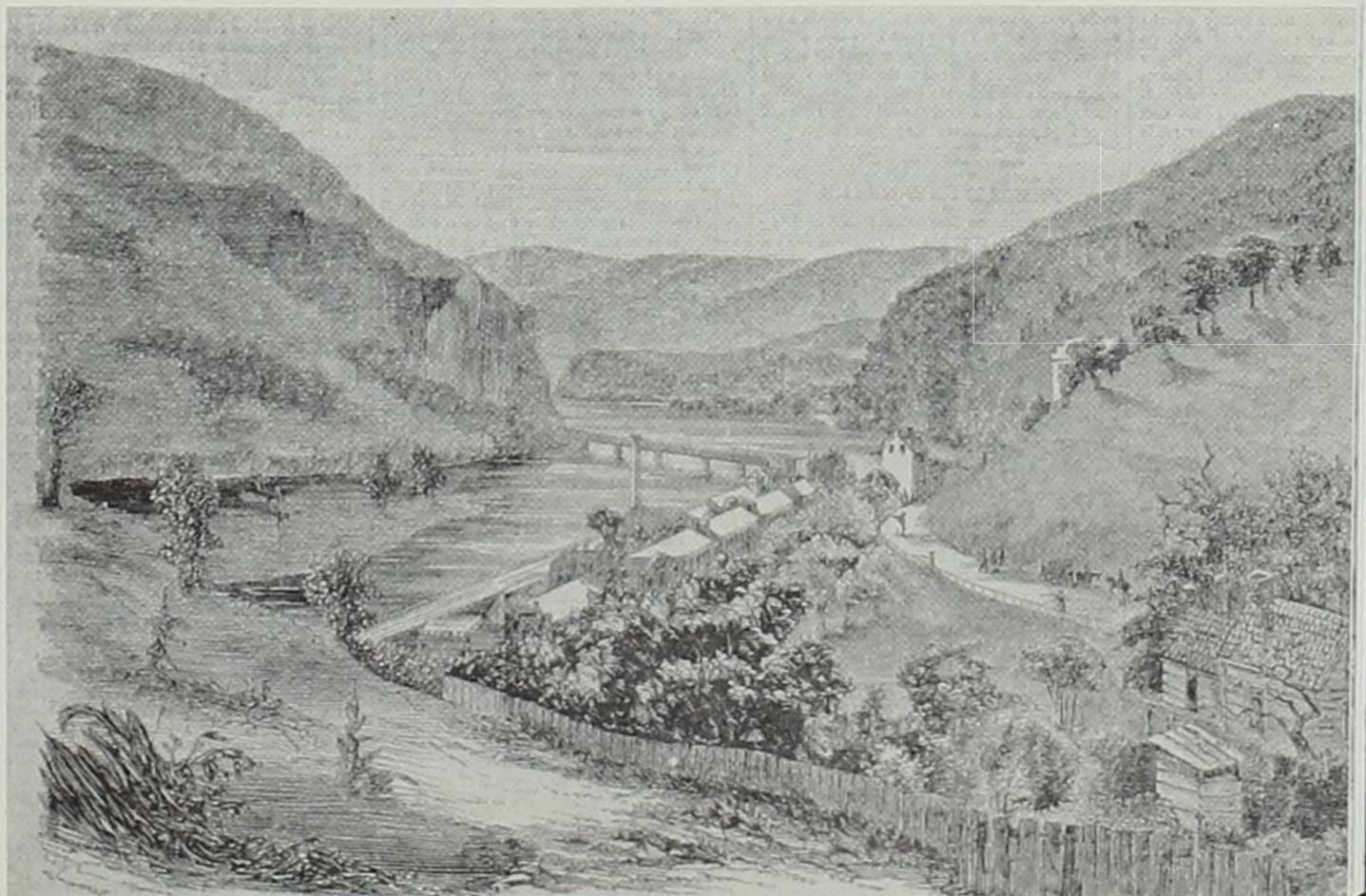


army, and most of them given commissions. John Brown was of course the "commander-in-chief" and Edwin Coppoc was made a "lieutenant." It did not seem odd at the time that the officers had no men to command. That detail would be taken care of later when slaves and sympathetic white men flocked to their standard in this modern crusade.

For many years John Brown had cherished the idea of abolishing slavery by making it "insecure" in the South through a predatory war in the States of Virginia, Tennessee, and Alabama. He looked upon Harper's Ferry as the strategic point at which to begin his operations. The reasons for this were three: the surrounding country had a large slave population; the wilderness of the Blue Ridge Mountains close at hand would offer comparative safety from pursuit; and the United States arsenal at the Ferry would furnish guns

Harper's Ferry—Looking down the Potomac Valley from Virginia side

Harper's Weekly



and ammunition which could be put to good use by the insurrectionists.

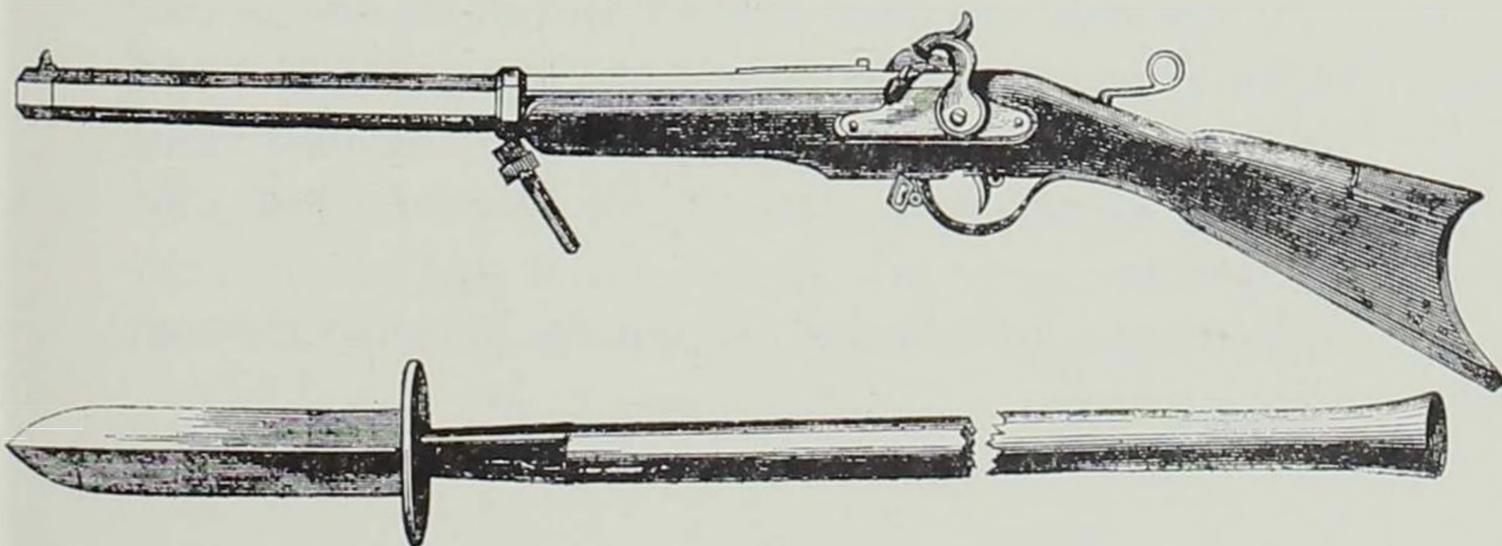
At this time Harper's Ferry was a town of about thirteen hundred inhabitants, situated on a high promontory at the juncture of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, in a gap of the shaggy Blue Ridge Mountains, scarcely sixty miles from Washington and not over one hundred and seventy miles from Richmond. From the Maryland side of the Potomac River the arsenal and government buildings at the edge of town were in plain view. A combination railroad and wagon bridge afforded ready access from across the Potomac while a suspension bridge spanned the Shenandoah. Here was the Thermopylae of Virginia.

At last, on Sunday night, October 16, 1859, Brown said to his followers, "Come, men, get on your arms; we will proceed to the Ferry." The long-awaited time for action had come! Not a moment should be lost, for there was a rumor abroad that a search warrant had been issued for the Kennedy farm. Twenty-two men, five of them negroes, answered roll call on that Sunday evening. Of this number, Edwin Coppoc, Barclay Coppoc, Steward Taylor, Jeremiah G. Anderson, George B. Gill, and Charles W. Moffat were Iowans.

Owen Brown, Francis J. Merriam, and Barclay Coppoc were left at the farm as guards, while two others were stationed with supplies at a

schoolhouse about a mile and a half from the Ferry. The remaining number marched on toward the arsenal, taking with them a one-horse wagon containing pikes and other arms. The night was cold and dark. They moved forward stealthily and in silence, making numerous halts while one or two of the party scouted around each turn in the road to see that the way was clear.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when they crossed the Potomac and entered the town. John E. Cook and Charles P. Tidd cut the telegraph wires, while two more of the party were left to guard the bridge. The rest of the company proceeded with Brown to the gate of the United States armory which was not more than sixty yards away. The guard there did not comply with their orders to open the gate, so they forced their way in with a crowbar. In compliance with previous orders Edwin Coppoc and Albert Hazlett broke into the arsenal which was across the street outside of the armory enclosure, Oliver Brown and William Thompson occupied the Shenandoah bridge, and two more of the men took possession of the gov-



Harper's Weekly

Musket and Pike used by Brown's Men

ernment rifle works half a mile up the Shenandoah. By midnight all of the vantage points were in the hands of the raiders, while the sleeping town was unaware of any disturbance, so quietly had the coup been accomplished.

