A Journey to Philadelphia: or, Memoirs of Charles Coleman Saunders.

An Original Tale—By Adelio.

Preface

*A Journey to Philadelphia, or, Memoirs of Charles Coleman Saunders* was first serialized in *The Philadelphia Repository and Weekly Register* in 1804. The initial installment appeared on April 14th, and the novel ran in six subsequent issues, ending May 19th. The author signed the novel simply “Adelio.” The pseudonym is a masculine derivation of the German *edel,* which translates to noble (*Pocket Oxford English-German Dictionary*). In addition to *A Journey to Philadelphia,* Adelio is named as author of 12 other poems and opinion letters in the magazine. One poem is written in German, and translated by another contributor, others written in English. His contributions present a range of topics, including marriage, linguistics, law, German poetry in translation, and nature. All Adelio’s contributions were published in 1804, and several were in the same issues in which *A Journey to Philadelphia* appeared.

*The Philadelphia Repository and Weekly Register* was a Philadelphia-based weekly magazine which was published from 1800-1805. According to its terms, a subscription cost four dollars per year, and half that for subscribers in the country outside Philadelphia (“Terms of the Repository 72”). Women’s interests were frequent topics in the magazine. According to Lucia McMahon’s study of female roles in American society, venues like *The Philadelphia Repository* expanded the network of communication in order to propagate and advocate for women’s education. “The early republic’s government, institutions, and society depended on the presence of properly educated women—and thus, the public had an obligation to support women’s education” (488). *The Philadelphia Repository* was a miscellany, committed to publishing a variety of topics, so it is unsurprising the editors would publish pieces which contributed to the national conversation of women’s roles in the nascent republic.

Adelio’s contributions are not excluded from the conversations on women. In one April 7th, 1804 Adelio letter, a case is made against men who bemoan their wives. He warns readers against choosing a marriage partner for beauty and fortune only.

Let those who write against marriage, pause, and reflect--let them enquire with care, listen candidly, and decide impartially, and I am much mistaken, if they do not find themselves erring in a most egregious manner; they will find, that where there are unhappy couples, it has as frequently been owing to an improper choice; in many instances the female has been selected for beauty of fortune only, without any regard to disposition, virtue, or solid accomplishments. (“For the Philadelphia Repository 71”)

In other words, Adelio echoes other writers of the Early National period by advocating for a filial marriage pairing instead of marriage for financial gain. The April 7th letter sparks a response from L’ami, another contributor, who disagrees with Adelio’s forgiving stance toward women in unhappy marriages. L’ami instead blames incessant female chatter, financial excess, and domineering female spirits to marital strife (“To Adelio”). Adelio responds by reproaching the writer, and suggesting he read more closely in order to fully understand his points (“To L’ami”).

In another entry, Adelio claims a motto, initially in German, then translated to English. “When you write, write so your reader may understand” (“For the Philadelphia Repository”). Following the German heading, Adelio’s article is a denouncement of foreign language mottos or headings, and he describes them, in essence, as pretentious displays of education.

Varied articles like Adelio’s are common to *The Philadelphia Repository and Weekly Register*. As a miscellany, the magazine ran various entries, including essays, fiction, birth and death announcements, poetry, biographical sketches, theatre information, and music. Itwas also known to re-print and re-run previous material or material from other periodicals. Edited first by David Hogan, successive editors were John W. Scott and Thomas Irwin. In 1802, the magazine was suspended from July to October due to the Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia (*American Periodicals)*.

*A Journey to Philadelphia’s* protagonist, Charles Coleman Saunders, an idealistic youth from the countryside north of Philadelphia. Saunders, while in search for his trade, is arrested for a murder he witnessed, but did not commit. The true culprit is his double in almost every way, a Freudian *unheimlich.* The double, whose name is Carson, attempts a crime due to an unhappy marriage. The stranger’s doubling represents Saunders’ options to choose an unhappy marriage and suffer the consequences, or to choose well and be happy. Emila represents a good marriage pairing, while the marriage of Saunders’ double represents what can happen if prudence and wisdom is not exercised in romantic pursuits.

In another subplot, Charles Saunders, like protagonists in Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland* (1798), faces trials at the hands of a malicious villain, one who threatens his existence and happiness. Like Brown’s Carwin, Carnell has insights to Saunders’ life, his home, and his closest friends. Saunders cannot rid himself of the villain, but unlike Brown’s novel, Saunders’ wrongful conviction shields him from Carnell, while Brown’s Wieland family (of German descent) falls to madness and violence. *The Journey to Philadelphia’s* parallels to other popular texts at the time suggests the influence of those works on the writer, and provides ample evidence for the short novel as a gothic tale.

Shortly after its appearance in *The Philadelphia Repository and Weekly Register, A Journey to Philadelphia* was collected and published as a book by publishers Lincoln and Gleason in 1804. Included in the book was *An Interesting Narrative,* another short, anonymously printed tale. That *A Journey to Philadelphia* was collected and sold as a text so soon after its initial publication suggests its popularity.

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*AN ORIGINAL TALE-- BY ADELIO.*

A

JOURNEY TO PHILADELPHIA:

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES COLEMAN SAUNDERS.

[1. 14 April 1804]

SOME time in the year--, I fre-

quently visit the prison at Philadelphia,

for no other purpose than to satisfy curi-

osity, in one of which visits, I noticed a

man sitting in a retired part: Something

in his appearance made me wish for a

nearer view, to accomplish my purpose,

I resolved to address him and offer such

little services, as I knew were agreeable to

persons in his situation; his counten-

ance was remarkably interesting, it bore

the traces of sorrow resisted by a manly

fortitude; his dress was plain in a much

greater degree, than was common for

persons at his age (he appeared about

twenty;) his manners were mild and pre-

possessing, and his conversation plainly

evinced that he possessed no common

share of intelligence; I afterwards fre-

quently visited him in his prison and did

him any little services my power: -- I

would describe his character; but this

will be better done, representing the fol-

lowing memoirs of him, written by him-

self.

