

TUGALOO

a novel by  
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Copy # 2, Part III.

"Mrs. Memory? But of course," came the great, gravel voice from the depths of that rolling mountain of flesh. "Where is that worthless Ganymède? Nowhere when he's needed, always here to plague when not needed!" She pulled a second rope by her couch which activated a nine-inch brass bell hung from the ceiling. The violent clanging could be heard in the East Room of the President's House or in the Halls of Congress.

A minute later, the maligned Ganymède appeared. He was a gangling, angular mulatto, wiping flour from his hands onto his apron. The flour and his New Orleans French accent revealed that he was the creator of the advertised French Cuisine.

"Ganymède," boomed the corpulent Amazon, "One of your tasks is to welcome guests. You will show these gentlefolk to the front bedrooms on the third floor. Then you will explain to them how they may take their meals. You are very negligent Ganymède. You disappoint me."

"Mais, Madame Mémoire, you know parfaitment zees ees hour of zee baking. One does not do zee baking and also keep zee hôtel. C'est impossible. Zee gâteaux--zee cake--and zee bread are zees moment en danger of zee burning!"

Mrs. Memory, having apparently faced and surmounted such crises before, showed no panic beyond an almost imperceptible tightening of the muscle in the vicinity of her third or fourth chin. "Enough, no more talk, Ganymède." Her words issued ominously from the

fathomless abyss of her being. "One minute to welcome our guests, then back to the kitchen with you. Were the cakes to burn, it is not I, mark you, who will suffer."

This warning galvanized the harried Frenchman who gathered up their bags and leaped three steps at a time up the staircase leading them to their rooms, then in a Gallic flurry of half-imprecation, half-supPLICATION he bounded down the steps to save his gâteaux.

They had looked about them, smiling as they caught their breath, and discovered the chambers were relatively immaculate as advertised, and that was really more than travelers could expect in those days when crowded and dirty hotels were the rule in the young republic.

Later, another of Mrs. Memory's promises proved true when Ganymède's pleasant wife, Marguerite, served their dinner, all French, delicious and complete with unburned bread and cakes. Their undeveloped palates, accustomed to the plainest of Quaker fare, (although Horatio was now a wealthy man,) were so excited by the subtle French food that they wondered if they might not be somehow sinning.

They had had some moments before dinner to visit with their ponderous hostess (who remained, as always, supinely immobile on her couch.) She revealed she was the celebrated actress, Arabella Memory, who for twenty years had thrilled audiences from Drury Lane to New Orleans. Ten years before, she had reluctantly retired from her repertory company when she had become too matronly (as she

delicately phrased it,) for the ingénue rôles she favored.

Her stentorian delivery and convoluted phraseology certainly betrayed her thespian training. It was evident she could easily fill a theatre with her presence!

In New Orleans she had bought the well-trained mulattoes, Ganymède and Marguerite, from a retiring hotelier, then brought them to Washington City where she had invested her modest fortune in this lodging house. Now the three of them survived very well here in symbiotic dependence. Marguerite was the housekeeper and maid, Ganymède was the cook, baker, hotel clerk and flunky, while Madame Memory planned grand strategy and directed the enterprise from her couch, ruling with alternate threats and cajolery. They usually had a couple congressmen in residence and an adequate succession of transients.

Horatio could see that sometime with the aid of Ganymède and the scaffold she must hoist and move her body, though that didn't happen when they were there.

Next morning they had hired a hack for a quick tour of this aspiring city, still really a small country town with a number of nondescript buildings, vacant, open spaces and muddy sloughs. They rode by the Capitol, still with its low dome, the President's House, and skirted the new brownstone structure, half-Gothic, half Romanesque, half-built, which would be home of the Smithsonian

Institution.

Then they returned to bid farewell to Mrs. Memory, who was on her couch as previously.

When Ganymède helped them with their baggage to the rail station, he was rewarded with a handshake, a compliment on his superb cooking, and a silver dollar--all of which brought wreaths of smiles to his thin, French face. "Je vous remercie, I sank you, Monsieur! I am Oh so happy zat zee gâteaux dey do not burn! Zen you have eated zee good food of la Nouvelle Orléans!" He helped them to their seats on the train and then stood smiling, bowing and saluting until the train pulled out.

Such had been their luck in Washington. In Richmond, Wilmington, Charleston and Atlanta the accomodations had ranged from poor to indifferent.

At last they were in Selma. Horatio saw a busy, small southern town. They paid a little black boy a dime to watch their luggage at the <sup>stage</sup> station before they walked down to look at the river. Horatio wanted to see that spot where he had bid farewell to his brother thirty-four years before. He had had no idea they would be apart for so long. There it was--the murky Alabama River moving slowly toward Mobile--but now there were numerous barges and steamboats tied up at the wharves. Warehouses lined the riverbank. One elegant riverboat some 250 feet long, with three decks, was being loaded with cotton bales as was a barge which it would tow downriver.

"Some of that cotton may be Uncle Mordecai's," Horatio told his children. "Mordecai used to wonder how he would get his crop to market."

Much of the town's activity seemed centered around the cotton crop with wagon loads raising dust as they moved up and down the streets and bales stacked in open air near the wharves, ~~near the buildings~~.

They walked by Woodall's Hotel and found a livery stable nearby where Horatio rented a carriage and driver to take them to Tugaloo. The livery stable man called over an old black who had been sitting in the shade of the building. He said, "This here is old Harry. He'll take you out there in no time. Tain't fur. Now Harry, I want you back here befo' supper

time, y'understand?

The livery stable man was curious. "You know Mr. Mordecai Johnson?"

Horatio was non-committal. "I used to know him but haven't seen him for some time."

"Folks think very highly of Mr. Mordecai. He has one of finest plantations in Alabama. You'll see when you get there."

Old Harry soon had the carriage ready. They got their baggage at the station and started west. They passed several large stores including McLaughlin's and Unterdorf's Emporium and noticed some shops with German names. This surprised Horatio but Old Harry told him, "We done got a passel o' dem Dutchmans about two years ago. Massa, he say dey got run out o' dey country so dey come hyeh. Dey smart so dey start up shops an' dey makes tings outa iron an' glass, an' dey makes candy, an' dey knows jes what dey's doin', 'ceptin' of cose dey don' speak so good! Dey jes'murdahs da English linkage, dat be what my massa say!" (maybe 2000 people,)

Selma, though busy, was not large, and in a few moments after passing a large brick building called the Dallas Male and Female Academy, then some tree-shaded houses, they found themselves in the country.

Horatio's mind kept going back to 1816. They had come out here in wagons, but they had to open the road through the forest. It had been very slow going. Now the road was dry and smooth

though it probably wouldn't be so good in rainy weather.

They kept meeting wagon loads of cotton which would pull over to let them pass.

Nothing looked familiar, but he felt excited knowing they were nearing Tugaloo. He told the children how it had been when he first saw this place.

"We's on Tugaloo land now," said Old Harry. "It go dat way an' dat way an' eberting hyeh it belong to Massa Mordecai. We's comin' up by de bahns now an' den de quartahs an' den you see sompin' real smaht, an' dat be de Big House!"

Just then, a white boy, maybe twelve years old, riding bareback on a buckskin mare, cantered up alongside them. He was followed by a black boy about the same age on a mule, and three dogs of assorted varieties. Both boys were carrying eight-foot slender poles. They were playing "knights of old."

The white boy, sturdy with wide, questioning gray eyes and unruly sun-bleached hair slowed his caravan with a military gesture. He was, of course, Geoffrey Johnson, heir-apparent to Tugaloo Plantation.

"Good afternoon, sir," he said to Horatio, at the same time glancing at the children and the baggage in the carriage. "Forgive me sir, but I just wonder if you might not be Dr. Horatio Johnson of Chester, Pennsylvania, that my father said would be coming here any time right soon?"

Horatio stopped the carriage, his face all smiles. "Why I am most certainly that person you just mentioned, and something tells me you are Mr. Geoffrey Johnson. If you are, you will want to meet your cousins Phoebe and Ben Johnson."

Geoffrey slid off his horse quickly, approaching to shake hands solemnly with his uncle and cousins and also giving Phoebe a very proper bow. The cousins sized each other up then burst into wide smiles like Horatio.

Ahead of them loomed the barns and sheds--a scene of well-ordered activity with wagon loads of raw cotton drawing in from the fields to be checked by a white man before they headed down the Selma road. Numbers of small black children were playing in the dust or watching owl-eyed, mouths hanging open, the arrival of the strange whites in the carriage. Horatio noticed one little black boy run away up the incline. This was Dodie, Kader's youngest son. Dodie was seven years old and his job was to watch the main gate and when white people not belonging to Tugaloo arrived, he was to run up to the Big House to tell Louise or Ellen what he had seen.

Horatio, if he had known that this was Kader's son, would have been struck and amused that Dodie was now performing the same service that Kader had done so well back in 1816 at Nansemond. Horatio had always been especially fond of Kader

in those old days and would even ask about him occasionally in his letters to Mordecai. Bright little Kader, everybody's favorite in the early years, had been taught to read and write by Sophronia and later learned carpentry from his brothers Maximus and Duke. When he was twenty he had married a part-Indian girl from the Brandon Plantation down near the river. Mordecai had obligingly purchased the fifteen-year-old girl and brought her to Tugaloo for Kader. In time, the girl, named Ralina, had presented Kader with six children, Dodie being the youngest. When they were first married, Kader had built a new three-room cabin for them in the quarters.

Now Geoffrey told the visitors they were expected but that today his father was in Selma but would be home soon. Now they must go to the Big House and his mama would be mighty pleased to see them.

The caravan formed up with Geoffrey re-mounted and leading. The black boy on the mule followed the carriage, with the excited barking dogs circling and about fifteen little black children falling in at the rear.

The road curved past the barns and then, on the right, Horatio saw the slave quarters, all well-built, tight, white-washed cabins and looking just a bit familiar to him since they were on the site of the old Indian village with the open square in the center. Now there were a good thirty cabins there

it seemed. Mordecai must have great numbers of blacks now. Horatio remembered all those young black couples back in 1816. They must have produced big families, children, grand-children!

The large chief's cabin was still at the top of the village square, but well-maintained with good chimney and roof.

Horatio thought of their first months here when he had a cot in the corner of that cabin. He told the children of the great rains when that roof had leaked like a sieve and of the daughter and day when Erasmus' four sons were married there. He told them of the celebrations they had had in that square when the Indians would come over to join the whites and blacks. What a great and memorable time it had been! Now it was history and he felt fairly historic himself.

As their little parade moved on, they got their first sight through the trees of the Big House. Noble and breath-taking, it gleamed white there in the autumn sun in all its Greek simplicity and splendor. Giant shade trees dotted the lawns, some kept from the old forest, but Horatio's eye looked in vain at the place on the rise where the great Tugaloo Pow Wow Oak had been. Gone! He knew it, of course. Mordecai had written. Still it was a shock. "Great trees live so long that we convince ourselves they are immortal," he mused.

He showed the children where the great and ancient tree had reigned for centuries. Then he showed them the thick clump of

trees that hid the Burial Ground.

They now entered a broad, shady, winding drive lined with sycamores and southern magnolias that Mordecai had laid out and planted in the 1820s after the Big House was built. The trees were now getting large. Tantalizing glimpses of the great house were afforded by the winding way, then, suddenly they were there!

The carriage drew to a halt in front of the four great square pillars of the portico. Who was standing in the shadow on the veranda? A little, gray-haired, white lady, richly dressed, blue-eyed, smiling. Horatio knew Martha at once. He thought of how he had hurried his departure in 1816 when he realized his feelings for Martha were more than those of a brother-in-law. Things were safe now. They were both fifty-four this year and his youthful passion had long since cooled. But he could see she was still a beautiful woman.

With Martha was a whole delegation of welcome. When Dodie had breathlessly imparted his information to Louise, she immediately told Martha that the Northern visitors had arrived. Martha had alerted her daughters Grace Lee and Jane, but Jane, as usual, kept to her room. Grace Lee was now here smiling next to her mother, as were such members of Erasmus' family as were readily available. Martha had sent to the kitchen house for old Betty, and Louise and Ellen were right here in the Big House. The men

were all down in the fields.

Betty, now seventy-six, didn't work any more but she spent her time at the kitchen house smoking her pipe and advising the younger cooks, including Sarah, now the chief cook at age thirty-.~~th-~~. Sarah was Louise's daughter, half-sister to Becky. Hearing the news, Betty hurried up to the mansion since she had nursed Horatio and Maximus together, just as earlier she had nursed Mordecai and Primus together. They were all her children, black and white. Now she would see Massa Horatio once more!!

Primus' wife Ellen was there. She was the efficient house-keeper of Tugaloo House having learned her skills from her mother whom she had succeeded in the job. Ellen was ram-rod straight, neat, dignified and handsome.

And Louise was there, now gray-haired, but still pretty. Louise was generally nurse and guardian of the children and had always been a house-servant in Alabama.

At Louise's side, each holding one of Dodie's hands, were two very pretty, well-dressed girls, one darker and taller, the other very light, ~~light~~ and gray-eyed.