Brown's next step was to dispatch Cook, Stephens, and four other men into the country to seize Lewis W. Washington and two or three other prominent citizens, with as many of their slaves as could be found, and bring them to the Ferry as hostages. It was hoped that the negroes would join the insurrection. Colonel Washington was captured principally for the moral effect of having a prisoner of that name. The sword which had been presented to George Washington by Frederick the Great was also taken so that John Brown might be armed with that historic weapon in this new struggle for human liberty.

Soon after daylight people began to appear on the streets, going about their business in the lower part of town near the government buildings. Most of them were summarily taken prisoners, and by seven o'clock there were thirty or forty confined in a building in the armory yard. Those who escaped quickly spread the news of the attack. An east-bound passenger train was allowed to proceed after being detained several hours and so the alarm was carried to Washington and Baltimore.

Within a few hours the whole countryside was

aroused. Armed with whatever weapons they could find, the citizens hurried to the scene of conflict. Toward the middle of the forenoon two militia companies arrived from neighboring towns, but the desultory firing of Brown's men stationed at strategic points kept the citizens at bay and gave the impression that the government buildings were held by a large force. Militiamen were sent across the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers where they could command the two bridges and return the fire of the raiders. By the middle of the morning Brown's men had been driven from both bridges and thus retreat to the mountains was cut off. Harper's Ferry had become a trap and all but five of Brown's band — Owen Brown, Barclay Coppoc, and Merriam, who had been left at the Kennedy farm, and Cook and Tidd, who had been sent to the schoolhouse for more arms and ammunition — were in it.

Early in the afternoon there was lively skirmishing in all directions. Citizens and militiamen occupied every vantage spot from which they could get a shot at the insurgents. One of the Potomac bridge guards was captured; Newby, a negro, was killed in the street beside Edwin Coppoc while they were running to the aid of some of their friends who were surrounded by the enemy; Watson Brown, Stephens, and Oliver Brown were wounded; Kagi and his party routed out of the rifle works, where all of them but one negro

lost their lives in the river; a group of Virginians in a house overlooking the armory yard opened fire and drove the men from their posts to the shelter of the engine-house; and finally the upper end of the armory grounds was taken and most of the prisoners released. Though the bullets rained about him, Edwin Coppoc was unharmed.

The sturdy, brick engine-house was the scene of Brown's last stand. He barricaded the door, knocked loopholes in the walls, and opened fire upon every one who came within range. The defense was gallant, but the men were literally trapped. By evening only six of the little band remained, and two of them were wounded.

After dusk a detachment of United States marines arrived and Colonel Robert E. Lee took command. Fear of injuring the "hostages" prevented an attack that night, but early Tuesday morning Brown was summoned to surrender with a guarantee of protection awaiting the orders of the President. In reply he demanded the privilege of withdrawing to Maryland unmolested. There was a curt refusal, and the assault upon the engine-house began.

Just before this encounter Robert E. Lee narrowly escaped death at the hands of Edwin Coppoc. A captive in the engine-house, Jesse W. Graham, relates:

Early on Tuesday morning, I peeped out of a hole and saw Colonel Lee, whom I had seen before at the Ferry,

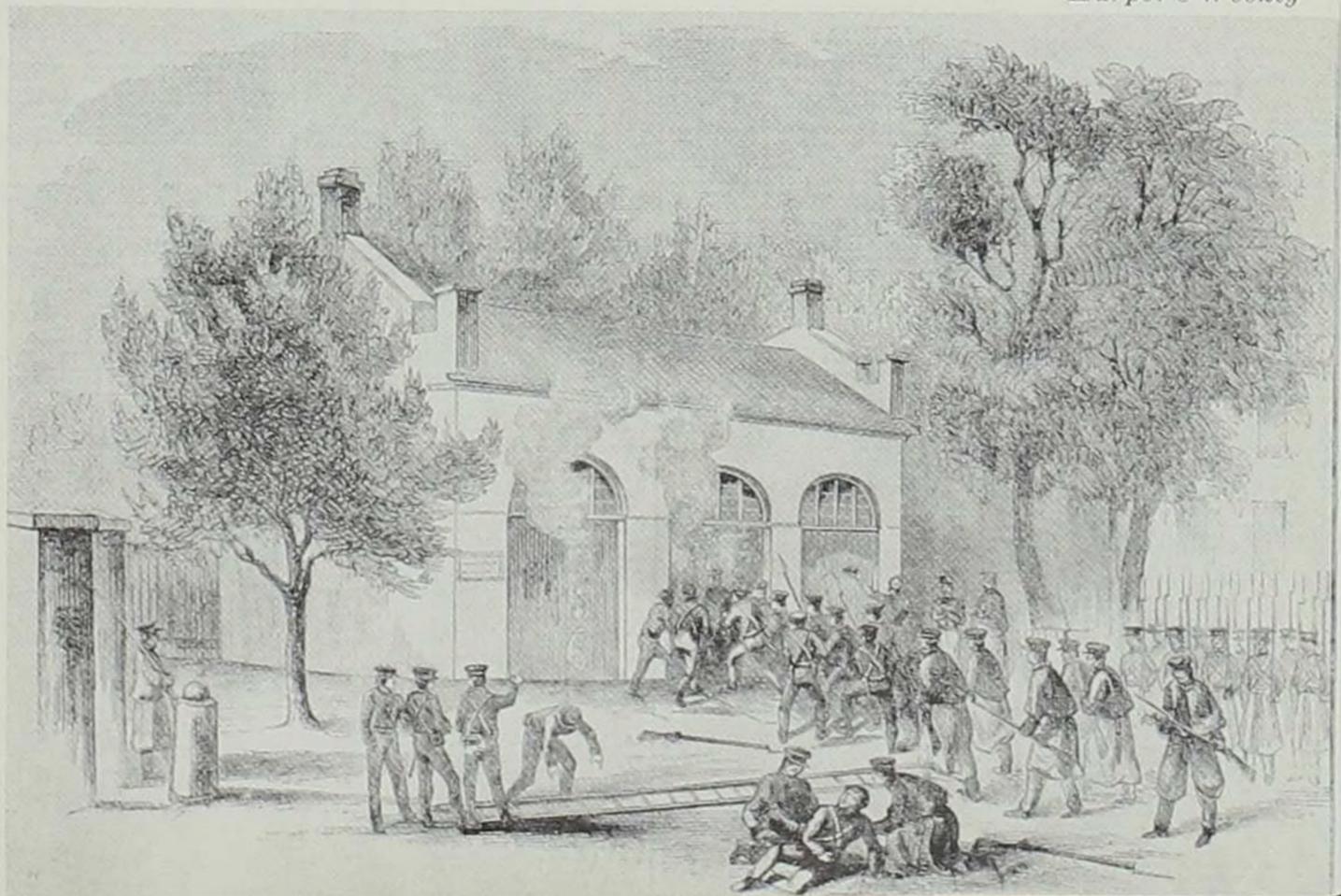
standing close by with the troops behind him. Just then Edwin Coppoc pushed me aside, and thrust the muzzle of his gun into the hole, drawing a bead on Lee. I interposed, putting my hand on the rifle and begging the man not to shoot, as that was Colonel Lee, of the United States army, and if he were hurt the building would be torn down and they'd all be killed. During the momentary altercation, Lee stepped aside, and thus his life was saved.

The final combat lasted but a few minutes. Upon a given signal a picked squad of marines battered down the doors of the engine-house and plunged into the room. There was a volley from within and two soldiers fell, but the rest pressed forward. John Brown was cut down by the savage thrusts of the marine lieutenant's sword, Anderson and Thompson were bayoneted, and the others were quickly overpowered.

According to Edwin Coppoc, both Anderson and Thompson "had surrendered after the first charge, which was repulsed, but, owing to the

Robert E. Lee leads U.S. Marine Attack Against Brick Engine House

Harper's Weekly



noise and confusion, they were not heard. Captain Brown and I were the only ones that fought to the last. The negro Green, after I had stationed him behind one of the engines, the safest place in the house, laid down his rifle and pulled off his cartridge-box, and passed himself off for one of the prisoners. He and I were the only ones not wounded."

After the fight, John Brown was taken to a room in an adjoining building while Coppoc, Watson Brown, and Green were confined in the watch-house at the armory. There they remained until noon on Wednesday before being taken to the jail in Charlestown, Virginia. One of the first newspaper reporters to arrive at the Ferry was astonished at the youthful appearance and open countenance of Coppoc.

"My God, boy, what are you doing at a place like this?" he asked.

"I believe in the principles that we are trying to advance," Edwin replied coolly, "and I have no apologies for being here. I think it is a good place to be."

Governor Henry A. Wise of Virginia, who was on the train that conveyed the prisoners to Charlestown, was also impressed with the boy's courage and candor.

"You look like too honest a man to be found with a band of robbers," he observed, addressing Coppoc.