TO you my friend who have not

suffered appearances to make you impen-

etrable to the voice of truth; and whose

humanity has alleviated the miseries of

my situation; I will relate the adven-

tures of my life; you will find them singu-

lar and unfortunate, and it will require

an exertion of all your candor to enable

you to give credit to the relation; -- but

I have now no motive, even if I had the

inclination, to deceive you; I shall short-

ly suffer the punishment due to the crime

of which I have been convicted, if you

think he who is standing on the verge of

eternity, and deeply impressed with a

proper sense of his situation, will not de-

ceive you, you will give my story a pa-

tient and accredited hearing.

The first part of my life was passed on

the banks of the Susquehanna in Penn-

Sylvania; my father had retired to this

place to pass his days in the quiet of an

agricultural life: He was one, who, like

myself, had early struggled in the thorny

paths of adversity and misfortune; he

had once filled a station better suited to

his talents and industry, and it was chief-

ly from this excellent being I received

the little knowledge I have acquired; but

on this is unnecessary to dwell:-- Pro-

fiting by his instructions, and aided by

a disposition to enquire into the causes

of all I saw in the works of nature and

art, and generally to add to my fund of

knowledge, I early contracted an aver-

sion to the dull uniform, and as I then

thought, uninstructive round of pursuits

which mark the progress of an agricultu-

ral life; I sought to distinguish myself

by becoming eminently useful to man-

kind; I had read of men who, with no

unusual talents, but by a proper exertion

of them, had become celebrated for some

singular services they had performed;

and why, thought I, could not I, like

them become distinguished; the path of

fame was open to all who have the cour-

age to tread it; could I not, by application

and a strenuous exertion of my powers

give my ideas a greater expansion? If I

reflected on what I saw, what I did, and

what was done by others, would it not at

last lead me to the accomplishment of my

wishes? There were various methods

by which I might acquire celebrity and

honor; in the field, in the cabinet, in the

study of the arts and sciences; for the

first I had neither inclination nor taste,

my disposition was peaceable, I possessed

none of that terrible kind of courage,

better called ferocity, which would ena-

ble me to distinguish myself as a soldier,

and had I possessed it, I did not enter-

tain the idea that honest fame could be

acquired by becoming the greatest of the

destroyers of the human race, and an in-

creaser of their already too numerous

calamities.

Politics pleased me as little, I thought

it would be impossible to preserve my

integrity, amidst the dangers and tempta-

tions which usually surround an impor-

tant political station, I saw that even the

preservation of this invaluable possession

would not perhaps eventually accomplish

my purpose; the best of politicians had

not all been famous for their virtue;

even those who had preserved it untaint-

ed, while they had been extolled by one

party of men, had been vilified by ano-

ther; to become celebrated in the pro-

motion of the arts and sciences, was the

only path left open to my footsteps, my

success in this pursuit would displease

no one, and the applause I might merit

would be willingly awarded by all.

Many of my leisure hours had been oc-

cupied by reflections of this nature, and

time only served to add strength to my

resolution; I had already become ac-

quainted with some of the principles of

experimental philosophy, my father’s

books had supplied me with much use-

ful knowledge in mechanics, hydraulics,

&c. many an unoccupied hour had been

passed in applying my theoretical know-

ledge to practice; I had constructed

clocks of wood, I had made mills, pumps,

&c. it is true, they were rude and un-

finished, but they were my first essays

and much could not be expected, where

the only tools used were a saw, hatchet,

and knife; yet my success served to add

vigor to my ruling passion; I flattered

myself that my little machines were con-

structed on an improved plan, and if I

could make improvements here, under so

many disadvantages, what should I not

be able to perform in the city, where

these attempts might be made on a more

extensive scale, and would receive the

reward due to their merit.

To go to the city became my most

earnest wish; but my father was very

averse to the scheme, his experience had

taught him to believe a greater share of

felicity was attainable in his situation,

than in the accomplishment of the object

of my pursuit; I knew he entertained

this opinion and therefore resolved not to

consult him, but to act in obedience to

the dictates of my inclination, without

his knowledge; it would do him no in-

jury, my brother was a sufficient assist-

ant in the ordinary labors of the planta-

tion, and his circumstances enabled him

to hire in the case of inability. -- My resolu-

tion was taken, and I had but to put it in

execution; a journey of a few days

would bear me to the city: I was well

acquainted with the roads, accustomed to

pedestrian feats, and dreaded no danger,

from a nightly elopement. A circum-

stance which happened some time before,

was an additional motive; it had been

my delight to take a nightly ramble to a

rock which commanded a fine view of

the river and surrounding country, here

I used to sit, or walk, and contemplate

the beauties of nature, when the mild ra-

diance of the moon displayed all the ro-

mantic beauties of the surrounding

scene, in its richest, though softest tints;

nor was this my only employment, I had

a smattering of astronomy, I could name

most of the constellations, and loved to

gaze over, and reflect on the innumera-

ble glories of the heavens; returning

from an excursion of this kind, I was

alarmed by a cry of distress, I started--

the natural timidity of my disposition

gave way to the idea, that I might per-

haps, be serviceable to some person in

distress, the voice was that of a female,

but from whence could it proceed? I

knew no female would willingly be

abroad at this solitary hour, in a country

but thinly settled; the idea of robbers

occurred, -- the shriek was heard again,

it was near me; and I quickly saw a

man attempting to bear a struggling fe-

male from the public road; I rushed up-

on him, -- a desperate struggle ensued,

in which I proved victorious; mean-

while, the lady had fled, but the momen-

tary view I had of her features awaken-

ed sensations of a new and unaccountable

kind; the first wish they produced was,

a desire to behold again, the object which

had excited them; the man who had

yielded to my superior strength had fled,

I had no right to detain him, I had ac-

complished my object; but now a new

one occupied my attention: I hasted to

search after the female, I searched the

road, the wood, but in vain, she was no

where to be found; and I returned home

weary, dissatisfied and perplexed.