In the confusing chorus of welcome and introduction, of hugging, kissing, and genuine smiles of delight, Horatio and his children were made immediately to feel at home. Their luggage was set down and Martha sent Old Harry to the kitchen for a

bite to eat before his return to Selma.

Louise had introduced the two girls as her granddaughters Augusta and Lucille.

Martha said, "I declare we've been expecting you for days, and each day Mordecai would stay here fidgeting around the house so he wouldn't miss you if you showed up, but today he just had to go into town to do some business at the cotton gin. You know this is a busy season with the crop. Now he'll get a real surprise when he gets home. We expect him back soon. Here we stand talking and carrying-on and you all must be so tired and hot from that long journey! We have your rooms all ready. You all know that you are home now. We just hope you can stay for a long time. We have so much <sup>be</sup> catching up to do! Who would have thought it would ~~be~~ thirty-four years before we set eyes on you again!"

Geoffrey and his black follower brandishing their sticks, were now whooping and racing their mounts around the driveway accompanied by the excited dogs. This furious activity and fearful cacaphony delighted the bevy of black children. Ben too, was pleased and would like to have joined in, but Phoebe, Augusta and Lucille tried to hide their smiles in imitation of the adult women, all taking their cue from Martha.

"I don't know what gets into those boys. Such a racket! Let's go inside. I think they'll quiet down if they lose their

audience." She led the way into the cool, pleasant gloom of the great hall.

After the bright sunlight, the northerners could see only dimly the gleaming luxury of the interior. Martha and Ellen kept the windows open but the shutters closed, so there was always a gratifying movement of air in these hot days, but the strong sunlight was shut out.

The black women had picked up the luggage and they all now trooped up the magnificent curved staircase to the bedrooms prepared for the visitors. Soon they were installed and arrangements made for bathing. This was a considerable enterprise, not to be entered into lightly, since the water was heated in the kitchen building and born in buckets by an army of small slaves up a service stairway to the rear gallery and thence to portable copper bathing tubs placed in the middle of the bedrooms. After the baths, the water was taken out the same way. Water pipes and sewers at Tugaloo were still in the future.

Following their first baths, the Pennsylvania Johnsons, embarrassed by all the elapsed time and the involvement of countless individuals, elected to take sponge baths using the china basins and water pitchers that were standard equipment in the bedrooms. Each morning a servant would bring a pitcher of hot water.

While the visitors were being made comfortable, Geoffrey and his fellow-knight (who was eleven-year-old Tom, Kader's son and older brother of Dodie,) quickly tiring of their fierce tournament once the audience was gone, decided to race down the Selma road to meet Mordecai and give him the news.

Tom, (known as 'Kader's Tom' since there were several Toms on the plantation) had already started to learn carpentry from his father, but since he was Geoffrey's special comrade, and since Geoffrey had been kept home from the Dallas Male Academy for the time when his uncle and cousins would visit, Tom also had a reprieve from work.

Three miles out the Selma road the boys found Mordecai and told him of Horatio's arrival. Then they all raced back to the Big House.

Mordecai bounded up the stairway to find Horatio lying down on a very familiar bed. They had given him the bedroom that had his own old bedstead and furnishings from Nansemond Plantation. Horatio had drifted off to sleep for a moment, pleased with finding this old walnut furniture that reminded him of his childhood. But he jumped up to embrace his brother, then shaking hands, they looked each other up and down, smiling and deciding if time had been cruel or kind to them.

In actual fact they were both fine-looking, gray-haired gentlemen, Mordecai somewhat taller and larger, his face

lined and tanned from an active, outside life with much time on horseback directing the plantation affairs.

Mordecai threw open the shutters to admit the sunlight. They looked at themselves in a full-length mirror set in the door of the armoire. Horatio, fifty-four, was shorter, slighter but neat and handsome with thick, gray hair.

Soberly they gazed at the mirror for a moment and then both broke out laughing. The family resemblance, the gray eyes, the features, were striking. They slapped each other on the back.

"I guess we have lots to talk about! We have to fill each other in on the past thirty-four years. Those letters just skimmed the surface. I'll have to meet those children of yours. Why didn't you bring your older boys? Why didn't you come down here a long time ago? We've wanted you to come right from the beginning!" Mordecai sat on an armchair near the window. The words poured out of him in an unaccustomed torrent.

"Wait a minute. One question at a time if you please."

Horatio laughed again. My older sons, (we call them 'Wooly' and 'Penny') are both deeply involved in their medical education in Philadelphia. That's a full-time occupation so they couldn't get away. But Phoebe, who is twelve, and Ben, who is six, are here with me.

"It's probably just as well if I speak with candor so we

understand each other from the start. I married a Quaker girl, as you know, and I became a member of the Quaker Meeting in Chester. Since you have spent your life in the South you may not realize the strong feeling among Northerners, and especially in the Friends' Society against the institution of slavery.

"At first, I thought of being a Quaker as a means of marrying Aurelia who would not marry out of the Friends' Meeting. But I soon truly became a Quaker "by convincement," as they say--I really accepted and believed in their tenets. Going back to the days of John Woolman and even earlier, the Quakers rooted out slavery among their own members and have since been determined to end slavery in the country. We named our oldest boy 'Wooly' after John Woolman.

"You may imagine how uncomfortable I was in the early days explaining my own youth in a slave-owning family and living among those good earnest people, my new friends and family, all of whom abhorred slavery.

"I didn't want to break ties with you and my old family, but I couldn't see how we could avoid some unfortunate falling out over this slavery issue. It seemed to me best if we kept apart and just exchanged amenities by mail. That's why I've been gone so long. Also the idea of bringing my family to a slave plantation which they had been taught was analogous to

the 'Devil's Workshop' --well, I just didn't see how they and your family and friends could ever understand one another.

"But I have wanted for years to see you again before we got too old, and so finally, I had a talk with the two younger children and we decided to make the visit. We will try not to let our feelings and beliefs spoil this family reunion.

"Perhaps it would be best if we don't meet most of your slave-owning neighbors. I'm sure they have strong opinions about Quakers and abolitionists."

Mordecai gazed soberly at the sun playing on the carpet pattern. "I suspected this problem was always in the background though we carefully avoided it in our letters. You and I knew slavery from birth. It has always seemed the natural order of things to me. I'm the first to admit it has its excesses, but I have tried to make the best of it here. As a matter of fact, we just lost a dear old friend here who was a born Quaker. She was born Sophronia Janney in a Quaker settlement in Loudoun County, Virginia, then she married Simon Ramsey, a young overseer, and they felt they had to leave the Quakers for the same reasons you are talking about. Simon came here with Sophronia shortly after you left in that winter of 1816-17. You remember I was so anxious to get an overseer then? They came down from Cypress Creek Plantation with Cousin Claiborne's Negroes, remember? I can

tell you Sophronia did a lot to civilize us over the thirty-three years she was here. Her son, Simon Jr. is my overseer now. Both Simons were good, strict, honest overseers who never used violence but treated the blacks well. That's what I wanted too.

"Sophronia never made a secret of her dislike for slavery. From the beginning she became Martha's closest friend. Martha would have died of loneliness without her in those early years. Sophronia was tiny, bright, quiet, determined in her way and very persuasive. She was so full of love and good-will that no one could oppose her. She even conquered Frederick Grantley, my neighbor, who is about the meanest slave-owner around. She started by tutoring Martha, (taking up where you left off when you went north.) Soon she was teaching reading and writing to Erasmus, Louise, Kader and Duke, and before long she had a little school for our children and some other whites from nearby plantations.

"I asked her not to teach our blacks when the neighboring white children were here since it is not legal in Alabama to teach blacks to read. It would only stir up a lot of trouble with the neighbors. So she had classes for our own people and other classes for the whites.

"She wanted to teach all of our blacks but even she had her limitations, especially as she got older, though she was still teaching the day before she died at eighty-four. Anyway, I

would sometimes ask her to teach certain blacks because they could be a lot more useful to the plantation when they could read and cipher. On the other hand, I didn't want her to educate them too much since I felt it would only make them unhappy so long as they must remain slaves. This was a little difference of opinion that ran through the years between Sophronia and me. She never said it to me but I really think she honestly believed the slaves would be free sometime soon and she wanted to get them ready for that!

"If you had seen her funeral (she just died in July) you would know what a successful life she had. It was by far the biggest funeral we ever had in the Old Burial Ground. I guess all of Dallas County was there. Isn't that remarkable how much affection a quiet little lady can inspire?

"So I know there is opposition to slavery in the country. We probably have a distorted view of reality when we live out our lives in one little corner of the world. I don't know if we will always have slavery in the United States. Probably not. Sometime it will change. Who knows when or how? I have heard talk of settling the blacks in the West Indies or sending them back to West Africa. Most people around here don't like the idea of having free Negroes living in the South. But I don't think the white people could get the work done all by themselves.

"But while you're here, look about and see how Tugaloo is run. I'm proud of what we have done here. I have maybe 150 blacks--I've lost count how many. I never sell any and have bought only a few, so they are all pretty much related--one very large family and you will find they are contented. They have plenty of food, warm clothes and tight cabins. Erasmus is grandfather to most of them so they are part of our family too."

Horatio was sitting on the edge of his bed. "I was really pleased to see my old bed here--it reminded me of when mother or Betty used to tuck me in when I was five or six years old! And hearing those names--Erasmus, Betty, Louise, Kader, Duke--it's like coming home even if it isn't Nansemond."

Mordecai smiled broadly. "Did you meet Louise when you got here? She's all gray-headed and stately and many times a grandma. They're all here! Even little Kader! You won't believe it but little Kader also has a passel of children and grandchildren! Maximus is here too. He married an Indian girl and they didn't have any children, but they live down in the quarters. I've had a lot of them trained for skilled jobs--carpentry, blacksmithing, brick masonry--makes them more valuable and they get good treatment if I send them out hereabouts. Maximus is the finest carpenter in Alabama. He helped build this house and later worked with the builder to become a master-carpenter.

Now whenever somebody wants something extra fine like a curved staircase and the like, they come asking for Maximus. He trained his brothers too. He could have bought his freedom long ago but decided not to since this is home to him--here with all the big family of Tugaloo blacks. And you know, my skilled workers could never have amounted to anything without learning some reading and arithmetic first."

The brothers continued talking in this vein for an hour, then the call came for dinner. Mordecai met Phoebe and little Ben and then they all went down together to a high-style dinner in the great dining room where the candles blazed, the silver and china sparkled, and the black servants scurried about. The French windows stood open to admit the pleasant evening air laden with the fleeting odor of jasmine and autumn roses in Martha's garden.

With wide eyes the Quaker children observed all this unwonted luxury. Shyly they watched their handsome young cousin Geoffrey and his older sister Grace Lee. Thirty-year-old cousin Jane had sent word of welcome to her uncle and cousins but pled some ill-defined illness that required her to remain in her bedroom.

So passed the first day at Tugaloo for the Horatio Johnson family. They had to learn to accustom themselves to hosts of servants. At home with Aunt Pennell there was a cook and a

servant or two, but they usually did things for themselves. The children had been expected to make their own beds and keep their bedrooms clean. The next morning at Tugaloo the black servants were amazed to find that Phoebe and Ben had made their beds. Already the Southerners and Northerners were learning about each other. With a measure of incredulity Ellen said, "It's not proper for white folks to do things like that. What kind of upbringing have they had up North? " To Phoebe she said, "Miss Phoebe, you just leave the bed to us. We take care of things like that."

This necessitated a family conference with Horatio where it was decided that things at Tugaloo would be done the Tugaloo way, but they mustn't grow lazy for when they returned North they must resume their self-reliant habits.

That second day while Horatio was having happy encounters with all the older blacks whom he remembered, Phoebe and Ben were taken in tow by their cousin Geoffrey, who showed them the many wonders of the plantation. They visited the kitchen house and laundry, the plantation office, the Old Burial Ground, the Overseer's house, the stump of the Tugaloo Oak, the furious activity around the cotton fields and sheds, the barnyard with its splendid population of birds and beasts, the barns with the cattle, horses, mules, sheep, goats, and the old Indian village, now the quarters. It was all an exciting spectacle for the visitors. Geoffrey showed them his two-wheeled horse-

cart. Of course he had his own horse as befit the heir and 'crown prince' of the plantation.

Everywhere they went they met blacks, young and old, who seemed to be related, as indeed they were. They were brothers, cousins, uncles, grandmas--all one big family. Part of the time Geoffrey's friend "Kader's Tom" went about with them. Then when Geoffrey showed them through the Big House itself, they were accompanied by the pretty, light-skinned girls Lucille and Augusta, whom they had met on arrival. Phoebe noticed how well-dressed and well-spoken these girls were. Lucille particularly seemed to be close to Geoffrey and he said they had always taken lessons together from Sophronia Ramsey who had recently died. Phoebe and Ben knew who Sophronia was, having already seen the classroom at the Overseer's house where they met Mrs. Simon Ramsey Jr. and Josie.