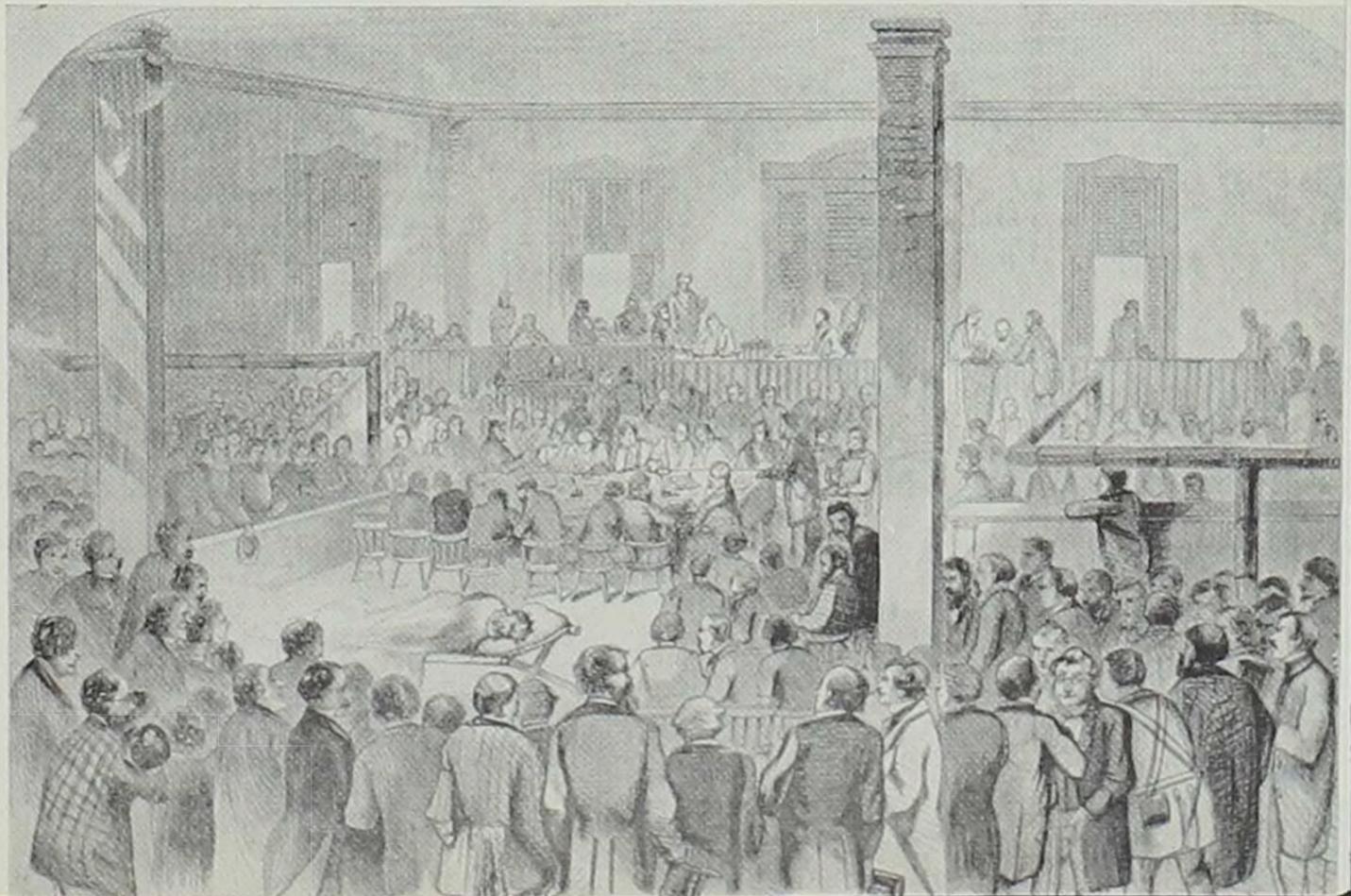
"But Governor," retorted Coppoc, "we look upon you as the robbers."

The judicial machinery of Virginia moved swiftly. Just nine days from the time he was captured, Edwin Coppoc was brought into court for arraignment, chained to his old leader. His trial, which followed immediately after the conviction of John Brown, began on the afternoon of November 1st and ended the next day with the sentence that he should be hanged on December 16th. When asked if he had anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced, Edwin Coppoc calmly declared:

The charges that have been made against me are not true. I never committed any treason against the State of Virginia. I never made war upon it. I never conspired with anybody to induce your slaves to rebel and I never even exchanged a word with any of your servants. What I came here for I always told you. It was to run off slaves to a free State and liberate them. This is an offense

The Trial of John Brown—Brown Lies on Cot in Courtroom

Harper's Weekly



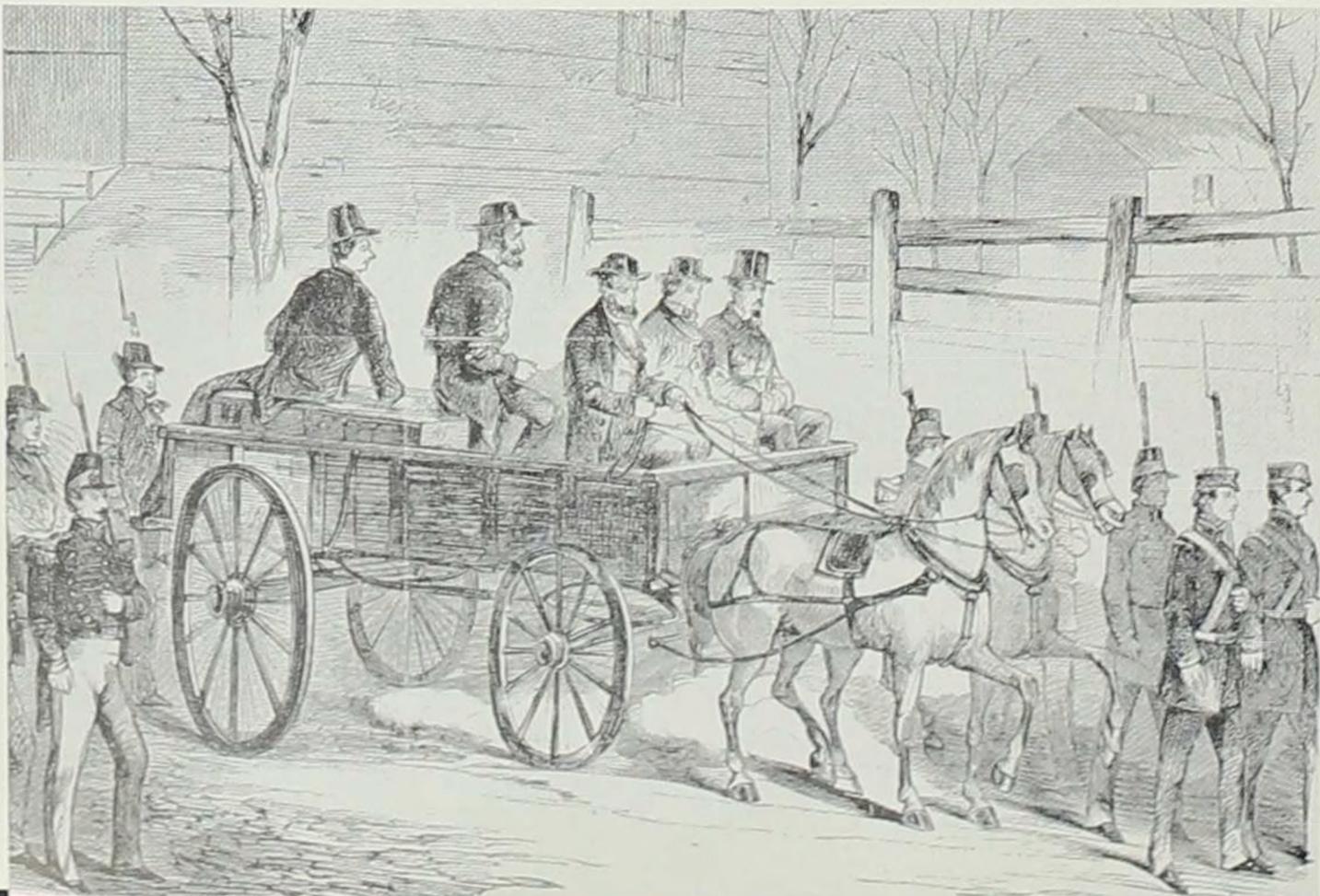
against your laws, I admit, but I never committed murder. When I escaped to the engine-house and found the captain and his prisoners surrounded there, I saw no way of deliverance but by fighting a little. If any one was killed on that occasion it was in a fair fight. I have, as I said, committed an offense against your laws, but the punishment for that offense would be very different from what you are going to inflict now. I have no more to say.

When the doors of the prison had closed upon him there were doubtless many dreary hours for pondering and regret. Young blood coursed through his veins and he found that it was going to be hard to give up life, even for a noble cause. There were periods of sadness when he reflected upon the way he had violated the faith of his childhood and borne arms against his fellowmen. In one of these moods he wrote to his mother:

It is with much sorrow that I now address you, and under very different circumstances than I ever expected to be placed, but I have seen my folly too late and must

John Brown Rides to Execution Sitting on His Coffin

Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper



now suffer the consequences, which I suppose will be death, but which I shall try and bear as every man should; though it would be a source of much comfort to me to have died at home.