All my enquiries with regard to the

lady, were fruitless, -- my affairs pro-

ceded in their wonted course for some

time; my nocturnal rambles were con-

tinued, and my speculations with regard

to the future were still indulged; one

night I was returning home from my

favorite spot, I noticed a man crossing

the path which led to my father’s dwell-

ing; surprised at an appearance so un-

common, I was endeavoring to guess

what could induce anyone, besides my-

self, to wander through the woods at this

late hour; from these reflections, I was

roused by a pistol shot, which deprived

me for a time, of sentation[[1]](#footnote-1); I know not

how long I remained in this state, and

when I recovered, found I had sustained

but little injury; how I happened to es-

cape so well, I know not, whether it had

been fired from a great distance, had

spent its force by striking against a tree,

or been deadened by the resistance of my

hat and a large handkerchief, which I

had bound round my head to relieve a

violent head-ache, I am unable to deter-

mine; but I was happy I had received so

small an injury.

A new train of reflections and surmis-

es were new exited; I asked myself

who could be the person that fired; it

was evident it was an enemy; every con-

current circumstance, the hour, the place,

seemed to impress this belief; but who

would it be? I had injured no being on

earth, I was almost a stranger (owing to

my romantic notions) even to my nearest

neighbors; I was totally unable to form

any rational conjecture; I soon recover-

ed the slight injury I had sustained; the

circumstance no longer caused any anxi-

ety, and I again ventured to revisit my

favorite retreat;--returning home one

night, as I passed through my brother’s

chamber to gain my own, I saw by the

light of the moon, the figure of a man

standing near the bed of my brother,

armed with a dagger; I stood almost pe-

trified with fear and astonishment; I

had imbibed from our rustic neighbors,

some superstitious ideas, it was near,

“the noon of night,” that solemn hour,

when the dead forsake their graves, and

wander forth to revisit scenes once dear

to them; I believed I saw a spectre; I

made no alarm, my tongue clave to the

roof of my mouth, horror almost froze

the blood in my veins, and my limbs

scarcely supported my tottering frame!

The figure moved towards me, -- I made

a desperate effort, reached my chamber

and locked the door; the silence of death

reigned in the house, -- not a sound reach-

ed my ear; I gave myself up to reflec-

tion: could, I asked, this figure be an in-

habitant of the grave? Was it probable

that the dead could leave the earth, and

rise to sport with the terrors of mankind?

Would they come armed with the wea-

pons of death? My reason would not

suffer me to cherish the thought, my cou-

rage returned, I left the room and search-

ed the house in silence, for now I believ-

ed it must be a robber I had seen; but I

found no one, every thing was save, and

returning to my bed, I puzzled myself

with fain conjectures, till sleep wrapped

my senses in forgetfulness.

In the morning, I enquired if any noise

had been heard in the night? And No,

was the answer; no one had heard any

thing, their slumbers had been sound and

uninterrupted; I evaded answering with

truth to the consequent enquiries, by say-

ing I had dreamed a frightful dream.

The next night I again saw the same

figure, but I was now convinced it was

no spectre, but a man; at the sight of me

he fled, and passed through the door

which I had by accident left unfastened;

a new cause of wonder here presented it-

self: who could this man be? and what

was his object? were questions which

naturally occurred; my father frequently

left his bed and traversed the house in

his sleep; but it was certain this was

not him. By what means could he have

entered the house? I had fastened the

door and had the key in my pock-

et; he was armed; this gave birth to a

new idea; it was evident his intentions

were dreadful; my adventure on a pre-

ceding night was remembered; my life

had been aimed at, and it was probable

it was again attempted; my thoughts

however, fixed themselves on no deter-

minate object, until I recalled the remem-

brance of the female whose rescue I had

effected; that man whom I had defeat-

ed, he then, I concluded, must be the one

who had fired the pistol, and whom I

twice met armed in my brother’s cham-

ber, -- he wished to revenge himself

on the author of his defeat, he had attempted

to destroy my brother through mistake,

and my appearance had alone saved his

life. There now appeared to be an ab-

solute necessity of taking some measures

to counteract his schemes; and in form-

ing plans of this nature I busied myself,

till a new thought displaced my former

ones. It now appeared plain to me, that

this man had discovered his error, or

why did he not (believing I slept in the bed

of my brother) pierce his bosom with

the dagger; there was nothing to pre-

vent him, my brother was sleeping, he

might have killed him, retired in silence,

and the dark mantle of oblivion, would

have hidden the secret from the know-

ledge of man. It was now evident my

life was attempted; he had found means

to descend the chimney, and enter my

brother’s chamber, as by this means only,

he could enter mine.

*(to be continued)*

[ 2. 21 April 1804]

There is no fear which acts so

powerfully on the mind of man, as that

which bids him guard against no deter-

minate object or attempt; my death was

certainly intended. To meet it face to

face in any form (though constitutionally

timid) I thought possible; but to be for-

ever in danger, to be taken off by a bullet

while I believed myself safe, to drink the

draught of death, when I thought myself

restoring vigor to my exhausted frame,

or to perish when lying defenceless and

reposing in the arms of sleep -- these

were dangers to encounter for which all

my courage was unequal, and which could

only be avoided by removing from my

present abode; once gone, my enemy’s

scheme of revenge would be relinquish-

ed; if I remained, I should one time or

other, become its victim. My journey

to the city was again resolved upon and

executed. At midnight I left my father’s

house, but without any intention to re-

turn: I took nothing with me except a

small sum of money: I imparted my in-

tention to no one: I may be blamed for

leaving my friends thus abruptly, in anx-

iety and suspense respecting my fate;

but I thought it wrong to alarm them, as

they could not possibly remove the cause

of my danger; they would have persuad-

ed me to remain, or by their means my

future residence would be discovered,

CARNELL (the being whom I believed to

be my secret enemy) would pursue me,

and I should be subject to incessant

alarms; perhaps you may think my con-

clusions unwarranted; if so, remember

they were the conclusions of one, who

was unable, from the singularity of the

case, to receive advantages from the judg-

ement of others.