The children toured the Big House from its cavernous, vaulted cellars through the great drawing rooms of the ground floor, the bedrooms of the second floor, and then up to the dormer windows of the third-floor bedrooms that gave a panoramic view out over the wide acreage of the estate. From there they had seen the wagons and tiny figures of cotton workers in the distant fields.

On their way down, a voice called, "Lucille, is that you?" They were passing Jane's bedroom. "Lucille, come in here, please."

Lucille went into the bedroom while the others started out the door to the back gallery from where they could descend to the ground. Then Lucille ran out to them. "Come back, Miss Jane wants to meet you."

The five children then moved toward Jane's bedroom, Geoffrey whispering, "This is pretty special! She almost never wants to meet anybody!"

When they entered the room, they could scarcely see anything since Jane kept the shutters and most of the heavy, wine-colored, velvet drapes closed. Jane, as the oldest daughter, now thirty, had one of the large bedrooms. In a moment the children could discern the appointments--the imported French carpet and wall-paper of rich design, the great walnut bedstead, the armoire with its mirrored doors catching bits of light, the brocaded chairs, the marble-faced fireplace, the side table loaded with medicines and elixirs, the candle sconces of polished brass. And there in a large chair padded with pillows was Jane, clad in a dressing gown with her head hidden in a voluminous silk scarf. She held a small, cut-glass bottle of smelling salts to her nostrils for she expected this interview would debilitate her meager resources. She felt herself growing faint already before a word was spoken. Yet she felt it was a duty imposed by blood to meet and welcome these Northern cousins, as she must also welcome her Uncle Horatio, if she could but garner the energy to do so.

"Geoffrey, I believe these are our cousins from Pennsylvania.

Please introduce them to me."

Geoffrey cleared his throat, brushed back a shock of his straw-colored hair, then, standing like a soldier at attention said, "Yes Ma'am," (for he had never had a close relationship with this strange sister of an older generation who lived apart from the family in her ever-darkened chamber.) "May I present to you our cousins, Miss Phoebe Johnson and Benjamin Johnson of Chester, Pennsylvania. Phoebe and Ben, this is my sister Jane."

Jane, who seldom saw the lighter side of things, was amused by the boy's formality which he had learned from observing his father.

"Well now, Phoebe and Ben, I am happy to know you. You must forgive me for not seeing you sooner, but I'm a very ill woman. Geoffrey will tell you I have always been of delicate constitution and so must stay here in my room. The least exertion is beyond my poor powers. I hope none of you will ever have to suffer as I must suffer each and every day. But let us not speak of my misfortune. I don't wish to spoil your visit."

Did they only imagine a thin smile had passed over her face? "Tell me what you have been seeing." She sniffed her salts once more.

The visitors were fairly overawed by this wraith-like presence

but Phoebe found the courage to recount their tour of the plantation.

When she was done, Ben suddenly blurted, "Phoebe, you left out the best part. Tomorrow Geoffrey will give us a ride in the horse cart and he and Kader's Tom said they would show us the secret cabin over behind the Burial Ground!"

Now Augusta spoke up. "That's not a secret cabin. It's just the old cabin where my mama and daddy used to live." They were talking about the cabin where Becky and Augustus had their brief married life. "It's been empty since mama died and daddy moved into the quarters."

The Northern children were wondering about the background of Augusta and Lucille, who were supposedly sisters. Even to them it was obvious that Lucille was much lighter-skinned and spoke English just as the white people did. This was because she usually lived in the Big House and had been carefully schooled alongside Geoffrey, while her older half-sister had less schooling and spent much more time in the quarters with Augustus and the field blacks who had no schooling at all.

Except for the small one-legged bed built into one corner, there was no stone fireplace or un-damned chimney. The deserted, lorn air of the room affected him deeply, reminding him of Becky when he had known her and known how to excuse the great loneliness of her troubled marriage. He would think of

The Tugaloo blacks would generally avoid the old cabin. Remembering Augustus' bitter experience at the Grantley Plantation, they preferred not to test their luck by voluntarily going near Grantley's domain. The field blacks developed a superstitious fear of the place compounded of Grantley, coral snakes, death and the mysterious unknown. They convinced themselves there was a curse on the location. More enlightened, Duke and Kader had told the others there was nothing to fear over there, but the cabin remained for most a place to shun. It stood up beyond the old Burial Ground, just on the edge of Mordecai's land. Since Becky's death it had been empty but one year Mordecai had Duke and Kader put a new roof on it. When Kader asked why he wanted to roof an empty and useless cabin, Mordecai said, "We might need that cabin some day--no use to let it rot away."

Occasionally Geoffrey and Kader's Tom would visit there on their forays around Tugaloo. Also, Mordecai himself, making certain he wasn't observed, would sometimes visit the cabin, pulling the latch-string on the plank door, going inside for a few minutes then sitting for a half-hour or so on the bench outside. The cabin was empty except for the simple one-legged bed built into one corner, and a small stone fireplace with mud-daubed chimney. The deserted, forlorn air of the spot affected him deeply, reminding him of Becky whom he had loved and who had known how to assuage the great loneliness in his life in those years of troubled marriage. He would think of Becky and of his little Laura Lee. Somehow the two would be always

mixed in his memory. The little girls had been inseparable until Laura Lee died. Then, Becky had helped fill the empty spot in his life. He would remember her as she was that summer of the malarial fever when they went to the mountain resort. She had been dressed in Laura Lee's fine clothing, and each morning he would tutor her and Sarah along with Jane.

Sometimes Mordecai would surprise himself finding tears running down his face. He would let his mind run to his unacknowledged daughter, Lucille--that beautiful daughter conceived by him and Becky here in this little cabin. The business of race was such a fearful burden in the South. True, it weighed most heavily on blacks, but he thought of how fine it would be if he could but tell the world that Lucille was his own. If he could but tell Lucille. No, it could never be, not here in the South. The races must always be separate in spite of everything.

So after a time of reflection with a bit of self-pity, Mordecai would pull the door to, leaving the old cabin once more in solitude and he would head down the path, stopping at the Burial Ground before returning to the Big House.

The morning following their visit to Jane, Geoffrey led the children on their promised visit to the cabin. Martha told them they might have a picnic there and Sarah had packed a basket of cornbread, fried chicken, water melon, bottled grape juice and lemonade and chocolate cake. It was decided Augusta and Lucille would go along as well as Kader's Tom who would carry the basket.

Martha warned them to be on the lookout for snakes since this was a wild part of the plantation, still thick with the old forest. She called Geoffrey and Augusta aside and told them Augusta, who was fifteen, would be in charge and that while Geoffrey would someday own the plantation, still today he was only eleven and must therefore not get into some kind of trouble/<sup>to</sup> which his venturesome spirit might otherwise lead.

Geoffrey readily acquiesced saying, "All right, mama, but you know, I never get into trouble." Truth was, he had the run of the plantation, generally doing what pleased him. Today, however, Martha told him he was to be the host with a responsibility for his guests. They must stay on the paths, avoiding snakes, poison oak, spiders, and above all, they must not wander onto the adjoining Grantley Plantation where they would not be welcome because of the antipathy between Mordecai and old Mr. Grantley.

About ten o'clock, the children walked slowly single-file up the path to their destination--Geoffrey leading, Tom and the dogs following. They traversed once more the Burial Ground where Geoffrey showed them the graves of his brothers and sisters and they saw the home-made markers on various graves of the blacks. The Ramsey graves had not yet been marked. Again the mystery was there for Phoebe when Lucille and Augusta showed them where their mother was buried. Here was a small marble stone which said simply, "Becky, died 1841." Mordecai had paid to have that marker which was as good as those

on the graves of his own children.

Discreetly questioning them, Phoebe learned that Becky and Augustus had lived in the cabin they would soon visit and that the two sisters had been born there, but after Becky's sudden death, Augustus and the children had moved to the quarters, once Augustus had been rescued from the Grantleys by Mordecai.

Phoebe and Ben heard with horror how Becky had died so tragically from the snakebite. Phoebe thought it would hardly be an ideal place for a picnic, what with its history of violence, death and mystery. But she was the guest here. She thought how unlike Pennsylvania the South was with its brooding dark corners. Everywhere one was confronted with race and slave problems and the delicate protocol governing the system. She wanted to speak out against it all but held her tongue, remembering the agreement they had made at the beginning of their trip south. They must look and learn, reserving their opinions until they were safely back in Pennsylvania.

It wasn't so much further to the little cabin which, Phoebe had to admit, was in a charming wooded location. In a shady spot by the cabin Augusta spread out a couple blankets they had brought. They all explored the cabin which took only a few minutes since it was a tiny one-room affair.. To protect their basket from squirrels and dogs, they set it on the interwoven rope bed and pulled the door shut.

The plantation children told what they knew of the cabin. It was usually called "Becky's Cabin," because Becky, Louise's daughter, had belonged to Tugaloo, but Augustus in those days belonged

to Mr. Grantley and could visit his wife only when Mr. Grantley allowed it. They told how Augustus had suffered before his rescue.

Augusta had been five when Becky died, so she had some memories of her mother and of living at the cabin. Each morning early, Becky and Augusta would hurry down the path to the Big House where Becky was a house servant. Augusta would follow her mother around or join the other children being cared for by Louise or attending Sophronia's classes. Augusta told the children of these sparse memories but she said nothing about how Master Mordecai had come to visit Becky on many nights when Augustus wasn't there.

Earlier, she and Becky had slept together, but one day Becky made a little bed for Augusta in the corner near the fireplace, telling her that a visitor was coming. Becky hung a blanket around the big bed. Augusta had only the vaguest memories of these nocturnal visits but she was certain that the "visitor" was Master Mordecai. Sometimes when she was almost asleep she would hear them talking outside the door.

Then, she remembered when Louise and some of the others had come up to help when Lucille was born--a red-skinned, gray-eyed little mite. When she asked if Lucille was an Indian like Augustus' mother, they all laughed at her. Then came the trauma of Becky's swift death and burial. All and all, Augusta didn't care much for this place and its memories. She had heard from her father the horrendous story of life for black people at Grantley Plantation. Here, Grantley was just

over the rise. This was the highest spot near Tugaloo House. There were some great, moss-covered rocks where ferns and reeds grew in the deep shadow of old forest trees which each year dumped their crop of leaves on the earth, making the mold rich, deep and spongy. Here, in three spots, little springs of clearest, sweet water bubbled forth to form Tugaloo Creek. Doubtless some underground aquifer found its way down here from the hilly country of northern Alabama. On the north of the rise some other springs formed a creek that flowed northerly across Grantley land. These springs never dried up even in the hottest, driest summers and there had been times when the good water supply had been invaluable to both plantations.

The children explored around the cabin , then Geoffrey suggested they go examine the springs. The girls stayed behind at the picnic spot, but Geoffrey, Kader's Tom and Ben with the dogs, climbed up the hillock to the very plantation edge.

Tom then shouted, "Mastah Geoff, bettah not go no furthah 'cause dis heah be da edge of yo daddy's lan'." Geoffrey was near the top with the boys making a good deal of noise shouting back and forth. They had looked at the springs and were about to return when Rufus, one of Geoffrey's dogs, a somewhat flighty and ill-trained red setter dashed over the top of the hill in pursuit of a squirrel. Clearly he was on Grantley land now. Geoffrey called and whistled but Rufus paid no heed.

Suddenly, a heavy, bearded white man lunged from behind a tree and

grabbed Rufus by the collar.

"Leave my dog go," hollered Geoffrey, but the man only leered back and held on.

"This heah dawg done strayed onto Grantley land so I reckon either he belong to me now, (that is, iffn I wants to keep him, but he don't appear to be worth much,) or maybe I'll jes' put him outn his misery!" This was the Grantley overseer, Jim Grundy, a big, cruel, ignorant bully of a man--the kind that Grantley always used to intimidate his work force.

Before Geoffrey could stop him, Kader's Tom slipped down among the trees and approaching Grundy from the rear, gave him a big poke with his long stick. Grundy, surprised, released the dog who now bounded up to Geoffrey. Grundy whirled and caught Kader's Tom by the arm. Tom pulled free and started up the hill only to be caught once again.

Grundy now looked up at Geoffrey, "Guess I didn't hanker after that no-account mongrel dawg, nohow, but now I got me a prime nigger. Reckon he'll bring a good price down to N'Orleans!"

Kader's Tom continued to squirm and rain blows on his captor. Then Geoffrey and Rufus plunged down the slope full-speed with Geoffrey crying, "Sic 'em Rufus, go get him!" Ben, owl-eyed, watched all this un-Quakerly activity from the hilltop.

Geoffrey was only eleven but he was sturdy and coming down in a rush from above he landed a sharp blow with his five-foot pole on the head of the startled man just as Rufus sank his teeth into Grundy's leg.

Grundy toppled over backwards to be temporarily stunned and immobilized when his head hit a fallen log. In a flash, the dog and the two boys raced up the incline back to the safety of Tugaloo.

Having had enough adventure for the day, they ran back to the picnic spot where Geoffrey, taking command as always, said, "Tom, you get that basket and Augusta, take those blankets--we have to get out of here fast! We had a little set-to with that damned Grundy, Grantley's overseer, and this-here picnic ground is too close for comfort.