Yet he could not refrain from trying to justify himself in her opinion.

I hope you will not reflect on me for what I have done, for I am not at fault, at least my conscience tells me so, and there are others that feel as I do. . . . Our leader would not surrender and there seemed to be no other resort than to fight, though I am happy to say that no one fell by my hand, and am sorry to say that I was ever induced to raise a gun.

At the end of his letter there was a touch of boyish homesickness when he asked for some sweet cakes from home. "We get plenty to eat here, but *it is not from home*. It is not baked by the hands of those we love at home, or by those whom I never expect to see."

In the meantime, Edwin's Springdale friends were busy trying to save his life. Many of them wrote letters to Virginia authorities, and Thomas Winn, the postmaster at Springdale, succeeded in gaining the attention and respect of Governor Wise.

I feel encouraged to invoke thy friendly offices in his behalf, on the score of his youth and inexperience. I believe Edwin to be incapable of doing, intentionally, a mean or unworthy action. Indeed there is a native nobility of character about him which I think must have been ob-

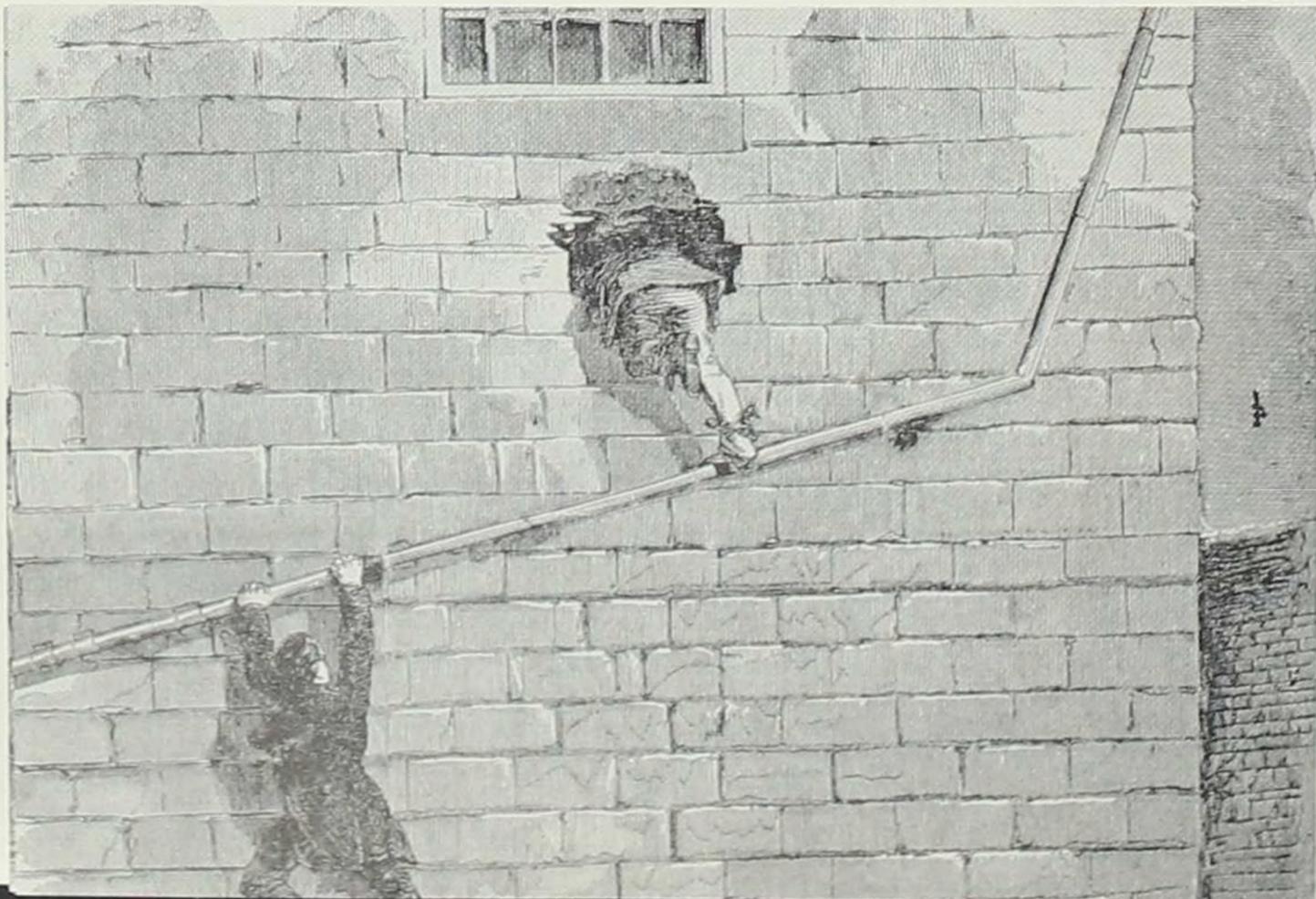
served by those who have been brought into contact with him since the sad event which we all deplore. I fervently hope, therefore, that his life may not be taken.

This plea, and others in the same vein, had a powerful influence upon Governor Wise. Edwin wrote that many of the hundreds who came to see him exhibited sympathy. After a thorough investigation of the case the Governor recommended the commutation of Coppoc's sentence to life imprisonment. But the committee of the legislature to which he appealed was in no mood for clemency. The relations between the North and South were then so strained that under no circumstances would quarter be given. The "irrepressible conflict" had already begun and the legislature of Virginia was resolved that no guilty man from the North should escape.

But as the fatal day of December 16th drew nearer, Coppoc was planning his own method of

Edwin Coppoc and John Cook Escape from Jail down Rainspout

Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper

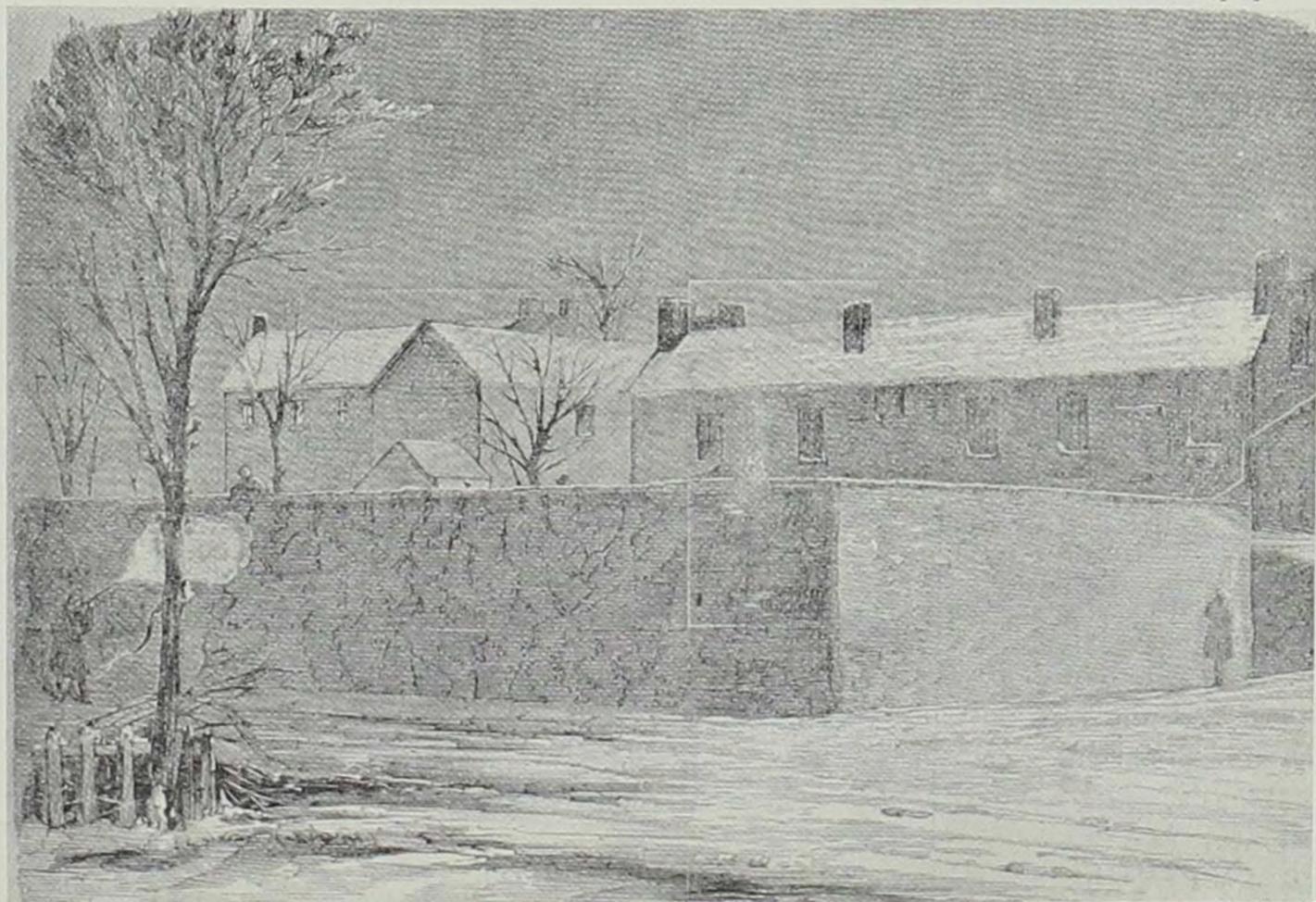


escape. He and his fellow prisoner, John E. Cook, had noticed that along one side of their cell there was a heavy plank, held in place by screws. They loosened this with a Barlow knife and a long screw taken from the bed, and carefully began to take the bricks from the jail wall. The outer layer they left intact, to be removed on the night of their flight. A friend, who had enlisted in the Virginia militia, was to be on guard duty the night of December 14th. He would neglect to see them as they climbed over the wall and escaped to the mountains. It seemed like a pretty plan.