I did not, however, leave my father’s

house without emotion, I could not de-

ny myself the secret satisfaction of vis-

iting every spot, which recollection made

dear to my heart, the nocturnal seat

was not forgotten; once more I repair-

ed thither and seated myself in the usual

place; -- the night was calm and clear,

not a cloud obscured the splendors of the

etherial vault of heaven, the moon was

full and her beams seemed to repose on

the tranquil bosom of the water; every

sound was hushed, save when the zephyr

sighed through the foliage of the venera-

ble oaks. -- It brought to my recollection

the celebrated night-piece of *Homer*, --

thus translated by *Pope*:--

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,

O’er heav’n’s clear azure casts her sacred light,

When not a breeze disturbs the blue serene,

And not a cloud o’ercasts the solemn scene;

Around her throne the vivid planets roll,

And stars unnumber’d gild the glowing pole;

O’er the dark trees a yellower lustre shed,

And tip with silver ev’ry mountain’s head.--

Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise;

A flood of glory bursts from all the skies;

The conscious swains exulting in the sight,

Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.

To me who was about to leave it, per-

haps forever, this scene appeared unusu-

ally interesting; I knew not how long I

sat occupied with various reflections,

when I was roused by the sound of ap-

proaching footsteps; I started, and look-

ed around, I saw a young woman at no

great distance from me, in her hand she

held an open letter; her movements were

wild, irregular, she would look on the

letter, and then on heaven; I watched

her with attention and solicitude; the

adventure was of a singular nature; this

was a place not frequented by any human

being except myself, at least I had not

seen any one here at this hour. Could

she be seeking any one here! This

seemed improbable, and her attention

seemed wholly absorbed by the letter. –

Suddenly she exclaimed, I can bear this

torture no longer, rushed towards

the river; I started from my seat, and

flew to prevent her; I seized her but she

eluded my grasp, shrieked, and leaped

into the water! In a moment all was

again silent; to descend to the river at

this spot, could not be accomplished

without immanent risk; I looked down

on the stream, but the overhanging rocks

cast a deep shade over it, and I saw her

no more: Some distressing occurrence

had probably overpowered her reason,

and in a moment of despair and insani-

ty she had put an end to her existence;

she had chosen the hour of midnight for

this purpose, when she thought the deed

would be concealed from every human

eye; I however, had been a melancholy

witness to the shocking catastrophe.

Her friends would wonder whither she

had fled – I only could tell; her corse

would be borne down the stream, it

would perhaps be found when corruption

had made the features indistinguisha-

ble; conjectures would be formed as to

who it had been, and how it came there;

and I alone, could answer all these ques-

tions; but should I endeavor to discover

who it was, should I inform her friends,

what had been her fate; I should be

seized as the perpetrator of the deed: I

might indeed discover the truth, but

they would not believe it; I should suf-

fer by my sincerity, I should at least be

blamed for not preventing it; this I

might have done, but how was I to ima-

gine her intention? Self-destruction was

a deed of which I thought mankind in-

capable, and when convinced of the con-

trary, it was too late -- the deed was

done; the past could not be recalled. I

resolved to leave every thing to its

course; no one had witnessed her end

but myself, and I would, for many re-

asons, be induced to conceal it, her

friends would be benefited by this pro-

cedure, they would suppose her death,

(if the intelligence of it reached them) ac-

cidental, and be spared the dreadful cer-

tainty of its being intentionally effected.

I pursued my journey, and reached the

city in safety; here new difficulties pre-

sented themselves; my object had been

to offer myself as an apprentice to a

watchmaker; but who would take me?

I was acquainted with no human being,

though surrounded by so many thou-

sands, I was unknown and unrecommend-

ded; in the mean time I might be ap-

prehended as a thief, or confined as a

vagrant or runaway; this might be pre-

vented by a disclosure of the truth, but

its concealment was necessary to my pur-

pose; in addition to this, food was abso-

lutely necessary; my stock of money

was almost exhausted.

Those who have lived remote from

cities, have not a just conception of the

real necessity of money; provisions for

a day, lodgings for a night, might be had

in many parts of the country gratis, and

would be received as the offering of hos-

pitality, a virtue more practised in the

country, than in town: The little cash I

had yet remaining would not, here, pur-

chase more food than was necessary for

a single meal; the haughty indepen-

dence of my spirit would not permit me

to ask a favor, and my soul revolted at

the thought of stealing; I shuddered

when I reflected on the condition to

which my imprudence had reduced me;

a secret voice whispered, “you have

done wrong;” but to return was too late,

and the evils I had fled from would again

be encountered; my situation was sim-

ilar to that of a man in the midst of a

rapid stream; it was at least as easy to

proceed as to return, my course was

pointed out, and I could do nothing

more than rush on boldly to the endur-

ance of whatever ills I was doomed to

suffer.

I knocked at the door of a watchmaker

in market-street, and was soon ushered

into the room, where sat the master and

his family, in a manner which plainly

evinced my embarrassment; I told him

my business; his dark, unprepossessing

features were contracted, and his pene-

trating eyes seemed to pierce my

very soul: He asked my name, place of

abode, &c. I told him no falsehoods,

neither did I tell him the whole truth; I

did not tell him my father’s dislike to my

pursuit; after much conversation of an

uninteresting nature, he said, “your sto-

ry does not seem improbable, your ap-

pearance seems to evince the truth of

some parts of it, but if I take you as an

apprentice, what security can you give

me, for your good conduct, and indus-

try.” All I have to give, I replied, is the

word of a man of honor, who values his

word too highly, to promise what he

does not intend to perform. The term,

I believe sounded strangely in his ears,

it was indeed ludicrously contrasted

with my homely dress, and awkward ap-

pearance, and I believe he was about to

refuse me, when the entrance of a young

lady put an end to this interval of sus-

pense, and created another; she cast an

enquiring look upon me; I felt still

more distressed, and held down my head,

confused and confounded, when a sud-

den exclamation from her, of “Can it be

possible?” effectually roused me, “can

what be possible?” said every one in the

same instant; she answered not, but hast-

ening to me, she seized my hand; I was

now convinced my conjectures were

right; when she spoke, I thought the

voice familiar to my ear, at least that I

had somewhere heard it before; a sight

of her features told me where, my hand

trembled in hers, and I flattered myself

she was not without emotion: You have,

no doubt, already guessed who this lady

was, you will remember my adventure

in the wood when I saved her from the

violence of CARNELL: An explanation

ensued, and I received the thanks of her

family; my first request was granted,

and I became an apprentice.