He's a damned coward but he might think up some kind of devilment." The girls could see Geoffrey meant business so they gathered things together quickly and made a strategic retreat to the Burial Ground where they enjoyed their picnic lunch in the company of their departed relations.

Now the boys' eyes sparkled as they recounted the tale of the battle with Grundy. Augusta was worried that Martha and Mordecai would blame her for allowing this trespass on Grantley land after being warned expressly against it.

"Don't you worry none, 'Gusta," said Geoffrey, "'cause I'll just tell mama how it happened. 'Tweren't your fault noway. Besides, that damned Grundy deserved everything he got and more." Now the boys jumped up to re-enact the fight with Ben taking the part of Kader's Tom so Tom himself could play the part of Grundy and Geoffrey would descend on him dealing him a mighty blow. They all followed Geoffrey's directions as he staged the show for the appreciative audience.

Tom said, "Now don't you go fetchin' me a big wallop like you done

give ol' Grundy or I'll be one daid nigger!"

Geoffrey said, "Oh, no, this is jus' pretend so I'll jus' give you a light tap, but the girl's know we're play-actin' here!"

So they were all excited and laughing as they watched the show and when Ben was at last released from the clutches of Grundy (Tom,) he ran over to Phoebe singing, "I'm free, I'm free. That Grundy was going to sell me in New Orleans. Now he can't sell me 'cause I escaped with the help of cousin Geoffrey!"

Everybody was pleased and laughing, but Phoebe was troubled in her mind as she thought of the murky evil of racial slavery always insinuated in everything here in the South. The little twelve-year-old Quaker girl hugged her brother, thinking, "How frightful, the idea of being sold in New Orleans. But for these plantation black children it was a real, ever-present threat, even for the ones who were practically white. Supposing Uncle Mordecai died. So long as they were slaves, others would decide their futures for them and they might end up at a place like Grantley or worse."

She stole glances at Augusta and Lucille. The sisters, if anything, were better dressed than she, because they generally got clothing handed down from Grace Lee and Jane. They had special status at Tugaloo, getting only light household tasks to perform and Lucille had always been in Sophronia's classes with Geoffrey, right from the beginning. To Phoebe, Lucille seemed exactly like an exceptionally beautiful white girl, but Augusta was a shade darker. Yet, they

were sisters and slaves and must remain so because of their blood. Augusta told Phoebe they had a Creek Indian grandmother still living at Grantley but they were never allowed to visit because Mr. Grantley, with his vindictive hostility toward Augustus, took pleasure in keeping their family apart. Phoebe discovered that Indian squaws who married black slaves were often also considered slaves as were, of course, their children.

Then Phoebe who had briefly met Augustus, Maximus and Nolachee at their cabin, remembered Geoffrey had told her that Nolachee was a free Indian squaw. So there was another racial confusion in this southern land. Geoffrey had told her that Maximus could have bought his own freedom had he chosen to do so, but he preferred to remain at Tugaloo with all his relations since he knew being a free black man in the South wasn't necessarily a desirable condition. Having a good master and great skill in his craft, he lived much better than might a free black. He had travelled some around Alabama to his various carpentry jobs and he would get good quarters and food since he could do jobs no other available man, black or white, could do. So long as he belonged to Mordecai, an indulgent master, he had a powerful champion to protect him in the racial morass.

Phoebe, albeit thoughtful, was too young to understand all these intricacies. She wondered why Maximus chose to remain a slave if he might be free.

When the picnic and the ex tempore dramatic efforts were concluded,

the children filed down the path to the Big House, Phoebe walking between the two slave sisters, hand in hand, wanting to show them her respect and concern, not knowing just how to verbalize it.

The boys with that excess of energy typical of their age, raced back and forth with their dogs and their long sticks, creating a din to arouse the dead. At that moment, Ben thought life in the South was far more exciting and pleasant than that of his staid, Quaker, northern home.

Later at the Big House, when the parents heard the story of the battle, Mordecai looked sober. Though secretly pleased with the boys and Rufus for their quick decisive action against the latest affront from the Grantleys, he didn't want to promote unnecessary further confrontations by expressing his approval. He asked, "Haven't we warned you many times to stay away from Grantley?"

Geoffrey could see he might be in trouble with his father. "But papa, don't you see, Rufus doesn't know where the borderline is and he was just chasing a squirrel down the hill like dogs do and us boys, we were playing Knights of Old and we was there on Tugaloo land above the springs when we seen that damned Grundy make a grab for Rufus which he caught. Then Grundy seen us and he starts a teasin' an' a hollerin' about how Rufus now belongs to him on account of he's on Grantley land and Rufus ain't worth much so maybe he'll just shoot him an' put him out of his misery."

In the excitement of telling the story, Geoffrey's English was losing the fine patina required by Sophronia. "Like usual, I was a

knight and Kader's Tom, he was my squire, and we allowed Ben to be one of those new knights like Sir Galahad, you know all kind of pure-like,--so we all had our spears and such. Well, when that Grundy done what he done, I should have thought fast what to do. But it was Kader's Tom what thought what to do and what he done was, he snuck down there and give old Grundy one big sudden poke in the behind with his spear (which was really a long stick, you know,) an' Grundy, he let loose of Rufus what come up the hill to me which was just fine, except then Grundy, he managed to lay hands on Tom and Tom a-wigglin' an' a-scratchin' an' a-shriekin' but he couldn't get free nohow.

"So then, bein' a knight and all, I had to figure how to rescue my squire from captivity. So that's when I jus' crashed down there full speed, lettin' out a big whoop, and I bashed old Grundy full on the head from above with my stick, an' Rufus, he give him a bite on the leg he won't forget. Then Tom got free so we skedaddled out of there quicker'n you can wink. Ol' Grundy, he fell backward an' banged his head on a log and I reckon that saved us with him a-layin' there all stunned and confused-like."

Sir Ben, wide-eyed, was sitting on Horatio's lap. Sir Tom had returned to his family cabin in the quarters. The slave girls were in the kitchen house. Sir Geoffrey had to justify their actions. Furtive smiles were playing across the faces of the adults.

Mordecai, trying to appear stern, now told Geoffrey to stay clear of the Grantley borderland in future to avoid some more serious

incident. "Can't you find plenty to do on our 5000 acres without going to Grantley's?"

A hesitant grin spread on the boy's sun-brown face, crinkling the edge of his gray eyes. He slowly nodded his head with its tousled mop of bleached hair. "Yes, papa, I reckon if we really set our mind to it we could keep busy at Tugaloo!"

At sixty, remembering how he had lost earlier, promising sons, Mordecai could not punish or scarcely reprimand this handsome and winning boy, sent by fate to be his heir, the joy of his declining years. He simply said, "You try real hard, you hear, because I don't need any more trouble with the Grantleys."

Then they all laughed when Martha said, "That boy does seem to have some of the Old Nick in him. I guess it comes from your side of the family."

The atmosphere now was all relaxed and as it happened, the expected unpleasant repercussions from Grantley didn't materialize. Frederick Grantley never heard of the Grundy battle, for the overseer had been ashamed to tell his employer about his unsuccessful capture of the black trespasser and of his ignominious defeat by two children.

They had a gala dinner that evening with the younger Ramseys as guests. They would have had guests from other plantations except for Horatio's misgivings about attempting conversation with groups of slave-owners.

Martha had Milton, Ellen's light-skinned son by Claiborne Ingram, give a short musical evening. Milton, now thirty-three, had shown musical ability as a child and quickly learned to play the violin that Mordecai bought for him. He had married Sarah, Louise's daughter, who was now the head cook, and they had three sons, all light-skinned, Russell, Roger and Roscoe. Mordecai had apprenticed Milton to a Selma locksmith and clock-maker. Milton was the respected general handyman on the plantation and he would often go to neighboring plantations when a fiddler or a locksmith was needed.

Milton and his three sons now played as a group. The three boys simply had rattles made of gourds and sticks with drums on which they banged and rattled with marvelous vigor to make lively rhythm while their father played Oh! Susannah! and the new Camptown Races (which he had just learned,) in addition to an eclectic repertoire of Irish jigs, Negro spirituals with waltzes of Strauss, Mozart and Chopin rendered in his own versions. Sometimes little six-year-old Roscoe with round, bright eyes and flashing smile, would step forward to do a creditable dance. Mordecai had ordered made bright yellow suits of satin with red piping for all the musicians.

The Pennsylvania Quakers were charmed by the entertainment, so unlike anything they had known.

Days, then weeks went by with the northern Quakers finding it not difficult to adjust themselves to plantation life. Horatio started regularly "making rounds--" visiting both white and black as a medical doctor, prescribing little placebos and panaceas for the petty or imaginary ills he encountered. Truth was that almost everyone was in good health. But the blacks were delighted to have visits from a genuine northern doctor, and were generally healed simply by his manifestation at their cabin doors.

Jane was a harder case but he had brought a certain elixir from Philadelphia which cheered even her withered heart. Then, one day, Duke's leg was accidentally broken while he unloaded heavy logs from a wagon. Providentially, Horatio was there in a minute to quickly set the leg in splints. They gave Duke a couple drinks of whisky and he was soon joking to Mordecai, "Didn't Ah tell you, Massa Mordecai? It wuz when Massa Horatio done headed no' th. Ah done tol' you dat he be back heah pretty soon all full o' larnin' an' dat he be da bes' doctah aroun'! An' sho' nuf it done turned out jes' lak dat! We's had to wait a while, but heah he be an' das' a fact!"

They all laughed.

Soon Duke was hopping around with a crutch, and his leg healed perfectly.

As Horatio did his doctoring, he was generally assisted by Grace Lee and, more often than not, by Lucille and Augusta.

Martha, as was the custom with plantation mistresses, had usually ministered to the assorted illnesses in the slave quarter, but Grace Lee had been taking over these duties.

Horatio knew in the back of his mind that some of his solicitous doctoring here was in the nature of a powerless witness against slavery. If he couldn't free the slaves, he could perhaps make them more comfortable.

The older slaves who had known the young Horatio, liked and trusted him. The younger slaves instinctively liked and trusted him for his quiet, friendly and selfless conduct, his wide-set, intelligent gray eyes and shock of gray hair. He inspired confidence.

Horatio would also ride around the broad acres of the estate with Mordecai who was overseeing all the activities. Early in the visit Mordecai had shown Horatio the oak planks from the ruined Tugaloo Oak. They were stacked in a barn to dry. "When this wood is ready, I'll have Maximus make a large dining table and perhaps some other furniture. We'll sell the old dining table from Nansemond if you don't want it. We can also make a couple small tables for your house in Chester. That will give you a souvenir of the Tugaloo Oak. If Maximus does it, it's going to be beautiful. He was trained by a Pennsylvania Dutchman who was a master craftsman. Maximus got to be so good that when the Dutchman went home, Maximus got his job. He worked for years with

the builder who built Tugaloo House. I guess I told you how good he is. I'm proud of him." (Eight years later, when Horatio had all but forgotten this conversation, two glowing, handsome, oak tables arrived in crates in Chester.)

Just now at the plantation, the cotton harvest occupied almost everyone, but later there would be fence-repair, building-maintenance including roofing, annual white-washing of the cabins, inside and out, caring for the farm animals, some continuing lumbering. There were always jobs waiting to be done. Mordecai and Simon Ramsey Jr. made certain the jobs were done in good time for this was a well-run plantation, its owner having always taken an energetic and intelligent part in its management.

If the young Northerner, Frederick Law Olmsted (who travelled extensively in the ante-bellum South and found much to criticize) had stopped at Tugaloo, he would have given a glowing report. The cabins were well-chinked and tight, the glass windows and roofs all in good repair, the animals sleek and well-fed, the land properly tilled with what Mordecai could learn of the latest farming methods. Most impressive was the well-being of the blacks who likewise were well-fed, well-treated, adequately housed and clothed.

Horatio was not unaware of all this. He thanked heaven that since he must have a slave-master for a brother, it was a good and compassionate slave-master, (if there were not there somewhere

a contradiction in terms.) He could see that the blacks were happy here. It was more than just the common idea that whites had of the happy, black slave. Erasmus' numerous descendants and the children of the Cypress Creek blacks knew full-well how fortunate they were because the awful example of Grantley Plantation was right next door.

Stories of atrocities and petty cruelties at Grantley and elsewhere drifted around the Tugaloo slave quarters with such frequency that Tugaloo blacks were not interested in changing masters. Further, they had a genuine affection for the master and his family who always were concerned with their well-being.

What Horatio saw on every hand were wide, friendly smiles when Mordecai approached--not dissimulation, but the loving regard of tribesmen for their benevolent patriarch.

Horatio sometimes sighed to himself. Freeing the slaves was going to be an enormous traumatic experience for the country, for the whites, and most especially for the blacks themselves. Surely the slaves would be free sometime. Then, what would they do? How would they live without the protection and direction, harsh as it might be, of the present slave rulers?