But on the day of December 14th Cook's sister and brother-in-law, the Governor of Indiana, had come to Charlestown to bid him good-bye, and as they were to be in town that night Cook refused to leave the jail, for fear that they would be accused of complicity in the escape. He urged Edwin to go alone, but Coppoc would not desert his

Armed Guard Firing on Coppoc and Cook as they attempt to escape

Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper



friend. Accordingly, they decided to try the venture the next night, but an unfriendly guard discovered them in the act of scaling the wall and they gave themselves up without a struggle.

Early the next morning the prisoners were prepared for execution. Seated upon their coffins, they rode in a farm wagon to the stubble field where the scaffold stood. Several military companies paraded in a hollow square as the men mounted to their doom. The whole countryside had been aroused by the news of the attempted escape and there was some concern lest the furious citizens should not be satisfied with legal execution.

In contrast to the confusion about them the "calm and collected manner" of Coppoc and Cook "was very marked." Both "exhibited the most unflinching firmness, saying nothing, with the exception of bidding farewell to the ministers and sheriff." After the caps had been placed on their heads, they clasped hands in a last farewell.

Joshua Coppoc and Thomas Winn took Edwin's body back to Salem, Ohio, and there arrangements were made for a quiet Quaker funeral. On December 18th hundreds of people came to participate in the simple rites and pay their respects to one of the heroes of Harper's Ferry. Until late in the afternoon the saddened crowd continued to file past the coffin. At sunset the body was lowered into its grave.

To-day a monument marks the spot to which his body was removed, in Hope Cemetery, Salem, Ohio, and the name of Edwin Coppoc lives among those who died in the great struggle for the abolition of slavery.

PAULINE GRAHAME

The Escape

It was about eleven o'clock on the night of October 16, 1859, when father and his little company started from the Kennedy farm, five miles north of Harper's Ferry. He left Barclay Coppoc, Francis J. Merriam, and myself to guard the arms and ammunition stored on the premises.

Barclay Coppoc, the one who was with me through so much hardship, was a medium-sized young man not over twenty-two or twenty-three years old. He did not look very healthy, but could stand a great deal, as you shall see. Still he was not so well educated or so energetic as his brother who was hanged. F. J. Merriam was of the wealthy Massachusetts Merriams. He was twenty-eight or thirty years old at the time, and not very robust. He had easy, unassuming manners. The only thing very positive about him was his hatred of slavery.

Toward six o'clock in the morning, we all heard firing in the direction of Harper's Ferry. The rain, which continued at intervals all that day and the next night, had already set in. Between two and three that afternoon, there was a great deal of firing in the direction of Harper's Ferry. Later in the afternoon, arming ourselves well with rifles

and revolvers, we started toward the Ferry through the rain — Coppoc, Merriam, and myself. We had not gone far when we met one of my father's men, Charles Plummer Tidd, a large, strong, determined fellow, in the prime of life. A few minutes later John E. Cook approached out of the darkness. He had witnessed the fight at the Ferry and reported that the gallant little band was completely surrounded — the cause was lost and the only thing to do was to make good our escape. I hated to give up the idea of helping our friends, but I had to. To have lingered in that neighborhood would have surely cost our lives.

Returning to the boarding-house, we took a hasty supper and hurriedly seized some biscuits, arms, and ammunition. Up the base of the mountain about a mile from the boarding-house, we halted in the laurel. It was raining, and very cold. Here I told the boys my plan. We must follow the mountain ranges, making to the northwest when we could; travelling only at night upon the edges of the clearings; sleeping and hiding by day in the thickets on the uninhabited mountain-tops; shunning all travelled roads at all times, except as we were obliged to cross them in the night; building no fires; buying or stealing no provisions; in fact, not even speaking aloud. They agreed with me that we should make as much progress as possible that night. We each took two guns and one or two revolvers, besides a full heavy cartridge-

box apiece. More than this, I carried that night about fifty pounds of provisions. The others were opposed to taking so much to eat.

We started up the mountains diagonally. It was very hard work getting through the laurel and up the steep places with our loads. Well, we didn't reach the top of the mountain till after daylight. The rain had stopped, but it was foggy. At last we came to a road across the mountain. No one was in sight, so we ventured across. We were not quite concealed in the thicket on the northern side, when we heard the sound of horses' hoofs upon the wet ground, and lo! eight armed men rode briskly past over the mountain. We kept still till they had disappeared, and then we stole farther into the thicket, where we all five of us hid away in one bed for the rest of the day.

For all our narrow escape, I slept very soundly that day in the thicket. We awoke in the afternoon, ate some of our biscuits, and discussed our affairs in a whisper. Cook, in his fiery, quick-thinking way, was always proposing bold, hazardous measures. He to some extent carried Tidd and Coppoc with him; and so they were in favor of stealing horses, and riding right into death, which was lying in wait for us at every bridge and on every highway. Cook's wife was then in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania; and he was bent on going there. So were Tidd and Coppoc. Merriam always abided by my decision. Now it was not in

my original plan to go to Chambersburg, but I had to consent to go that way.

I could not keep them from going down to the edge of the clearing before dark. It was cold, and they *would* be moving. Just as we were approaching the clearing where we could see Pleasant Valley extended before us, I beheld a man coming along the path through the woods. He was carrying on his shoulders what seemed to be a sack of flour. I made a signal, and we all dropped down, not far from the path. I think the man saw us, but he saw also that there were five of us, with two guns apiece, and with wonderful presence of mind he walked on without speaking or turning his head. That askant look of his, however, I have reason to believe, cost a sleepless night to the inhabitants of at least ten miles of territory. I had no difficulty now in prevailing upon the boys to wait till later in the night before attempting to cross the valley. Reaching the mountain on the east side of the valley, we pursued our journey along its side just above the clearings. Toward daylight, we went up to the top and concealed ourselves, eating our biscuits and sleeping.

This was our usual plan, and of course, we travelled very slowly. When we woke up in the afternoon, I had to argue myself hoarse, restraining the impetuosity of some of the others, especially Cook. He wanted to travel by the roads, and when the provisions began to get scarce, he

insisted upon going to buy more. At last, to restrain him, I offered and he took all my share of the biscuits; so that I commenced, a day or two before the other boys, to live upon the Indian corn which we found still standing in the fields. When the biscuits finally gave out, we were all reduced to the same diet of raw, hard corn.

Thus we had passed perhaps five or six days, going up the mountains to sleep and coming down to the edges of the woods to travel, when one night a cold rain set in. Toward morning it changed into snow; all day long the trees sagged with it, and our bed was covered with it — the one bed into which all five of us crawled to keep warm. We slept beautifully.

Starting on after dark one night, we came to where the mountain made an unexpected turn too much to the east, and we had to cross a valley to the next range. This entailed the half-wading, half-swimming of a bridgeless stream, and a journey of at least five miles through the snow and wet, before we reached the mountains again. A little way up on the border of the forest, we found some pitch-pine shavings and some wood, and here, in spite of all I could say, the boys made a fire. We were all wet and cold and exhausted by want of food, and I suppose the temptation was pretty strong. It was not yet daylight.

In the course of half an hour, while we were munching our corn, we heard what were unmis-

takably human voices, calling to one another, it seemed, in the valley below. Soon after we heard the baying of hounds, evidently in pursuit of something. Now we had just crossed this valley, leaving our tracks, of course, in the snow, and the idea that we were followed immediately flashed upon us. We were not a minute in putting the fire out, scattering and covering every stick and ember in the snow and earth.

Then we hurried farther up the mountain into the thickets. We could hear all the time that the hounds were approaching us. On we pressed till after daylight. All of a sudden we came upon a clearing with a house in it, and along a road only a few rods away a man was driving a span of horses with a load of wood. Though the noise of the hounds was increasing and coming nearer and nearer, we had to wait till the man and team were out of sight. He fortunately did not see us. We travelled on perhaps a mile farther through the woods and laurel, until the day was so light and the hounds so near that we made up our minds it was time either to camp or fight. So we stopped and waited for the dogs. In a little while there was a light crackling of the brush, and a red fox with his tongue out broke past us down toward the valley. Soon after came the hounds. They stopped and stared at us for a moment, then went on after the game. It was many days and nights, cold ones too, before we built another fire.

There is a gap in the mountains on the pike below Boonsborough, leading from Hagerstown to Baltimore. That I knew would be a place of great danger; there was nothing like safety for us till we should get across that pike, but there was no other practicable way of getting out of Maryland. Finally, one night, at a sudden turn in the mountain, the gap opened before us; and what a sight it was! There must have been a hundred fires in view, flaring out of the darkness — alarm fires, we took them to be, of those who were watching for us.