*(to be continued)*

[ 3. 28 April 1804]

TIME rolled rapidly along; my

exertions pleased Mr. BRANART; my

knowledge increased; my reading, and

conversation with man, enlarged my

mind, whilst it corrected many of my er-

rors; my hopes of distinction were raised,

I thought I saw the path of fame open as I

travelled: Mean time my leisure hours

were passed in the society of the amiable

EMILIA BRANART, the first impressions

which I had felt at the sight of her, were

strengthened and confirmed; nor did I

think her opinion of me unfavorable, and

I believed I should have no cause to re-

pent my journey.

But this pleasing calm, this feast on

lively hopes of future prosperity, distinc-

tion and happiness, was doomed to be in-

terrupted, by an alarming circumstance:

I had been sent to repair a clock at the

house of a gentleman in race-street; re-

turning home, just as I stepped on the

pavement, I saw a stage coach arrive at a

neighboring house; wishing to see if any

of the passengers were known to me, I

stopped and to my astonishment, saw

CARNELL descend from it; a cold shud-

dering seized me; the sight of this be-

ing filled me with sensations of a dread-

ful nature; they were connected with a

sense of the dangers to which I thought

myself again exposed; this man I was

convinced, had sought to destroy me,

and now again haunted me for the same

dreadful purpose. Yet, how could he

have discovered my residence? I had

imparted no hints of the place of my de-

stination on quitting my native spot, to

any human being; yet he was here;

causes with which I was wholly uncon-

nected, might have induced him to visit

Philadelphia; pleasure, business for

aught I knew, this city might be his home,

yet I still labored under the conviction

that I, and I alone, was the object of his

journey, to gratify his revenge, to em-

brue his hands in the blood of an innocent

man. And was his vengeance to be gra-

tified only by my destruction? Was there

no method of warding off the impending

danger? Could I not cause him to be ap-

prehended? I had seen him in my cham-

ber, armed with the instruments of death,

at the hour of midnight; but I was the

only one; my voice alone would not

condemn him, and if it would, dare I

charge him with meditating a deed, of

which he had perhaps never formed an

idea? It was at least possible, I might

be mistaken, it might have been some

other, my apprehensions had probably

deceived my senses; these and many

more reflections passed rapidly though

my mind, but produced no other effect

than to confuse it with the uncertainty

of probabilities, and the horrors of appre-

hension.

Nothing, however could be done; no

means could be pursued, to ensure my

safety, or lull my fears. I was obliged

to wait with patience the unfolding of

this mystery, and prepare myself to meet,

with firmness, whatever might happen.

Walking in the state-house garden[[2]](#footnote-2)

was a favorite amusement with EMILIA;

thither I frequently attended her, when

the warmth of the summer days, made

the coolness of the evening, and the frag-

rance of the garden inviting; here, en-

joying the society and conversation of

the object of my fondest affections, -- I

was suddenly seized by two officers of

justice: I was surprized[[3]](#footnote-3), and enquired

their business, “Our business, Sir,” said

one of them, “is with you.” You have

mistaken your object said I, with me you

have no possible business; they howev-

er, insisted they were right, they men-

tioned my name, and even my former

place of abode; after a vain altercation I

accompanied them to the mayor’s office,

and answered many questions, and was

finally informed I was charged with the

crime of murder! You may form some

idea of my astonishment at the informa-

tion; EMILIA had accompanied me to

the mayor’s she believed the officers la-

bored under some mistake, and her feel-

ings may easily be conceived when she

found me charged with the commission

of so detestable a crime; yet what she

knew of my character and conduct, seem-

ed not to accord with that of a murder-

er; she requested I should not be sent

to prison; she believed me innocent,

and related those events of my life which

had fallen under her observation: The

mayor was a humane man, but he was

compelled to fulfil the duties of his of-

fice; “All you have stated,” said he,

“may be true,” but I, he observed, was

charged with the murder of a young

woman, who had long been missing. I

had entered the city under very sus-

picious circumstances &c. if I was innocent

the truth would shortly appear; this was

not the place of my trial, his duty, how-

ever, obliged him to confine me, and I

was sent to prison!

Of all the strange adventures I had

met with, this was the furthest above my

comprehension: I could recollect no

circumstances of my life which could pos-

sibly create suspicions of this nature:

I did not think myself a dubious charac-

ter; during my residence in the city I

had led a quiet and inoffensive life;

how then was this to be accounted for?

It was evident some person had lodged

information which would justify my con-

finement, in the judgment of the may-

or; but here I was almost entirely a

stranger, and who, except actuated by

the spirit of a demon, would accuse me

of any crime, without possessing at least

a shadow of proof; the crime too, was

so detestable, I had never even meditate-

ed it; I was lost and bewildered amidst

innumerable and useless conjectures: At

length the idea of CARNELL occurred,

and with it a train of terrifying images;

might not he, I asked, have caused my

apprehension? Might he have not sub-

orned some desperate villains, to prove

me guilty of the crime? The conjecture

seemed probable: instigated by revenge,

he had already sought my destruction;

and was not he who could deliberately

meditate the death of an innocent man,

capable of any deed, however enormous

and detestable? Thus did I bewilder my

senses endeavoring to guess why I

had been apprehended; my few friends,

in the mean time, visited me in prison;

they believed me innocent, and endeav-

ored to impress a belief, that I would, on

trial, be proved so, and be honorably ac-

quitted; for this occasion, I summoned

all my firmness to my aid, yet I could not

avoid reflecting with pain on the misfor-

tunes I had encountered in consequence

of quitting my paternal home; I had left

it, chiefly to avoid assassination, and was

now to suffer death, (perhaps) for a crime

of the commission of which I was inno-

cent.