Mordecai showed Horatio how he had expanded the original 3000-acre Tugaloo purchase by buying out small adjacent farms until he had 5000 acres. By any standard, he had become wealthy. Unlike many of his neighbors, he was not in debt for he had vowed after the sale of

Nansemond never to be encumbered with debt again.

Mordecai on several occasions offered to share the plantation with Horatio, saying he had built it from their common inheritance after he sold Nansemond. But Horatio rejected the idea saying, "No, our agreement was that you would pay for my medical education. You did that long ago. Now, I am wealthy, though of course, less wealthy than you, but we live very comfortably. Perhaps you will one day bestir yourselves and pay us a visit?

"Anent this, there's a quotation I discovered once which affected me much. It is from Quintus Horatius Flaccus, that is Horace, the Latin poet, and I am his namesake. You understand, all doctors must study Latin and I enjoy it--perhaps got that from our grandfather with his collection of Latin books--he who gave Latin names to Erasmus' sons--Primus, Secundus, Tertius, Maximus!

"Anyway, Horace wrote, 'Hoc erat in votis...', forgive me, in English it is something like, 'This used to be among my prayers--a piece of land, not large, with a garden, a good, fresh spring near the house, and beyond, a bit of wood.'

"Truth is, I'm content with simple things and surely have more than I need, (Horace would have found it too much,) but I have a ten-room stone house, a big stone

barn, a stone root-cellar and a twelve-acre estate--not so large as yours, but adequate for a simple, country doctor. I have seven acres of woodlot and a four-acre orchard of the finest apples in North America. We like to sit out in that orchard in good weather. We have a bench for you and your family too!

"But we are surrounded by Quakers and abolitionists--all dear friends and relatives. Now if that would make you uncomfortable, maybe you and your family will consider one day coming to meet us say, at White Sulphur Springs, Virginia--neutral ground, you might say, where we don't have to be so careful about expressing views on slavery. They have some fine hotels there. It's about half-way between your home and mine, and while it's in a slave state, it's in a part of that state that seems rather more North than South. Aurelia and I took the children there several times."

Talking in this vein, one day the brothers sat smoking on an old log in the Burial Ground. Mordecai had just shown Horatio where Chief Tugaloo was buried and the young oak tree he had planted there twenty-six years earlier.

Horatio murmured, "Quercus alba."

"Pardon?" said Mordecai.

"Oh, its botanical name is Quercus alba, white oak," smiled Horatio.

"This was a sapling from the PowWow Oak, so I brought it here when Tugaloo died," Mordecai explained. "Tallega, you remember him? He was Tugaloo's son and he became chief though there wasn't much left of the tribe. He and Rector brought Tugaloo back for burial. And remember Rector? When he married Tugaloo's niece, Tugaloo asked me to free him. He became a leader in their tribe and had a lot of children. (But, you know, he left us a memento because he also fathered a son, that is Abraham-- Abraham was born to little Kate the summer after you left.) Anyway Rector and the Indians came back through here once more in about 1836 on their way to the Creek settlements in the west. Tallega thanked me for planting that little tree. I tell you I was sorry to see what was happening to our Indian friends. They were being herded by the army like so many cattle across the country they had owned a few years before. I tried to get help from Washington, but it was the federal policy to move the Indians out."

As these conversations developed, it occurred to Mordecai that he had more blacks than he needed and since he would not sell blacks but Horatio wanted to free blacks, perhaps they could work out an arrangement whereby he could pay some of the indebtedness he continued to feel toward his younger brother by giving him some of the blacks who he could, in turn, take north to freedom.

Mordecai broached this idea that day as they sat ~~on the~~ on an old log in the Burial Ground. Immediately, Horatio was taken with the plan. He wanted badly to free slaves, so here was an opportunity.

Mordecai told Horatio that by rights half the blacks were his-- that is, about seventy-five or so of the one hundred-fifty now at Tugaloo. But since they couldn't break up families, and allowing for black children not yet old enough to work, he felt he could give Horatio about thirty right now, with possibly more later. "Then, you could take them up North and free them, if that is so important to you!"

It was important to Horatio. They talked more about the idea. Mordecai said they would consult the blacks, and that only entire family groups would go. Mordecai also knew they must proceed with circumspection, since the blacks were all related and close to one-another. If it became known that some were going to freedom, some of the others, perfectly happy up to now, would become

discontented.

The brothers then talked confidentially with Martha and the Ramseys. Next, they brought old Erasmus, still respected family head, to the Burial Ground and told him of the plan, swearing him to secrecy. They asked for his ideas.

"Massa Mordecai, it be a fact dat all blackfolk thinks of freedom lan'!!! But dis heah be a fambly. We is all a big fambly. When we goes to freedom lan', we wants to all go togethah! Now ah don' know about sneakin' some off up no'th, but dat be fo' white folks to decide, n' aftah it's ovah, den we be happy some of da fambly done crossed ovah to freedom lan'!"

They discussed various of the families and gradually settled on Kader, Ralina and their six children, and Milton and Sarah, with their three sons. Kader, Milton and Sarah had skills to survive in the North. Kader was a good carpenter who could be spared since Mordecai had Maximus and Duke as well as some younger carpenters in training. Sarah would be a loss in the kitchen, but old Betty was still there as adviser and Sarah had several assistant cooks who could take over. As for Milton, he had trained Marcy's mulatto son, Robert, to be a locksmith.

Now it remained to delicately and secretly make approaches to those blacks themselves who would go North. It was decided to ask the adult parents if they had strong objections to going to Pennsylvania and belonging to Master Horatio. No mention was made of freedom. When there was hesitation, Mordecai re-phrased the

proposition in such a way that they couldn't answer negatively.

He said, "I want you to go home with Master Horatio when he returns North."

They all liked Horatio, and Kader remembered and loved him from the days of his own childhood. Kader had been a pet of the Johnsons, always well-treated from birth. Once the idea of going with Horatio was planted, they all accommodated themselves to it. If Master Mordecai said they would go, then, they would go! And it might be they would like their new life, but in any case, they must go. Kader with a philosophic smile said, "We don't nevah want to be sold South, an' ah 'spec' bein' sold No'th aint so bad, but goin' with Massa Horatio aint really bein' sold nohow!"

Kader's oldest two children were already married. Brandon, also a carpenter now twenty-three, had married Lollie in 1845 and they had three small daughters. Kader's daughter, Rosabel, now twenty, in 1848 had married Chester, a son of Alvin and Arbutus. Rosabel had a baby son.

Lollie and Chester would go along with their spouses. Altogether Kader's family now counted fourteen with his wife, his six children, the two young spouses and the four little grandchildren.

Mordecai wanted to give Horatio another fifteen or so blacks but they couldn't work it out that year because of their rule against separating families and because of the exigencies of the plantation.

Now, Mordecai announced to the whole plantation that in a month

or so, whenever Master Horatio returned North, Kader and Milton and their families would go along. There was surprise, some consternation, considerable regret at the impending parting--probably forever. Only by death itself had any blacks been parted from the Johnson Plantation in over a hundred years, for even when times were hard, Mordecai, his father and grandfather had refused to sell blacks.

After the initial shock, the Tugaloo blacks took a fatalistic attitude. Had it not always been so? What Master Mordecai wished was the law.

In the ensuing week, three of Marcy and Arthur's younger sons, who were close friends with their parting cousins, asked Mordecai if they might go along. These boys were called Arthur's Tom, age 22, Apple, aged 18, and Rennie, aged 17. Mordecai decided they could go also, making a total of twenty-two who would be transferred to Horatio. Mordecai remarked at the time that it would make it simpler to keep the Toms sorted out with both Arthur's Tom and Kader's Tom going north. That would leave only three or four other Toms at Tugaloo.

Horatio decided to revise his travel plans since he would now have such a large family. He booked passage for himself, his children, and the twenty-two slaves on the riverboat Alabama Warrior which four weeks later could take them all to Mobile. In Selma he likewise managed to book passage on a coastal packet, the Nantucket Queen, going from Mobile to Philadelphia. They would

They would need to wait in Mobile for a week until the packet arrived from New Orleans.

The blacks were told to do what they could to train their successors and they were told to be packed and ready to move in a month's time. They must plan to take clothing, bedding and only a few personal possessions. Once safely back in Pennsylvania, Horatio would officially manumit them but they were not told this. In Pennsylvania they would automatically be free but slave-chasers were legion there and the new Fugitive Slave Law made it easier to send blacks back to bondage. Horatio would make certain they all had freedom papers. The Quaker meetings would help for they had regular programs for settling escaped blacks.

The last weeks of the visit went smoothly and without incident. The Northerners developed a taste and understanding for the Southern way of life as they saw it at Tugaloo. This wasn't the unmitigated evil that the abolitionists painted. Still, they realized they were seeing slavery at its best and they remembered that just over the plantation border deplorable things happened every day. They had seen the slave-auction blocks in Southern towns, heard the stories of whipping and cruelty. But Horatio and his children were not sorry they had made this trip to strengthen family ties. All the Johnsons, North and South, had developed a new love and respect for each other. The children were thoughtfully regretful as the time for parting drew near. It had

been a wonderful visit. Several times Grace Lee had arranged tea parties for them. Josie Ramsey, Lucille, Augusta and Kader's Tom would always be there as well as Geoffrey, Phoebe and Ben. Grace Lee would read stories to them from Harper's New Monthly Magazine and other northern publications. Then they might take turns reading aloud as they consumed bowls of strawberry tarts, hot biscuits, butter, jam and thick cream. To Phoebe and Ben it seemed fairly near heaven sitting in the heavily-perfumed, deep shade of the arbor, where roses, wisteria and jasmine all vied for the attention of the droning bees. They loved their pretty, adult cousin, so jolly and different from her morose, older sister Jane, whom they had seen only twice during their visit.

But the terrible fact of slavery was still there to divide them. Mordecai and his family, like most southern whites, could not conceive of a South where blacks were free and equal. It was unthinkable, impossible. They must make the best of an imperfect system they had inherited.

One day Mordecai and Horatio rode down to the courthouse at Cahaba, eight miles south, to transfer ownership of the slaves to Horatio. (The village of Cahaba, started with high hopes, had been state capital until 1826 when floods and fever struck. The capital was then moved to Tuscaloosa, though Cahaba remained Dallas County Seat until 1866.)

Mordecai showed Horatio the Laidley Plantation house which

had inspired Tugaloo House, then the brothers stopped briefly to visit Zach and Sabrina Antrim who were still living in their remarkable log cabin. It had been enlarged several times and one year Zach built a two-story new central cabin with the original building as a north wing and a new similar south wing. All was surrounded by broad galleries and balconies. Horatio agreed it must be the most impressive log dwelling in America.

Zach was one of the few slave-owner neighbors that Horatio had consented to meet. They had known each other in North Carolina and in 1816, Zach had come up to Tugaloo when they first arrived. Horatio and Mordecai also knew that Zach didn't mistreat his blacks. In the event they couldn't stay long enough for possible misunderstandings to develop. Zach and Sabrina pleaded with them to stay longer, but they needed to get their business done in Cahaba. Before noon, Horatio had become a slave-owner for the first time in his life. He was a substantial slave-owner too, with twenty-two blacks belonging legally to him. He was filled with ambivalence but knew the Quakers would understand, even applaud, what he was doing. Still, he had always declared he would never own another human soul.

In that year of 1850 the forces on both sides were building for the titanic struggle that would tear the nation apart. That year, John Brown, the abolitionist martyr, was at his farm at North Elba, New York, near Lake Placid. It was a community of free Negroes

who thought of Brown as a "kind of king." In a few years Brown would perform violent acts in Kansas and Harpers Ferry, Virginia--moves to free all blacks, arouse the people and end slavery.

Also, even as Horatio visited in Alabama, the congress was passing the five bills known as the "Compromise of 1850." That summer southern states had threatened secession. Now congress admitted California as a free state but also passed a strict Fugitive Slave Law that caused wild resentment in the North where it was immediately ignored and violated by many. The country would try for another decade to accomodate itself to being "half-slave and half-free."

The days of the visit dwindled away, then it was the twenty-ninth of November. The river boat, Alabama Warrior, its decks loaded high with cotton bales, (some of it Mordecai's,) was scheduled to depart at noon for Mobile. At daybreak all the plantation was alive with last-minute preparations for the journey. Everyone had big breakfasts and great baskets were filled with food. They could get food on the boat also, but the accommodations for the blacks would be minimal.

Mordecai declared a holiday so any blacks who wished might go into town to wave goodbye to their departing relatives. Some said their farewells at the plantation as did Martha and even Jane, who waved from her window. But many wanted to go, so there was a real

caravan of wagons led by Mordecai and Grace Lee in their carriage with Horatio and Phoebe. Geoffrey, Kader's Tom and Ben were riding horseback up and down the line. They had brought out one of the old Conestogas, minus its canvas top, and there were eight other wagons to carry the travelers, their luggage and those who would wave from shore when the boat pulled away. All were dressed in their best finery. When they rolled into town about ten o'clock, Selma people and visiting plantation owners clucked their tongues at Mordecai's "foolish indulgence of his niggers." Yet it was the biggest show in Selma so there was a sizeable crowd to watch the sailing.