I told the boys very promptly that was no place for us. They were quite ready to follow me. We retraced our steps half a mile or more, came upon a road, and followed it, right past a tall log house. Though a dog rushed out and barked at us, we thought best to keep straight on. We followed the road down the mountain till we came to a spring where, having hastily drunk and washed our faces, we turned off down to what we supposed was Cumberland Valley. Our object was to get across that Baltimore pike at some place out in the open valley, away from the gap and the people watching for us there. It was already as late as midnight, and our safety depended upon our getting across the pike and valley to the mountains beyond, before daylight.

Imagine our disappointment when, clambering down the rough mountain-side, we found that we had reached, not Cumberland Valley, but a ra-

vine, with a steep mountain road towering right in our way on the other side. It was nearly morning when we finally got down into Cumberland Valley, but we hurried on, and just as the first light of morning appeared, we crossed the terrible pike. Having waded a creek, we were hurrying across a plowed field, when clatter, clatter along the pike came forty or fifty armed horsemen, galloping by in plain view down toward the gorge in the mountains. We dropped and watched them out of sight. When at last we reached the woods, so weary we could scarcely put one foot ahead of the other, we found the timber too sparse for our purpose, and went on and up the mountain, still finding no safe camping-ground. On the summit we came upon a sort of observatory, which afforded a fine view of the valley we had crossed. Horsemen were scampering hither and thither on the highways, and the whole country, it seemed, was under arms. I had little difficulty in impressing upon the boys how necessary it was that we should be in concealment. And so, exhausted as we were, we followed along the ridge of that mountain-top for as much as three miles in broad daylight before finding a safe place.

For two or three nights we trudged through the dense woods. But after a while the mountain range swerved out of our direction and it became necessary to cross another valley. While reconnoitering we came upon a farm house and the

smell of cooking food was wafted to us. Never before or since has anything so boundlessly delightful fallen upon my senses. It was more than the others could endure. In spite of all my protests they decided that one of us should go to the house to buy food. Since Cook could wield the glibbest tongue and tell the best story, I decided he should go.

Cook was gone two or three hours, perhaps. He came back with a couple loaves of bread, some salt, some good boiled beef, and a pie. He had stayed to dinner with the people of the farm-house and made himself very agreeable.

In the course of that night we crossed two valleys and a mountain and got into the woods of another mountain before day. I was especially anxious to get as far as possible from the place where Cook had bought provisions. The forest now seemed so extensive that, after resting a while, we thought it safe to go on by daylight; and we travelled on in what we considered the direction of Chambersburg till the middle of the afternoon, seeing no traces of inhabitants.

At last we stopped at a clear spring, and finished eating the provisions bought the day before. Then the boys said it would be a good time to get a new supply. More earnestly than ever I tried to dissuade them, but to no purpose. They outnumbered me. Coppoc wanted to go this time. I said, since they were determined that somebody must

go, Cook was the man most fitted for the mission. He left everything but one revolver, and took his leave of us, as nearly as we could judge, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. Cook had not been gone long when two ravens flew over our heads, croaking dismally. You may think it queer, but it struck every one of us as a bad omen. We waited till dusk, but Cook did not return; we waited till dark and starlight, still he did not come; we waited till nine o'clock, till midnight, and still he did not come. He might have got lost, we thought; and we lingered about, calling and watching for him till at least two o'clock in the morning. Cook never came.

Daring to wait no longer, we made a bold push for the road, to see if we might in some way find him. After quite a while we reached a village and walked straight through it, taking the middle of the street. Only a few lights were burning. A half mile or more beyond the village, we struck through a corn-field, helping ourselves to the dry, hard corn, to which we were again reduced. Just across the corn-field we came upon a wide public highway, evidently leading to Chambersburg. Here Coppoc and Tidd astonished Merriam and myself by announcing that they would have to leave us. They said Merriam, in his weak state, could not get into Chambersburg before daylight; it was at least fifteen miles away. They knew I had pledged myself never to leave Merriam be-

hind. And so, leaving a gun or two extra for us to carry, and promising to meet us the next night at one of the hiding-places beyond Chambersburg, they started off, on the public highway, as fast as they could walk.

It was a wild, desperate thing for them to do. Weak and worn as Merriam was, he saw as well as I did that they were exposing us as much as they were exposing themselves. Two could make little resistance in case of attack; and, we argued, our safety depended upon keeping up with them, and preventing them, if possible, from running more foolish risks. So, picking up the guns they had left, we started after them, in the belief that it was a walk for life, and I have no doubt it was. On we went, unchallenged, through toll-gates and past farmhouses. For the whole fifteen miles, Tidd and Coppoc never got six rods ahead of us. During the race, some time before daylight, Coppoc left his things with Todd, walked up to a house, waked the inmates, and asked the way to Chambersburg! He felt pretty sure, he said afterwards, that this road led there, but he was not certain whether we were going toward or away from town. Just at the first streak of daylight we reached Chambersburg and went to the house of a widow where father had boarded. But the place was guarded. It was a miracle that we ever got away from that house.

Though utterly fatigued, we made our way to

the railroad which we followed for some distance before we reached the thicket I intended to hide in. We would certainly have been caught, if it hadn't been for a cold mist that hung low upon the land after daylight. The falling of the leaves had made our hiding-place much more dangerous than I had expected to find it, but we finally found a patch of briars in the middle of the field, and crawling into it, made our bed there.

A little before noon we heard martial music steadily approaching us — not at all a pleasant sound under the circumstances. Then after a while it stopped; and, in perhaps five or ten minutes more, a train went shooting by on the neighboring railroad. The martial music then started up again at what we supposed afterwards to be the railway station, and gradually marched out of hearing. It was, as I have since heard, the escort that took poor Cook from the jail to the depot: and the train we saw was the one that bore him away to Charlestown, and to death.

A cold rain, with snow and sleet, set in about noon. This was no doubt a greater protection to us than the briars — so near to a populous town as we were. There were three or four yoke of oxen running loose in the field. An ox came browsing near our thicket, and by his disturbed manner called the attention of the whole drove to us. They would stare at us, then start off and come back in a way that would give warning of

something wrong to any one knowing oxen. At last, to our infinite relief, they seemed to have satisfied their curiosity, for they went away of their own accord.

While we were lying there we had determined that, in the exhausted condition of Merriam, it would be best to run the risk of sending him on by rail. I mended his overcoat and clipped off his beard as close as I could shingle it with a pair of scissors I had. All day long, more or less, we discussed Merriam's leaving. Coppoc wanted to go with him. I whispered myself hoarse, trying to convince him that he ought not to go. I was glad when, in the afternoon, a high wind arose as an accompaniment to the storm, and we dared to speak aloud. We shivered with the rain and sleet as we argued. I told Coppoc he would excite suspicion if he went with Merriam.

"We need you with us," I said, "and you need yourself with us — for defense, and especially to keep warm nights. We have lost too many already; we shall freeze if we lose any more now. When it is safe, you shall be the next to go."

Merriam, poor fellow, was so weak and worn that there was not much warmth in him. He was no use in bed or out of it, and besides, he couldn't have walked any farther anyhow. The snow and sleet stopped for a while as we were still arguing, and as I turned over on my elbow and looked at Coppoc, I could see that great tears had fallen

and hung quivering on his waistcoat. He was thinking, perhaps, of his Quaker home in Iowa, and of his widowed mother there; perhaps of his brother whom he supposed killed; or maybe, he was in utter despair. I never knew; I never asked him. None of us spoke for a long time. The wind blew more violently than ever, and the rain and sleet came down again, and washed away the traces of the man's weakness — if it was weakness.

A driving snow set in that night, and it was as dark as I ever saw it in my life. We started together for the road bordering the side of the field opposite the railway. In this road Tidd and Coppoc bade Merriam good-bye and God-speed. Leaving them in a fence-corner, I took Merriam by the hand — it was so dark and he was so feeble — and led him to the railroad. Then I walked a little way on the track with him, so that he would be sure to take the direction away from Chambersburg, and reach the first station outside of that town before taking a train. Our plan was that he should thereafter go north as directly as he could. In due time he reached friends in safety.

Tidd, Coppoc, and I, leaving the public road, started across country. It was my plan to keep on in a northwesterly direction toward Meadville and some old friends in Crawford County, Pennsylvania. After a while we came to a creek swol-

len by the recent rain till it was at least five rods across. There was nothing to do but wade it. The water was very swift. When I reached the other side, I could not feel my bare feet on the snow, they were so numb. Getting up the steep bank we were greeted by the boisterous barking of a dog. A road passed along this bank with a farm-house on one side of it and a barn on the other. Not being sure where the road led, we decided to seek shelter in the barn. I tried to catch some chickens in the barn, but it was so dark I could not get them. They sounded as if they would taste good. Even hard corn had been scarce with us lately; and we should not have waited to cook the chicken. We slept two or three hours in the shed — slept beautifully — our wet blankets and ourselves steaming with the wet and warmth. Then it stopped snowing and the stars came out, and we resumed our way. Toward morning we crawled into a brier-patch up a gully, and went to sleep.

About noon that day the sun came out, melting the snow and waking us. After a while a boy came along, leading a dog. It was lucky for us that the boy *was* leading him, for the dog got scent of us, and tugged at his rope to get at us. Jerking him along, the boy cursed the animal for his stupidity in wanting to hang himself. He probably came much nearer hanging us, as we thought at the time. In the open country that way,

with such enormous rewards upon our heads, our lives may be said to have hung on the dog's cord.