*(to be continued)*

[ 4. 5 May 1804]

THE day of trial came; I was con-

ducted to the bar of the supreme court;

the eyes of hundreds were upon me; the

usual question was asked, “*Are you guil-*

*ty? or not guilty?”* I replied with firm-

ness “Not guilty!” when the charge was

read, and I was accused of drowning a

young woman, by forcibly pushing her

into the river *Susquehanna!* A smother-

ed groan was heard from the audience;

it was not excited by an emotion of pity

for me, but was a proof of their detesta-

tion of the author of so shocking a deed;

I did not blame it, it was honorable to

their feelings, and evinced the rectitude

of their hearts. I now found to my sur-

prise, I was tried for the murder of her

whose life I would gladly have saved,

and whose unfortunate end I thought no

eye, save mine, had witnessed; it now

appeared, some others had witnessed it

besides me, but who, and why I was

charged with the crime, were circum-

stances, to me, inexplicable. The wit-

nesses now appeared, but guess, if you

can, my sensations, when the first I saw,

was (CARNELL) the same dreadful being

I had seen in my brother’s chamber, I

shuddered; my heart beat tremulously

in my bosom; my sight grew dim, and

I almost fainted; the spectators seemed

to consider my emotion a proof of my

guilt, but they were mistaken. The tri-

al continued, and new sources of inde-

scribable astonishment and wonder were

every moment displayed. The sub-

stance of the evidence was as follows--

“That I had planned and effected the

death of SUSAN WARFIELD; I had been

heard to say, I would destroy her, by

any means in my power; that knowing

she had frequented the scene of her death,

I had laid in ambush (armed) to effect

my purpose, and had been seen by the

evidence (who were fishing at a little

distance, though in a situation which

precluded all possibility of rendering as-

sistance) to push her forcibly into the

water, where there was little probability

of her escaping:” All this was new to

me, so far from planning her death, I had

scarcely known her, she had consequent-

ly never given me any cause of offence,

I was certainly ignorant of the visits of

any one but myself to the spot I had cho-

sen for my nocturnal seat; the exertion

I had made to save her, might, it was

true, be mistaken for the different one, by

persons who had seen the transaction

from a distance; but that it should be

said, I had declared my intention to de-

stroy her, and that I had concealed my-

self to effect this purpose, was really as-

tonishing: But the witnesses were suf-

ficient, respectable, positive and uniform

in their depositions. I had nothing to

offer in my defence but the truth, but

who would give credit to the relation of

one who stood convicted of so foul a

crime, who had secretly left his native

home, and entered the city in a manner

not ill calculated to excite suspicion, had

concealed his true name and passed un-

der a different one (CHARLES COLEMAN)

and betrayed evident marks of guilt and

confusion, at the sight of his accusers. --

Had I said, --I had seen CARNELL offer-

Ing violence to EMILIA; had rescued her

from his grasp; had seen him in my

brother’s chamber armed with a dagger,

at midnight &c. would my tale have

been credited? No, I had no proofs to

offer; I had informed no person, not

even my brother of what I had seen. I

believed all attempts at defence would

prove entirely useless, and therefore for-

bore to make any. I thought it better to

meet my fate, dreadful and ignominious

as it was, with manly firmness and un-

yielding fortitude; my story would be

treated as the last effort of despairing

villainy and impotent malice. The

Judge addressed the jury in a solemn

and impressive manner; they retired,

and in a short time, returned with the ex-

pected virdict[[4]](#footnote-4), “*guilty!”* They had

done their duty. I had no cause to com-

plain, the evidence was sufficient to con-

demn me; and had I been appointed to

judge a similar cause I should have act-

ed in the same manner; I listened to my

sentence with calmness and composure,

and was reconducted for the last time,

to the prison. Thus, I had given you

a faithful and exact account of my adven-

tures. -- I shall now shortly suffer an ig-

nominious death: the world in general

believe me guilty: but the time may

come, when what is now hidden from hu-

man eyes, will be disclosed, -- and then,

my friend, when the grave shall hide me

from the world, you, I trust, will do jus-

tice to my memory.

THUS ended the story of this unfor-

tunate young man, it was told with the

greatest apparent sincerity, and my heart

became deeply interested in his fate. I

was astonished at the calmness with

which he supported his misfortunes; he

was endowed with the keenest sensibili-

ty, and even timidity of disposition; his

courage had probably never been awak-

ened by danger, or perhaps was of that

kind, which, though unequal to the en-

counter of sudden and alarming attacks,

gathered strength by reflection; those

who best know the various shades of

character which distinguished mankind,

know, that there are persons of weak and

delicate constitutions, who tremble at the

slightest agitation, while their minds re-

main firm and undaunted, who, if they

have time for reflection, meet danger

with an undaunted front: Thus it ap-

peared in the present case, here reflection

seemed to have inspired a contempt of

death in its most terrified and disgraceful

form, in the mind of this young man;

yet there were moments, when his tran-

quility was disturbed, when the images

of his father, his friends, and above all,

his EMILIA presented themselves to

his imagination: EMILIA loved him with the

tenderest affection, which even his mis-

fortunes, (for she believed him guiltless)

were unable to alienate; yet, for him she

was doomed to suffer all the evils, flow-

ing from disappointed love, and the cru-

el taunts of a misjudging world; these

causes interrupted his quiet far more

than his own misfortunes; “my pain,”

said he will “shortly end; death will

lull it to rest; but, for them, an ample

store of anguish is collected, which time

alone can mitigate.” -- Some pressing af-

fairs obliging me to hasten to Europe, I

bade him an eternal *adieu!* The day of his

execution was at hand, which my depar-

ture alone spared me the pain of witness-

ing. --

*(to be continued)*

[ 5. 12 May 1804]

SOME years after, I returned to

Philadelphia; the misfortunes of SAUN-

DERS, though not forgotten, yet the im-

pression they made was partly effaced

by time and various cares.