It was planned that Geoffrey would remain in Selma at the Dallas Male Academy, with only occasional visits to the plantation. He was feeling apprehensive about the school but his regret at losing his friend Tom was tempered by a little conference he had had with his father one afternoon in the office. Mordecai had told him that Kader's Tom would be much better off in the North. Mordecai said not to mention it to anyone but just believe what his father was telling him.

Geoffrey said Sophronia had told him that black people were free in the North. "Will Kader and the others be free up there?"

Mordecai had answered that there was such a possibility, but they must not say anything about it now or all the blacks would be wanting to go also, and that was impossible. Mordecai cautioned him to say

nothing to anyone, particularly not Kader's Tom. Mordecai said, "I think of you as a responsible young man and I expect you will keep the secret." Geoffrey promised.

On another occasion, Arthur's Tom asked Horatio if they grew a good cotton crop in Pennsylvania. "Massa Mordecai, he say we has da bes' cotton what dey is!"

Horatio told him it was true that there was no better cotton in the whole world than what they grew at Tugaloo. But in Pennsylvania there were different crops and he expected Arthur's Tom and the others would like it up there.

One day in that last week Kader had approached Horatio outside the carpentry shop. "Massa Horatio, Ah bin a-thinkin'. Folks say dat in de No'th black peoples is all free. Now Miz Phronie, she used to say dat de town of Pennsylvania it be in de No'th. So Ah keeps a-thinkin', if'n we's gwine to de town of Pennsylvania, den it be a fac' dat we is gwine be free! Is we gwine be free, Massa Horatio? Ah knows you'll tell de truf."

Horatio had anticipated some questions of this kind and had his answer ready. "It's true that Pennsylvania is north from here, but every place north from here isn't free. Look at the Grantley Plantation. It's north from here isn't it? And North Carolina where we were born, that's north from here." Kader nodded.

Horatio continued, "Well, at Grantley, it's not as free as it is here. So you see, all that's north isn't free. You won't be free. Remember, in North Carolina you weren't free."

You-all will belong to me when we get there, but I think you will like your new life once you're used to it!"

Horatio was depending on the insignificant, geographical knowledge of the blacks. Kader had to be satisfied with this answer and it was passed around and much discussed in the quarters. Horatio didn't enjoy lying but he and Mordecai had agreed to not reveal the planned manumission until after the fact. When Horatio saw the earnest, supplicating expression on Kader's face, (this same good, willing Kader he remembered from so long ago,) he wanted badly to say, "Yes, Kader, six weeks from now you will all be free forever!" But just now, the secret must be kept.

In Selma, the morning of the sailing, Mordecai gave Horatio a very generous bank draft. He told Horatio to buy complete new sets of carpenter's tools for Kader and Brandon, blacksmith tools for Chester, locksmith tools for Milton, iron pots for Sarah, and, at Martha's suggestion, two new woolen blankets for each of the migrant blacks. There was money left over to help settle them in new homes. These purchases would be made in Pennsylvania where fine manufactured goods were inexpensive. Additionally, the draft included \$100. for each black, to be held by Horatio and doled out as the need arose. Mordecai said these people had no experience handling money and would need help.

The parade of Tugaloo vehicles had entered town along Dallas Avenue past the cemetery, turning right at Broad Street and then left into Water Avenue which was then the busiest street in Selma since it paralleled the Alabama River front. But Water Avenue runs along the top of the bluff with brick buildings on both sides--warehouses, stores, hotels hid the river and the riverboats from sight until they were almost upon them. First, they saw puffs of black smoke climbing in the cloudless sky, then they heard some insistently-rhythmic music. Those who had seen the river boats before explained to the others how the boats built up a head of steam by stoking their fires with cords of wood, and how the bigger boats had musicians who would amuse the passengers and townspeople with performances at the major river ports. (Later, they would have calliopes, but not yet in 1850.)

As the wagons descended the bluff the people saw the luxurious boat tied up at the river's edge. Upstream 100 yds a ferryboat was slowly taking a stagecoach with its passengers and horses across the river, for there was no bridge and wouldn't be for another thirty years.

The river steamer had four decks with the lower levels completely loaded with stacks of cotton bales which made it sit very low in the water. Its name, Alabama Warrior, was painted in giant letters on the side of the vessel. Two tall, thin, smoke stacks at the front belched smoke and sparks. At the sides were the giant paddlewheels. Red, white and blue banners and bunting stretched about the lacy,

white-painted, /<sup>iron</sup>fretwork, giving the boat an exciting, festive air.

On the wharf, four black musicians, three with horns, one with a drum, were making music loud enough to be heard in the next county. Some black stevedores were still carrying baggage aboard while other blacks and whites stood about watching the activity. Many windows stood open in the brick buildings that lined the top of the bluff, giving vantage points to more spectators. Truth was, the arrival or departure of the river boats was enough to draw the interest of just about everyone in a sleepy, southern town.

Some carriages arrived with white passengers--the women in crinolines, carrying bright-colored parasols, the men in frock-coats and gray tophats as were Mordecai and Horatio. The black stevedores scurried from the boat to carry the luggage aboard. Other passengers, probably from Montgomery, lined the rails of the upper decks to watch.

Horatio with his children and Mordecai with Grace Lee and Geoffrey went down the gangplank (for the lowest deck was lower than the wharf,) to examine the cabin the travelers would occupy. They would be on the top deck with only the pilot house above. There were four narrow berths so Horatio had decided the family would all stay in one cabin.

Mordecai introduced Horatio to Jeremiah Tyler, the captain of the Alabama Warrior. Captain Tyler was an old friend who for years had been running boats up and down the Alabama River. He had a full, gray beard, (not so common in those ante-bellum days,) and bright, blue eyes in a jovial, weathered face. He was a full six feet five and, one might say, every inch a captain. He enjoyed good living,

but tended his business first, and although he had a wife in Mobile, his boat ranked as a "preferred mistress." He had been born somewhere up north as his accent betrayed, but had been in Alabama for thirty years, first as a pioneer river pilot, then as captain. Now he was a partner in the company which owned his boat and when he heard that Horatio was from Pennsylvania, he proudly told them he had gone to western Pennsylvania the year before to bring the newly-built Alabama Warrior down river to the Gulf. She had come under her own power all the way down the Monongahela, <sup>been</sup> the Ohio, the Mississippi, then ~~towed~~ towed to Mobile Bay to her new river route. He showed them the brass fittings in the pilot house marked "Griffith and Price Company, Brownsville, Penna."

Captain Tyler had been a guest at Tugaloo more than once. He and Mordecai did much business together. He seemed momentarily surprised to hear that Horatio was taking twenty-two of Mordecai's slaves to Pennsylvania but he did not question them about it. Mordecai told him that these blacks and their ancestors had belonged to the Johnsons for over one hundred years, so they were not the common run of slaves. He asked Captain Tyler to make special arrangements for them and he introduced Kader and Milton as the heads of their family groups.

Captain Tyler said, "We will make a good place for them, don't worry. Of course we can't let them stay in the staterooms as you know--the other ~~white~~ passengers would raise a storm big enough to sink this boat--but we can make special little staterooms down

among the cotton bales and they'll get along just fine." He issued orders for the cotton bales to be re-arranged in such a way as to create cubicles with a degree of privacy where the Johnson blacks could install themselves.

Leaving the children and the blacks in charge of Grace Lee, Mordecai took Horatio to Unterdorf's Emporium--now a large, three-story brick establishment at the edge of the bluff. There they went to the office of George Unterdorf and arranged a large draft on Mordecai's account, payable in Philadelphia to Horatio. This was the generous provision, mentioned earlier, that Mordecai made to help the blacks in their new home in the north.

The headquarters of the Unterdorf business was now in Philadelphia. Years earlier young Christian had been called home to assist his ageing father. Now, Christian was the head of the entire firm. He had married a good Pennsylvania German girl, ultimately fathering twelve children. While Mordecai and Horatio were at Unterdorf's, a burly, young, blond man came into the office. Mordecai thought for a moment it was Christian (whom he remembered perfectly well from the old days,) but upon being introduced, he discovered it was Christian Junior, out learning the business. He was a near-copy of his father though less rustic, more sophisticated, since he had grown-up in Philadelphia, attended the University of Pennsylvania and showed that these Unterdorfs had made the transition from German farmer to merchant prince.

This Unterendorf firm would continue to grow phenomenally in the ensuing years as the nation expanded. Christian and his family would seize each new opportunity as it developed. Luckily old Peter had many sons and there were some nephews involved also. They would characteristically put a son in charge of each new branch operation. Only that spring they had sent an Unterendorf around the Horn with a shipload of useful tools and supplies with the intention of opening emporiums in San Francisco, Sacramento, and the Mother Lode Country of California. In the previous decade they had expanded into Texas at San Antonio even before U. S. Annexation and in 1847 they opened an outlet in St. Joseph, Missouri, where the west-bound wagon trains formed up. Their formula for success was simple: provide high-quality goods at lowest-possible prices and get them quickly to the new markets.

For favored customers they could provide special services as George Unterendorf was doing for Mordecai that morning. They could transfer credit from one end of the country to the other, although the imperfect banking system might falter.

It was 11:30 AM when the Johnson brothers returned to the riverboat. As might be expected, Geoffrey had led the children on a thorough exploratory expedition from stem to stern and from top to bottom with the blessing of Captain Tyler. Geoffrey, Phoebe and Ben, with Josie Ramsey, Augusta, Lucille and Kader's Tom, and with assorted others tagging along, had gazed closely at the giant paddle wheels,

the great furnace and boilers in the engine room, run up and down among the towering piles of cotton bales, examined the public rooms and even crowded the pilot house at the top where Geoffrey first, then the others, took turns at the wheel.

There had been a steady scurrying back and forth to and from the vessel by the passengers and the family, with much hugging, hand-shaking, brave smiles and admonitions, tears--for a parting so permanent was a serious matter, even though it was generally felt that the departing blacks would be better off in the North. Most of the Tugaloo blacks were there. Well over a hundred gathered on the wharf by the wagons. Some watching white men spat and allowed they couldn't understand how Mordecai was so wealthy and successful when he permitted his niggers to stand around doing nothing all day.

Erasmus and old Betty were there--their faces tearful and hopeful at the same time, for Erasmus, while still guarding the secret, had let Betty know that this parting would be good for Kader and his family.

Ellen and Louise, both tall, gray-haired, dignified and well-dressed, both at the top of the slave-hierarchy, stood side by side next to Erasmus. They fought back their tears until Milton and Kader and Sarah one last time rushed up the gangplank from the boat to hug their mothers.

Lucille and Augusta, arm-in-arm, stood with Randy Handle and Primus on the other side of their grandmother Louise.

Kader shouted, "We'uns'll write! We find a way.

#### Massa Horatio

he say he write fo' us an' Massa Mordecai, he say he write fo' yo' all." Although Kader and some of the others could write, they had no experience addressing and posting letters.

Then there were several sharp blasts from the steamboat whistle. The travelers rushed aboard. The gangplank was raised. Horatio, Phoebe and Ben were now on the upper deck with the white passengers waving handkerchiefs, while the blacks waved from the lower decks.

On shore, Mordecai, Grace Lee and Geoffrey, standing in the carriage waved, Geoffrey swinging his wide, straw hat at arm's length. At the side of the carriage Duke was standing, his face somber as he looked from the boat up to his master. "Seem like we done did this befo', Massa Mordecai!" Both men thought back to that earlier time in 1816 when they had seen Horatio off at this same spot.

Another blast of the whistle, then the boat, its engines engaged, its wheels starting to turn, edged its way out into the river channel. The black musicians on the boat now, were playing a brisk march. The giant form of Captain Tyler could be seen with the pilot in the pilot house.

Some of the black children on shore were marching back and forth in time to the music and ordinarily Geoffrey would have been leading them, but now he was feeling a great surge of depression as he realized his best boyhood friend, Kader's Tom, was gone forever, and that further, in an hour he would be deposited at the Dallas Male Academy--exiled from the plantation, his family, and from Lucille. He couldn't think of anything to be happy about except that private conference

he had had with his father when Mordecai had hinted that Kader's Tom would be better off in the North.

In a few moments the boat was receding down-river, the music more distant, the faces indistinct, then the boat was like a toy belching black smoke clouds, then it was gone around the river bend. The travelers were gone. Everyone looked around, heaving sighs, drying tears. Now they must get back to routines. Mordecai had three young blacks mount the horses Geoffrey, Kader's Tom and Ben had been riding. He told Erasmus to lead the caravan of wagons back to Tugaloo. Then, he and Grace Lee took Geoffrey in the carriage to the Academy. Mordecai talked with the directors of the school while Geoffrey was settled in his new quarters. Mordecai told him that if he did well in school, he could keep his horse in Selma the next year and it would be easy to ride out to the plantation.

When Mordecai was leaving, Geoffrey said, "Papa, I hope Kader's Tom is going to be all right. He's just the best friend I have in the whole world."