After dark we made for the mountains with all possible speed and directness. After a while we came to a barn where I caught an old hen and a rooster, and wrung their necks without allowing them to make any noise. Putting them into the provision bag, we hurried on.

At last we came upon a gorge on the mountain, where we built a fire and went to dressing our hen and rooster. As soon as Tidd had picked the leg of the hen, he cut it off and began roasting it. It was nowhere near done when he began upon it, crunching the bones, and swallowing everything. After we had had a taste, none of us could wait for the old hen to cook. We ate her almost raw. Tidd, burning the bones, ate them, too. Putting the dressed rooster into the bag and burning the feathers, we started farther up the mountain to a good hiding-place. The country was so thickly settled that we did not dare to build a fire to cook the rooster till the second or third night after eating the hen.

A night or so later, I had the luck to catch four or five chickens in a barn. These of course went better when we got a chance to cook them, which was not till we came to a little shanty in a wild place on the mountain-top just before daylight one rainy morning. It was a mere hut of logs, covered with bark, built by people who had been there to

peel hemlock bark for tanning. Some stones were laid up in a corner for a fireplace. The bare earth was the floor. We knew that the bark-peelers work in the spring, and so we felt comparatively safe and happy — all but Tidd, who had been complaining ever since he ate so many hen and rooster bones. We built a comfortable fire in the hut, and cooked a couple of spring chickens. It was the first house we had been in for many a day or night.

Coppoc and I slept splendidly as the rain poured down on our bark roof. Waking up in the afternoon we found Tidd still complaining. After dark I left Coppoc to nurse him, and went down the mountain for more provisions. About three miles away, I discovered an orchard and filled my bag with apples, climbed back again, and found Tidd pretty sick. We did not any of us sleep much that night, for watching and taking care of him. It was almost providential that we had a roof and a fire for the poor fellow, or he might never have recovered. It rained the next day, and we stayed at the hut with Tidd, who began to get better.

Late the next night he felt able to travel, and we started. Our course now took us from one range to another, instead of along the tops and sides of the mountains, making our work much slower and more tedious. Still, by way of compensation we helped ourselves pretty freely to the

chickens and apples of the wealthy Pennsylvanians as we passed; occasionally milking their cows for them, too.

We did not know where we were, except that we were somewhere in the State of Pennsylvania, and we at last thought we would risk the roads by daylight. So one sunny morning, beside a clear spring, we made our toilets for that purpose, putting on clean shirts and mending our clothes. I cut both of the other boys' hair. We rolled our shoulder straps and ammunition into our blankets, drew our woolen covers over our guns, and started. Our first encounter was with a man on horseback, riding the same way we were going. He looked suspiciously at us, we were so gaunt, besides carrying guns. We talked him out of his suspicion, however, and into so friendly a mood that Coppoc rode his horse as much as a mile, while the stranger walked along with Tidd and me.

That night we crossed the Juniata River, rode for several miles on a canal boat, and then proceeded along the main road toward Bellefonte. It was morning before we camped near an old farmhouse, occupied only by a couple of horses. There we stayed till about dark the next night, before starting upon the public road again. We had gone hardly a mile when we saw a nice little farmhouse on our left, a short distance from the road. The light of the blaze in the old-fashioned fire-

place came out through the curtainless window with so cheery an invitation to us that we could not go by. We knocked at the door and obtained permission of the farmer to stay all night. It was not long till the fumes of frying flap-jacks filled the air. If the stout farmer's wife had not been so good-natured, her suspicions might have been aroused by the ravenous appetites with which we devoured what she put before us.

Toward the close of that meal, the farmer in a casual sort of way mentioned Harper's Ferry, and then we asked him for news. We had already in some indirect manner learned from our host that it was the fourth of November. Thus we had been about three weeks in our houseless wanderings, without positive knowledge of the fate of our comrades — it seemed at least six weeks. We told our host that we had heard something about the fight at Harper's Ferry, but not all the particulars. This surprised him greatly, for he said the country had not been so excited about anything in the last twenty years.

The weekly newspaper had just come that afternoon and Tidd began reading aloud as soon as we could decently rise from the table. The first thing that caught his eye was the account of Cook's capture. You can imagine how eagerly Coppoc and I listened to the first we had heard of Cook since he had left us in the mountains. Our host interrupted the reading to assure me that one

son of old Brown of Kansas had escaped with Cook and others, and was supposed to be still at large somewhere. In the meantime, Tidd had gone on, silently devouring the paper. Coppoc sat gazing thoughtfully into the blaze of the great fireplace, and I happened to be looking at him when our host went on to say that the very latest news was that the man Coppoc had been tried, too, and found guilty. That was his brother Edwin, and the ruddy glare of the fire did not paint out the deathly white of our poor Coppoc's face. He did not speak, but a little while after, he stealthily brushed away a tear from one of his cheeks, and sighed in a half-choked way.

After a few moments, Tidd handed the newspaper to me. I began reading the account of the fight aloud for Coppoc's benefit — how the little band had taken the town and held it all day against the States of Virginia and Maryland. In the course of the description of my father's courageous conduct, my voice trembled too much and I passed the paper to Coppoc who continued to read.

We sat by the fire and talked of the dead and wounded as long as we dared, and then went to bed. After breakfast the next morning, having paid our host, we asked him the direction to Bellefonte, and for Quaker families along the road. He told us of a Quaker by the name of Benjamin Wakefield, who lived some twenty miles in the

direction of Crawford County, Pennsylvania. After walking all day, we arrived at the home of Mr. Wakefield about sundown. Tidd approached the benevolent-faced old gentleman and asked if we could put up with him for the night.

"Thee and thy friends may come," said the Quaker. But when we appeared with our guns, he held up his hands in awe, and told us we could not bring our guns into his house. It may have been contrary to his church rules; but we argued the case a while and then hit upon the lucky compromise that we should take the loads out of the guns.

We had hardly got inside the house, however, when he startled us by saying, in his calm way, that he knew who we were — we were from Harper's Ferry. We asked him how he knew. He said we were so gaunt. He knew we were hunted like wild beasts, and that fact and our cause were a short cut to his heart. After supper we talked long about slavery and the struggles and losses of our family in Kansas. He made us stay over the next day with him, but told us to keep ourselves out of sight. He said that we had better travel for a while again only by night, for he knew that we were hotly pursued. Having stocked us with provisions enough to last two or three days, he told us the way to the home of a cousin of his, about forty miles away.

We parted with our good host and travelled two or three nights slowly as usual and as far as

possible from the highway. Having eaten all our provisions we took to apples and corn again. Finally, late one night we arrived at the farm-house of Mr. Wakefield's cousin and aroused him. We said that Mr. Wakefield had sent us, and the man seemed disposed to let us in; but at this stage of the interview a second-story window opened and three night-capped heads were thrust out.

"No, you can't come in, any such thing," they cried. "We know who you are. You are traitors."

We replied that we had merely risked our lives for the freedom of millions of helpless slaves. Neither were they in favor of slavery, they declared, but they were also not in favor of putting it down by force. And there we stood arguing with the night-caps. The man was on our side, but when he said anything in our favor it seemed to go worse with us than ever. Finally we offered to give up our guns. At this the voice of what I took to be the old lady said, "Oh!" and one night-cap disappeared.

"Well, father," said one of the others, "if you want to take in murderers, you may, but don't ask us to wait on them!" And the two other night-caps disappeared. In a moment the door opened and the Quaker told us that we might enter. He showed us promptly to beds.

At breakfast the next morning, the mother and her two daughters would not eat with us. The man would not take any money for his entertain-

ment, so we all went out into his field with him and fell to husking corn. At dinner-time the women folks seemed to be somewhat mollified, and we prevailed upon them to take some curious silver coins we had. Tidd and Coppoc went back to work in the field in the afternoon, while I went into the village and made my preparations for getting rid of our guns, and of sending Coppoc home by stage and railroad.

The next morning Coppoc very joyfully took the stage to Ohio. From there he went to Niagara Falls and as far east as Rochester, thence to Buffalo, then to Cleveland, and finally, on December 17th, the day after his brother had yielded his life on a Virginia gallows, he arrived safely at Springdale, "worn almost to a skeleton by starvation and exposure." Tidd and I continued northward, passing through Brookville, Clarion, Shippensville, Franklin, Randolph, and eventually arrived at Townville where we obtained work. But it was many months before either of us dared to stay in one place very long.

OWEN BROWN

Rendition Foiled

The dangerous flight through the mountains of western Pennsylvania was only the beginning of Barclay Coppoc's battle for life. Scarcely had he reached home when his presence was betrayed to the Virginia authorities. Governor John Letcher, just entering upon his first term as chief magistrate of Virginia, was anxious to prove himself a true defender of the honor and safety of his State. Accordingly, on January 23, 1860, his agent, C. Camp, appeared at Des Moines, bearing extradition papers for the rendition of Barclay Coppoc, reputed to be a fugitive from justice in Virginia.