While walking one day in front-street,

I was transported with the sight of SAUN-

DERS coming towards me: we instantly

recognized each other, and were folded

in a mutual embrace; I eagerly interro-

gated him on that subject, which my for-

mer knowledge of him and my astonish-

ment at our present meeting naturally

excited, when, after entering his house,

he gave me the following information.

“The day of my intended execution

came, and with it my father: His pre-

sence was more distressing to me, than

death itself; I wished to spare him the

pangs a parent must feel, who is doomed

to witness the ignominious death of a

son, once dear to his affections: but fate

had determined otherwise: Some per-

son had informed him to my expected

fate, and he hastened to bid me a last

adieu. He entered my prison, I flew to

embrace him, he received me with emo-

tions, which his love of justice had made him

desirous of suppressing; but the tide of

nature was powerful, and the severity of

judge was softened by the tenderness

of the parent: Think, my friend, what

must be the feelings of a parent who has

labored for years to teach his offspring

the duties of life, and the exercise of vir-

tue, -- a parent, venerable for his age,

and whose life, was unstained with a

crime, when he beholds the object of his

love, forsake the paths of rectitude, and

become the most detested villain, and

your imagination will paint this scene,

better than my words can describe it:

He believed me guilty, -- this impression

I strove to remove, and succeeded:

falsehood was so mean a crime, that he

believed me incapable of it, though pas-

sion might have impelled to the perpetra-

tion of greater crimes. Yet the convic-

tion of my innocence did not dispel his

sorrow; to the pain which the death of a

son will naturally produce, was added, t

he shameful manner by which justice in-

flicted the blow: I should die innocent,

but would his conviction of this, induce

the world to believe me so? -- Would not

my death load my family with shame

and infamy, which an indiscriminating

world casts on the relations of a murder

er? -- But now the appointed hour was

come -- I bade my friends farewell! and

the cart moved towards the place of ex-

ecution; the rope was fastened around

my neck, the cap was about to be drawn

over my eyes, and the signal was about

to be given, the execution of which

would hide the world from my view for-

ever, when a sudden and piercing cry of

“Save him! save him!” was heard and

a young woman rushed through the

crowd, to the foot of the gallows; her

distress and agitation soon discovered

who she was, it was her for whose mur-

der I was about to suffer! whom I

thought I had seen perish on the memo-

rable night when I left my paternal

abode! Yet, here she was, by some

means unaccountable to me, at the foot

of the gallows, accusing herself as being

the cause of my misfortunes, and implore-

ing the sheriff to suspend my execution.

The crowd pressed tumultuously around,

and joined their cries to hers. --The

rope was unfastened, and I reconducted

to prison.

“I had been saved, in the last moment,

from an infamous death; a prospect of

life and liberty was open before me;

my friends and even the spectators con-

gratulated me with that tenderness and

joy which will naturally arise in the bo-

soms of men, when they behold inno-

cence snatched from the fate which is

only the punishment of guilt; yet,

strange as it may seem, I was the only

one who seemed to feel but little emo-

tion: I had long contemplated death as

certain and inevitable, I had prepared

myself to meet it with a manly fortitude;

I wished to prove with what dignity I

could suffer a fate I had never merited,

and conscious innocence brightened my

prospect of eternity; the name of death

had become familiar and his terrible

shaft had lost the keenness of its point;

I returned to prison with but little more

pleasure than I left it, and some hours

elapsed ere I was sufficiently sensible of

the blessing of renewed existence to be

grateful for the gift; to no one was my

life more gratifying than the lovely

EMILIA; her joy was not expressed by

words, nor displayed by gestures; but

was painted in lively colors on her ex-

pressive countenance; a sweet satisfaction

animated every feature, and gave addi-

tional lustre to her beaming eyes.

“You will naturally be anxious to

know how this change was produced;

WARFIELD’S information was as fol-

lows; she had, for some reason she did

not explain, determined to anticipate the

hand of death by drowning herself; that

she attempted it, you know; but the fear

of death, proved stronger than her dis-

gust of life, and with great difficulty she

saved herself from that fate she had

sought with so much secresy; but,

dreading to return home and endure the

severity of her parents’ reproaches (who

she supposed would be made acquainted

with the circumstance) she fled to a rela-

tion in Maryland: Meanwhile the intel-

ligence of my fate reached her; alarmed

at the consequences her folly was likely

to occasion, she hastened to Philadel-

phia, thinking it probable she might ar-

rive in time to avert the fate which hung

over me; when she reached the city,

she saw the immense concourse of peo-

ple, who had assembled to witness my

execution; curiosity led her to enquire

my crime; the moment was propitious,

and my life was preserved. Yet reflec-

tion dissipated a greater part of my joy,

when I considered my situation,

my innocence of the crime of murder

was proved and I should probably be

liberated in a short time from confine-

ment; but who was to prove me inno-

cent of meditated guilt? Would not I

still be treated as a being dangerous to

the community? Would the world consi-

der me as much less guilty than before?

I should be detested by all mankind, and

condemned to wander through the world

like an outcast from human society; I

was conscious of my innocence, it is

true; this had supported me at the most

trying moment of my existence; but

that proud, unbending spirit I had receiv-

ed from nature, and which had been

strengthened by education, recoiled at

the prospect. I wished to deserve the

good opinion of all mankind, to command

respect, though I could not inspire love;

how then should I be able, when walking

through the streets of the city, to bear to

be shunned by all good men, and treated

as a being with whom no one could safe-

ly commune; these reflections gave me

intolerable anguish; I was almost tempt-

ed to wish I had perished at the hand of

justice; I should then have slept quietly

with the dead, the grave would have

shielded me from the scorn of mankind,

and insured my tranquility.