Mordecai, smiling at his son, said, "You know your Uncle Horatio will take good care of all of them. Kader's Tom is going to be just fine. You'll find out one of these days. We'll get letters from up there and maybe in a year or two we'll all go up for a visit!"

Before Mordecai had returned to Tugaloo, the Alabama Warrior, aided by the river current, had chugged past the mouth of the

Cahaba River. Horatio knew they were in the vicinity of the Laidley and Antrim Plantations and of Chestnut Grove, the home of Senator William Rufus King.

Now Horatio was seized with self-doubts about the enormity of what he had done. Had it been right to take these twenty-two blacks from their great tribe? Seeing the displays of affection at the parting had almost overwhelmed him. Then and there he came near abandoning the whole project. Everybody could go back to Tugaloo. He had seen that wasn't such a bad life for simple people, with its plenitude of food, its artless pleasures, its life-long security and familial love.

But really, it was too late to change the plan now! So here they all were on the first stage of the journey to a new life. He had shouldered an enormous responsibility but he planned to see it through.

Everybody was soon enjoying the trip, watching the constantly-changing scenery, the forested shore, the occasional pillared plantation houses, half-hidden in trees, the stops here and there to pick up passengers. Phoebe stayed close to her father but Ben spent most of his time with Kader's Tom and Tom's little brother, Dodie, who was seven years old, just a year older than Ben. No nook or cranny escaped the boys' attention. They were soon well-known to all the passengers and crew-members whom they encountered as

they raced up and down the decks. Excitedly they watched other river boats, rowboats and floating logs, or gulls that swooped near the stern hoping for bits of food.

In less than three days the boat got to Mobile. Captain Tyler then ~~had~~ had directed Horatio to an establishment called "Mère Framboise."

It was a two-story brick house set in an old, walled garden where Spanish moss drooped from ancient shade trees. Leaving his entourage on the Alabama Warrior, Horatio had ridden horseback out Government Street a half-mile or so to make arrangements with Mme. Framboise. She was an elderly French lady who ran a hotel in her family home. Luckily she had eight unoccupied slave cabins in quarters behind the house so she was able to find space for Horatio's unusually large family. At the entrance to her estate he had found a newly-painted sign picturing a large, red raspberry and the words, "Mère Framboise, Hôtel, by day, week, or month." He learned that Mme. Framboise's late husband was John Raspberry, former resident of North Carolina. Mme. Raspberry, convinced rightly that her family appellation sounded more elegant by far in French, became 'Mme. Framboise,' which didn't seem strange in the old French colony of Mobile.

The shipping company office told Horatio they must wait about five days for the Nantucket Queen, on its regular run from New Orleans to Boston with some stops along the way.

Horatio wanted his children and the blacks to learn as much as possible from the trip, so several times, he hired a carriage and driver so they could see the sights of Mobile and vicinity. With room for six passengers, they would take along Dodie, Weezy and Kader's Tom, or sometimes Milton's three sons.

Horatio consulted the city officials who told him his blacks could walk about the city if they stayed in family groups and he provided them with passes. They must return to their quarters, however, before dark. Otherwise, they could get into trouble with the patrols.

So Horatio wrote out family passes for Kader, Milton, Brandon and Chester, while the three cousins, Arthur's Tom, Apple and Rennie were admonished to always stay with Kader or Brandon if they left their quarters. Horatio told them to take long walks around the city and keep their eyes open. One morning he gathered them all together outside their cabins then drew a big map of the southeastern United States in the dust. He showed them where Tugalo was, up the river, and where the Gulf of Mexico was. He showed them how they would take a large coastal sailing packet, sail across the Gulf, around the Florida peninsula, then north to Charleston and finally to Philadelphia.

Only Kader remembered the great 1816 migration of the Johnsons from North Carolina, but Horatio showed them where North Carolina and Virginia were and where their families had lived at Nansemond and Cypress Creek Plantations. They would be going even further north.

From Mère Framboise he had secured a quantity of paper which he handed out to the blacks, telling them each to make a copy of the salient features of the map.

Mère Framboise, curious, had followed him out to see what was happening. She beckoned to Horatio from the shadow of her house. "Dr. Johnson, you know it's agin the law to teach niggers readin' and writin', and it's agin the law to make maps for niggers."

Horatio smiled graciously at her, sensing that she found him attractive. He bowed ever so slightly and said in his resurrected North Carolina accent, "But Mme. Framboise, I wouldn't think of letting these people write. We all know what a lot of trouble that would cause. No, I just made a picture on the ground and they are going to copy it. No law against making pictures is there now?"

She thought he was a little 'tetchy,' but nonetheless one of the most personable guests to come her way in a long time, and search as she would her encyclopedic knowledge of the law, she found no prohibition against making pictures. She fluttered her eyelashes while negatively shaking her head. Then a wan smile crossed her sagging face. "Perhaps you will honor me Dr. Johnson by taking tea with me at fo' o'clock this evenin'?"

Horatio accepted, thereby averting an incipient racial crisis. And since Mme. Framboise was a woman of property and influence in the community, during that tea party he rendered himself a

paragon of charm and amiability, thus quite winning her over so he would have a local advocate should the need arise. He hoped, however, they would all get safely aboard the packet and bid Alabama farewell, as indeed they did!

Two nights later, a messenger came from the shipping company that the Nantucket Queen had arrived and they should be aboard at ten AM the following morning.

They had already visited the dock area learning where their ship would tie up. The Nantucket company operated four large packets, sleek, tall, clipper ships, that raced by sail between New Orleans and Boston. It was a period of transition from sail to steam and not a few of the ocean vessels had both sails and steam engines, but the clumsy, heavy engines and paddles only slowed the beautifully-designed clippers. The Nantucket Queen was aptly named for she was pure clipper--narrow, long, speedy and seaworthy with great sails on masts of astonishing height. She could do sixteen knots when the winds were right.

Horatio marshaled his big family. He called in Kader, Brandon and Milton as his lieutenants and they passed on commands seeing that their families were ready on time.

Mme. Framboise regretted to see Horatio go, for she had entertained some improbable fantasies concerning that estimable gentleman. While urging him to return soon, she did facilitate the departure, providing wagons for the blacks and the luggage, and a carriage for Horatio.

Early in the morning they drove down Government, turning left into Royal Street. As they turned right on St. Louis Street they could see a slave auction in progress. The auctioneer was loudly praising the qualities of his merchandise--at that moment a thin, frightened girl, scarcely sixteen, with her two small children. A rag-tag collection of indifferent white men stood about talking, smoking cigars and kicking the earth. Horatio didn't know if his children understood what they were seeing. But the vehicles moved on to reach the pier in a few moments.

Awe-struck and excited by the size and beauty of the ship, they quickly went aboard. Horatio's family again were in a spacious, first-class cabin. Now the blacks had a row of tiny, crowded, third-class cabins on a lower deck reserved for their race.

Horatio, so clearly a man of culture and substance, was introduced to Captain Josiah Putnam. The captain told him they would be sailing within the hour since the passengers were all loaded and the tide and wind were propitious. The captain, like his ship and crew, was New Englander through and through, but unlike his Puritan ancestors (who had persecuted Quakers and other religious dissidents,) he was charmed by this obviously Quaker family so impeccably attired in their Quaker gray, with their strong family resemblance and remarkable gray eyes. Little Phoebe, bonneted, demure and quiet (but missing nothing,) was usually at

her father's side, while Ben tended to peek around his father from behind--showing one, large, solemn, gray eye under the wide brim of his Quaker hat.

Captain Putnam, fully aware of all the political and social cross-currents in the nation and an abolitionist himself, but circumspect enough to be silent during the southern parts of his run, was curious about the Quaker gentleman with twenty-two slaves, and all with passage for Philadelphia. He knew the Quakers had disavowed slavery seventy-five years earlier and were in the forefront of the abolitionist movement. He wanted to ask Horatio about this anomalous situation but limited himself to asking Horatio and his children to sit with him each evening for dinner at the captain's table.

Now Captain Putnam excused himself to direct the operations of the ship. They cast off. Some of the sails were run up amid shouted directions, clanging bells and furious activity as sailors climbed like monkeys up and down the rope rigging.

The passengers were confined to a portion of the deck where they could watch but not be in the way. Horatio could see his black family in a roped-off area at the far side of the ship. All were filled with wonder to feel the great ship shudder, creak and groan, then start to inch its way seaward.

A local pilot was aboard who would stay with them for thirty miles south past Mobile Point and Dauphin Island at the entrance of the bay. The channel near Mobile Point was dangerously narrow.

A cheer went up from the passengers as the sails caught the wind, bellied out, jerking the ship on its way. Windlasses turned, more canvas was spread and they were gliding swiftly away from the wharf with its waving well-wishers. Before dark, they had doubled Mobile Point where the guns of Fort Morgan looked down. The pilot was dropped into a small boat and they were on their way due Southeast for the Florida Keys. Captain Putnam told Horatio they would see no more land for five hundred miles until they sighted the new lighthouse at Key West.

They were surrounded by the warm, moist air of the Gulf. Soon they discovered the enchantment of gazing up past the billowing white sails and tall masts tipping back and forth against the azure sky and high, fleecy clouds. The passengers had nothing to do between meals. They would scan the surface and horizon for other ships or for dolphins. The blacks found places on deck more comfortable than their cramped quarters and some would stay there even at night, watching the masts rock back and forth past myriads of stars.

Early in the voyage Kader had noticed a black sailor about his own age. One evening, seeing the sailor standing at the railing, he approached him saying, "Ah bin a-watchin' yo and sees yo does all da same jobs dat dem white sailors is doin'. Ah bin wonderin' who yo belongs to? Does yo belong maybe to Captain Putnam?"

The sailor laughed, saying, "Me? I don't belong to nobody. I belong to myself!"

Kader, surprised, said, "Dat mean yo is free?" He had never talked to a free black before except long ago Jack Grant, the brick-maker, who built Tugaloo House. Of course he knew that his brother Maximus could have bought freedom but decided not to. It was interesting to find a real free black to talk to.

The sailor said, "Yes I'm free. My family been free for a hundred years but I have to be careful down here in the South 'cause some of them slave dealers sometimes kidnaps us free folks and makes slaves out of us. When we stop in the southern ports, I usually don't go ashore--Captain Putnam told me it ain't safe.

"But how about you? I notice you have a big family. I guess you're slaves? I heard you belong to that Quaker doctor! Now that's mighty strange since Quakers don't believe in slavery. Anytime I hear about Quakers it's when they're helping black folks to escape." The sailor lit his pipe while gazing at the last glimmers of the setting sun. "My name's Mathias Robinson, (call me Matt,) what's yours?" He held out his hand.

Kader said, "My name is Kader. Don't got no othah name, but we all belongs to the Johnsons. We always belonged to Massa Mordecai Johnson but now he done give us to his brothah, Dr. Horatio Johnson. Reckon dat means I'se Kader Johnson. We's gwine no'th to the town of Pennsylvania."

Matt hit the railing with the palm of his hand. "If you goin' to Pennsylvania you goin' to be free! I stop in Philadelphia eight or ten times a year and Captain Putnam says just keep my papers and I'll have no trouble goin' ashore there--all the black people there are free. That's the law. I have a lot of friends there--it's a big city you know, and our black people have their own businesses, churches and their own houses! They're free, all free! Like in Boston, there is a law against slavery!"

Kader's mind was in a turmoil. "Yo sho' dat Philadelphia and dat Pennsylvany be da same place? Massa Horatio, he done tol' me dat we still be slaves when we gets dere. Ah bin a-turnin' it ober and ober in mah mind caz Massa Horatio, he allus tell da truf. Cain't see how we can be free!"

"Well here's what I think," Matt said slowly, "I think that Quaker man has a big surprise he's goin' to spring on you. Now don't get your hopes up too high, but if you're goin' to Philadelphia, then for sure you're goin' to be free!"

Kader noticed how this black sailor talked like the white men on the ship. It was all strange and mixed up. Who could he believe?

Next day he called Milton aside and told him about the conversation. Milton whispered that all along he had thought they were going to their freedom. "Remember what Miss Sophronia used to tell us about up No'th (and that includes Pennsylvania.) She say dat be all free! Well, I jus' decided I waits 'til we gets dere and den we fin' out.

Better not say nothin' to all da othahs and get da hopes all up!!"

The second night out Horatio had asked if Milton and his sons could perform in the first-class dining hall. It was quickly arranged since the captain wanted to keep the passengers occupied and happy. The musicians proved to be such a success that they were engaged for all the subsequent evenings of the voyage and the captain paid them four dollars each evening. Also little Roscoe was allowed to pass his hat and the passengers might give up to ten dollars a night more. Horatio, reluctantly playing the master, made them hand over all this money for, as he told them, he planned to keep it for them in a safe place and they would get it back later.

Within three days they rounded the Florida peninsula with the new Key West light far off the port bow. Here the Gulf Stream, flowing in the same direction as they, sped their journey by as much as three and a half knots an hour. With brisk winds they dashed toward Charleston, the only stop before Philadelphia.