When the Virginia emissary presented his papers, however, Governor Kirkwood refused to honor the requisition. There were several reasons. In the first place, the affidavit alleging that Barclay Coppoc was guilty of an offense against the State of Virginia was made before a notary public instead of a "magistrate" as the law required. Moreover, the document was not authenticated by any official seal as it should have been. How could the Governor be sure that it was genuine? But even if it were authentic and legally drawn, the affidavit was "fatally defective" in not charging Coppoc with the commission of treason or any

particular "felony or other crime." It merely asserted a belief that he had "aided and abetted John Brown and others" without offering any evidence in proof of that assumption. Even if the allegation were true, that act in itself was no crime. And finally, Governor Kirkwood maintained that the requisition was defective in not showing that Coppoc was in Virginia at the time he was supposed to have violated the laws of that State. How could he be a fugitive from justice in Virginia if he had not been within the jurisdiction of that State before, during, or after the raid? The affidavit offered no proof that he had ever been in Virginia or that he had fled from justice. If he had not participated in the raid he could not be guilty of any actual offense, and the laws governing the rendition of criminals did not appear to apply to the "constructive" commission of crimes.

Considerably surprised and much nettled by the attitude of Governor Kirkwood, the Virginian undertook by dint of argument to convince the Governor that he was wrong, unjust, and incidentally perverting the letter of the Federal Constitution and the statutes of Congress. Kirkwood was firm, insisting that no chief executive could legally or justly honor such a demand. Mr. Camp raised his voice as his indignation swelled, but his expostulations were in vain.

During the progress of this discussion, B. F. Gue and another member of the legislature

chanced to enter the executive office. When the Governor advised the excited Virginian to keep the matter quiet, Camp replied that he did not care who knew it since the request had been refused, and continued his emphatic demands, arguing that Coppoc would escape before corrected papers could be obtained. With a significant glance at the two legislators, the Governor replied that there was a law under which Coppoc could be arrested and held until the requisition was granted.

The intruders felt that there was not a moment to lose if they would save Coppoc from his threatened fate. Hastily communicating with several other members of the legislature, it was decided to send word at once for him to flee from the State. A message to John H. Painter of Springdale was then prepared; and in less than two hours after the two men had left the room of the Governor a messenger was galloping eastward on his one hundred and sixty-five mile ride. His instructions were to reach Springdale as soon as the endurance of the horses furnished at the Underground Railroad stations would permit. It was confidently expected that Camp would take the first stage for Iowa City, thence to Springdale, and there arrest Coppoc before he could be saved. As the stage travelled day and night, it was imperative that the warning should reach Springdale as soon as possible.

On the morning of January 25th the messenger arrived at Painter's, delivered his message, and warned Coppoc and his friends of the impending danger. Camp, upon reaching Iowa City, heard of the preparations for his reception in case he should appear in Springdale, so he prudently passed on to Muscatine to await the arrival of corrected extradition papers.

It is related that after a time he grew impatient at the delay and obtained the aid of the sheriff of Cedar County to arrest the fugitive. The sheriff understood the situation perfectly. At Springdale he went up and down the street asking in a loud voice of every one he met if they had seen Barclay Coppoc, and saying that he had a warrant for his arrest. But no one knew where Coppoc was. Barclay was actually sitting quietly in his mother's house, while the sheriff looked everywhere else but there. There is another story to the effect that Camp himself repaired to Springdale and there actually saw Coppoc, but was afraid to arrest him. And he had good reason for his prudence.

Soon after Coppoc returned to Springdale a number of his friends, hearing that a United States marshal was coming to the village to arrest him, had organized an armed association for his protection. Relays of these men were constantly on duty to prevent surprise. Many people urged Coppoc to go to Canada, or at least leave home

since that would be the first place the authorities would look for him. But Barclay steadfastly refused to flee, saying, "I have done nothing criminal, nothing that I am ashamed of. Why should I hide, or run away to Canada?"

To further insure his safety only a few of Coppoc's most trusted friends knew continually where he was. He was never seen at the same place at night as during the day; and rarely was he seen at all even by the few trusted friends. After the message came from Des Moines, the vigilance was redoubled. Coppoc was seen less than before, and he was always under heavy guard. Measures were also taken to send him into Canada at a moment's notice, in spite of his own objection.

The corrected extradition papers were received by Mr. Camp at Muscatine on February 10, 1860, and, upon presentation to Governor Kirkwood, being found satisfactory, were promptly honored. Camp, however, instead of hastening at once to Springdale in order to serve the warrant, timidly returned to Muscatine from Des Moines.

Upon receipt of the news of the arrival and honoring of the corrected papers, word was again sent to Coppoc and his friends at Springdale. On the evening of the day upon which the messenger arrived a sleigh might have been seen hastening toward Mechanicsville. This sleigh contained John H. Painter as driver, and Barclay

Coppoc and Thaddeus Maxson as passengers. The arguments of friends had at last convinced Coppoc that he must flee, though he strongly objected to a proceeding which to him seemed cowardly. Since he had but lately suffered from a severe attack of asthma as the result of his exposure in the mountains of Pennsylvania, he was barely able to take care of himself. Thaddeus Maxson was therefore selected to accompany and care for Coppoc in his flight.

Boarding the night train at Mechanicsville, Maxson and Coppoc took passage for Chicago. From Chicago they continued to Detroit, intending to cross into Canada. Upon their arrival at Detroit, however, word was received from the Brown boys asking them to come to Ashtabula County, Ohio. There they remained for more than a month. "Well armed and thoroughly disguised," they eventually proceeded to Columbiana County where they remained with friends several weeks before venturing to return to Iowa.

Despite the harrowing experiences he had endured, Barclay Coppoc was not one to forsake the cause he espoused. When the Civil War began he went to Kansas where, on July 24, 1861, he was commissioned lieutenant in the Third Kansas Volunteer Infantry. This regiment was commanded by Colonel James Montgomery, well known for his prominence in the Kansas war.

Coppoc was authorized by his commander to

enlist recruits for the regiment and with this purpose in view he returned to Springdale where he secured the enlistment of eleven young men who had been his schoolmates. While returning to Kansas with these men, his life was brought to a tragic close. As the train which was bearing him and his companions to Kansas was crossing the Platte River near St. Joseph, Missouri, the bridge, which had been partially burned by rebel guerrillas, gave way, precipitating the cars into the river.

Coppoc lived until the following day when he succumbed to the injuries received. His remains were buried with fitting military honors in the beautiful Pilot Knob Cemetery at Leavenworth, Kansas. Cedar County, Iowa, has not forgotten the sacrifice made by her valiant and patriotic son, and graven with the names of other Civil War heroes upon a commemorative shaft in Tipton, Iowa, may be read the name of Barclay Coppoc.

THOMAS TEAKLE

A Pictorial Scoop in 1859

The efforts of newspapers and news magazines to be the first with the news is not a phenomena of the twentieth century. It was quite common a century ago. The efforts of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* and *Harper's Weekly* to excel in both speed and accuracy in 1859 are comparable to those of *Life* and *Look* today. The rivalry at that time was just as intense and a scoop was something over which the victor did not hesitate to crow. John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, with its subsequent trial and executions, provided a field day for newspapers of that period. Since many northern papers were Abolitionist, or at least sympathetic in their attitude toward Brown, the Virginia authorities granted them virtually no opportunity for personal interviews nor were they allowed to be present at the execution. One exception was *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, a conservative pictorial paper that had revealed no sympathy for Brown nor for the general cause of Abolition. As a result the artist and correspondent for *Leslie's* were granted many special favors and opportunities. *Leslie's* was not slow to point out to its readers the authentic quality of its work and the

purely imaginative contributions of its bitter rival—*Harper's Weekly*. The following letter refers to the picture on the inside back cover of THE PALIMPSEST drawn by an eyewitness.

CAUTION — MORE BOGUS PICTURES.

SATURDAY EVENING, December 17th, 1859.

The Publishers of one of our imitators having announced that they will issue early this Saturday afternoon Pictures of the Executions at Charlestown, which took place at one o'clock P.M. on Friday afternoon, we make the following statement to put the Public on their guard:

None of the Artists there present reached New York till six o'clock on Saturday evening, five hours after said paper was issued; while these fancy Pictures were on the press at three o'clock this Saturday morning, fifteen hours before the sketches made there could have reached New York.

We could have published at the same time, but we preferred to wait for the *bona fide* sketches.

As a proof of our immense facilities, we give the history of the double page block in the present paper. To make preparations for the execution of this cut we engaged rooms at a hotel adjacent to our office, where our Artists and Engravers, who were to work all night, were to sleep during the day, ready to obey our summons at a moment's notice. As soon as our Artist arrived with the drawing it was sketched upon the block, which was made up of sixteen pieces bolted together; these were then divided among our Artists, who each finished a piece, which were then sent to our Engravers. Sixteen men worked upon them, relieved at times by others; and thus our engraving, which by the old system could not have been done in less than two or three weeks, WAS FINISHED IN ONE NIGHT. It is

only in our Establishment that such a marvelous feat could be accomplished.

This picture has been reduced to its present size from a double page spread measuring 14 x 20 inches, and represents a truly "lightning fast" effort back in 1859, Coppoc and Cook having been hung on December 16, and the picture appearing in the December 24, 1859, issue of *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.

Our forebears were just as thrilled in 1859 with *Leslie's* feat as the present generation was with its first introduction to wirephoto and television. Generations yet unborn may witness even more phenomenal exploits in the field of communications a century hence.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