“By my uneasiness was happily re-

lieved--on the day succeeding that on

which my life was saved, I was saved

from a fate which I considered as little

better than death, in the following man-

ner, several of the persons who were wit-

nesses at my trial visited me in prison,

one of whom gave me the following wel-

come information, which I will give you

in his own words.

*(to be continued)*

[ 6. 19 May 1804]

“THAT the motives of my con-

duct, and that of my colleagues may be

understood, and our innocence of any de-

sign against your life, or the crime of

perjury may be proved; I shall relate a

few circumstances which happened pre-

vious to your unfortunate journey to Phi-

ladelphia: Being on a visit of some

length in the neighborhood of your late

residence, we happened to stop one even-

ing at an inn, where we heard a young

man (who we then thought was you)

express his intention of effecting the

death of SUSAN WARFIELD; he said her

base treatment of him, would justify any

measures, however violent and sanguina-

ry; it was such, as no human being,

however gentle, would suffer to pass,

without the severest punishment; and fi-

nally, he said he would effect her destruct-

tion in any manner whatever; we saw

him, though we were in the next room,

through the glazed door; he, I believe,

was unconscious of our presence: he de-

clared his intention to his companion,

while intoxicated with passion and foam-

ing with rage and fury; the circumstance

made some impression on our minds;

but we believed his words proceeded

from the violence of his passion, and did

not doubt, but during the paroxysms of

anger, he had meditated, what when rea-

son again regulated his conduct, he

would certainly not execute; for these

reasons we were silent, until some

months after; we were accustomed du-

ring the moon-light summer nights to

fish for eels in a small stream which

emptied into the river Susquehanna, the

situation we usually chose commanded a

near view of the rocky eminence where

we could observe all that passed without

being seen; here we saw you frequent-

ly arrive, armed with a club in the night;

near this place WARFIELD usually pass-

ed the evening with her lover, as his vi-

sits to her father’s house were forbidden;

these circumstance, compared with what

we had witnessed at the inn, excited our

suspicions, and you were narrowly watch-

ed; -- one night, while pursuing our usu-

al sport, we saw WARFIELD approach

you; we saw you rise soon after, rush

upon, and push her into the river; all

this was done in a few minutes, nor was

it in our power, (though in a short

distance) to prevent, or to save WAR

FIELD; as to reach you, we should have

been obliged to take a circuitous rout:

we therefore watched you, as you had to

pass very near where we were concealed,

by the trees, (it should be recollected,

that we still believed, you was the same

person we had seen at the inn.) That

night you absconded, and it was long

ere our inquiries traced you to Philadel-

phia. We caused your apprehension

and conviction. --As we were returning

home to Maryland (our place of resi-

dence) we lodged at an inn on the road,

where, on entering, to our astonishment

we saw a man sitting in the room, so

much resembling you, that we were ful-

ly persuaded you had escaped from pri-

son; without a moment’s hesitation we

seized him; his astonishment seemed

equal to our own; he said he was in

search of his wife, who had left his house

in Maryland, and he believed had gone

to her father’s on the banks of the Sus-

quehanna; he told his story with appa-

rent sincerity, and with that confidence

which innocence, or impudence, only,

can assume when charged with a crime;

we gazed on each other in silent wonder;

with the banks of the Susquehanna we

were somewhat acquainted; we asked

him many questions which he readily an-

swered; but when we charged him with

the crime for which you were condemn-

ed to suffer, he replied, if possible, with

increasing astonishment; SUSAN WAR-

FIELD is my wife! Not many days have

elapsed since I saw her; he explain-

ed to us several circumstances, all which

filled us with horror and consternation;

in short, we were made acquainted with

every circumstance necessary to prove

your innocence: Judge then, if you can,

what we felt; we had caused the death

of a guiltless and deserving man, he had

been deceived by an unusual resemblance

between two persons. unknown to each

other: the day appointed for the exe-

cution had already passed and you had

probably been punished for a deed you

had never committed; but the pangs of

death, and the extremest tortures were

bliss compared to the horrible sensations

we experienced. –Yet there was still a

possibility of your execution being defer-

red; this had more than once, been the

case; the life of a man and our own fu-

ture peace were at stake, and while there

was the most distant hope it might be

saved, it was our duty and our wish to

make the experiment. To return to Phila-

delphia and to take CARSON with us,

was a resolution adopted and instantly

put into execution; to our inexpressible

joy our journey has not been vain; you

will scarcely be able, sufferer as you have

been, to forgive us, who have been,

though unintentionally, the cause of your

misfortunes; but could you know the

torments we have felt, when in imagina-

tion, we saw your injured spirit rise from

the shades of death, and accuse us of des-

troying you by deeds perpetrated only by

the most abandoned of mankind, and

when you have seen the dreadful resem-

blance which caused our unfortunate er-

ror; you will look on us with less detest-

ation than is at present possible.” –

He ceased, went out, and soon return-

ed with CARSON––here was indeed an

extraordinary resemblance, so exact, so

striking, that all present were filled with

astonishment: but for a small difference in

our height, the most intimate friend

could have scarcely distinguished us

from each other; from these men I learn-

ed that the dreadful CARNELL was dead,

and thus another cause of uneasiness was

removed. I was now soon liberated, re-

stored to that respect I had before enjoy-

ed, and united to that amiable woman,

EMILIA, who had been one of the first

causes of my misfortunes. In her I have

found a woman of a superior understand-

ing, enlightened mind, gentle dispo-

sition, her superior judgment has correct-

ed many of my errors; she has lessen-

ed that love of distinction and celebrity,

which I had once indulged, and which I

had attained by means, as unwelcome,

as unexpected; she has convinced me,

that fame is not always the portion of

merit, that to deserve the esteem of man-

kind, was a superior enjoyment to an en-

larged mind, than distinction or fame

could bestow. “

ADELIO

1. Misspelling of “sensation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This place was then the report of people of fash-

   ion and decency. [footnote from original text] [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Misspelling of “surprised” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Misspelling of “verdict” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)