On the sixth day out of Mobile, they were in Charleston where during a stop of six hours they exchanged passengers and loaded food, water, other supplies and some U. S. Mail. Then the Queen headed out to the open sea past the partly-built Fort Sumter. Horatio hadn't allowed the blacks to go ashore there.

Despite the late season, (now December) the air remained damp and mild as they rode the Gulf Stream north. They were fairly flying along toward Cape Hatteras. Captain Putnam told them they could

encounter storms there--that it was a turbulent part of the sea lanes.

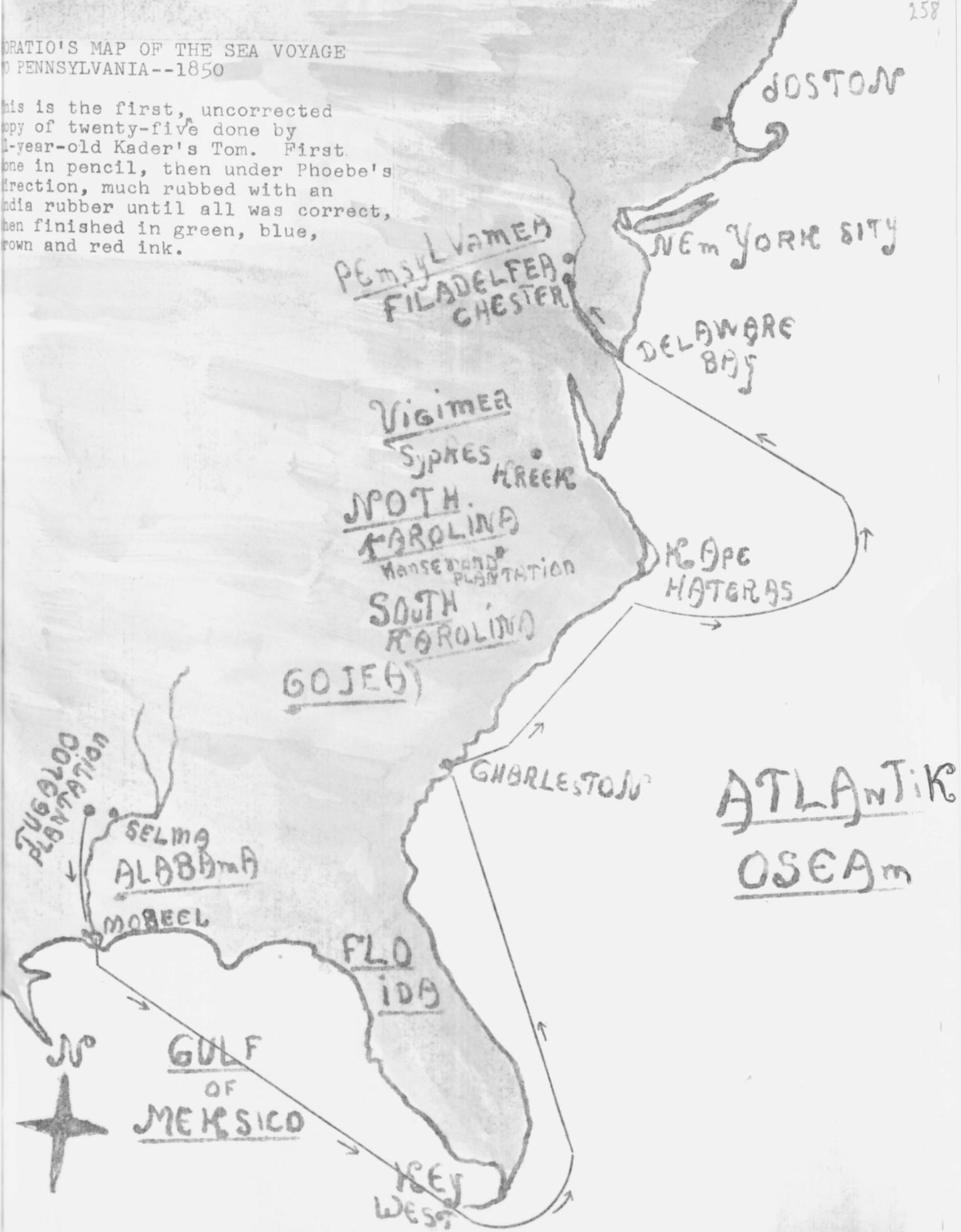
The fourth night after Charleston they sighted the Cape Hatteras light. It was about an hour after sundown that they ran into a violent storm with erratic winds and high waves tossing the ship about like a toy. The captain ordered all the passengers below. The experienced crew had its hands full hauling in and furling the sails, some of which blew out of control, flapping and banging in the roaring wind. Then began a cold, pelting rain to complete the misery of the laboring sailors. For two days the rains, winds and mighty waves slammed against the powerless ship forcing it two hundred miles off-course to the east. At last the storm died down. Once more it was bright and sunny so Captain Putnam re-set the course northwest toward Delaware Bay.

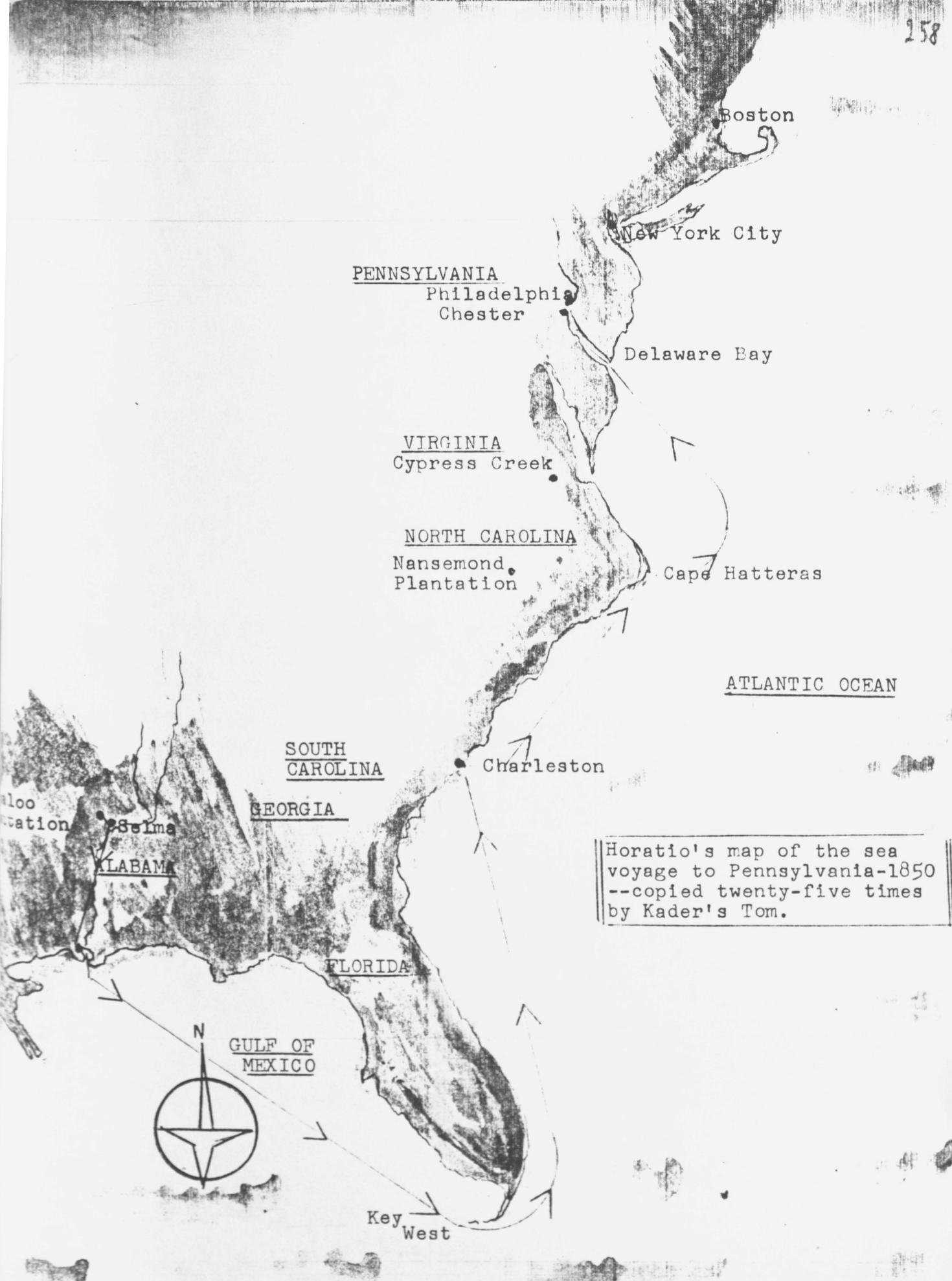
Almost all the passengers had been miserably sick. Dr. Horatio, sea-sick himself, realized there was nothing he could do about it. With the return of good weather he got them up in the fresh air of the deck where they soon recovered their appetites and good humor. Horatio told Kader that when they had seen the Cape Hatteras light, that was North Carolina where they had both been born. He had the blacks get out their maps, the ones they had copied in Mobile. He asked who could write.

Kader said, "Used to be ah could write pretty good but ah aint had no practice fo' years 'ceptin' writin' down carpenter numbahs. Now ah belieb Milton he write pretty good and my Tom he write maybe bes!"

DORATIO'S MAP OF THE SEA VOYAGE  
TO PENNSYLVANIA--1850

This is the first, uncorrected copy of twenty-five done by 1-year-old Kader's Tom. First one in pencil, then under Phoebe's direction, much rubbed with an India rubber until all was correct, then finished in green, blue, brown and red ink.





caz he all da time arunnin' round wid Massa Geoffrey and dey in dat class wid Miss Phrony."

So Horatio showed Kader's Tom how to print Tugaloo, Selma, Mobile, Key West, Florida, Atlantic Ocean, Charleston, Cape Hatteras, Gulf of Mexico, North Carolina, Nansemond, Virginia, Cypress Creek, and finally Delaware River, Chester, Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. Kader's Tom had to print these words in the right place on all the maps, and they had one map for each black, even the babies, because Horatio told them this was probably the biggest trip any of them would ever take and they would keep these maps for souvenirs and to learn geography. Horatio looked at all the maps to make sure the lines were in the right places. Then he had Kader's Tom print all the names with their correct spelling, then print them in place on the first map. Now Phoebe and Ben were directed to watch and make sure it was done properly. As the project progressed, Horatio noticed Ben was looking sad and downcast. "What's the matter, Ben?"

"Papa, everybody has a map except me and Phoebe and thee!"

Horatio laughed, "Well now, I didn't think of that. It wouldn't be fair for us not to have maps. I'll see if Captain Putnam has some paper so we can make three more." The captain, getting the request, took his straight razor to cut out three sheets from the back of the big ship's log.

All the blacks were greatly interested in the map-making which proceeded in a sheltered corner of the deck. They watched closely

as Kader's Tom laboriously completed each new map. Then Phoebe suggested he print one name, Tugaloo, on all the maps, then start over and print Selma on all the maps and so forth. However he did it, he was getting plenty of practice and Phoebe wouldn't allow any mis-spelling or sloppiness. He printed in block letters. They were so intent on the job they didn't notice two finely-dressed white men watching them. This was when Horatio was in the captain's cabin.

"Did you ever see the like o' that?", one white said to the other.  
"Ain't all them niggers slaves?"

The second white whispered, "I heard they belong to that Dr. Johnson who's travellin' with his two children."

Just then Horatio returned with the paper for three more maps.

"I beg your pardon sir," said the first white man, "But all them niggers, do they belong to you?"

Horatio was annoyed by the arrogant demeanor and tone of the man, but he remembered that favorite Quaker quote from Proverbs: "A soft answer turneth away wrath." So he said, "I don't believe I've met you sir, but yes, all these people belong to me and there are many more where they came from."

The white man looked confused and a bit uncomfortable. "These niggers have been writin' an' out here where everybody can see!"

Horatio smiled disarmingly. "They don't generally write unless I ask them to. Did I not see you gentlemen come aboard in Charleston?"

The first man said, "Yes, we're on our way to Boston. You must know that niggers ain't allowed to write?"

Horatio said, "I dare say, gentlemen, when you get to Boston you will find some black men who write very well, so you must try not to be upset by it." He turned away indicating the conversation was ended.

The white man sputtered a bit then was drawn away by his companion. Later Captain Putnam told Horatio that a Mr. Thaddeus Rexford of Charleston had complained to him about "niggers being allowed to write aboard ship." Captain Putnam had told Rexford that this was a Massachusetts ship and that they were on the high seas. Mr. Rexford must understand that the laws of South Carolina did not prevail throughout the world. "If black people write on this ship, then I as captain, applaud. It can only augur well for the future!"

Meanwhile, the project continued with some of the other blacks-- Kader, Milton and some of their children who had some knowledge of writing--printing out the words. Phoebe, a severe task-mistress, required careful, legible printing and correct spelling. She found that some had trouble differentiating C's and G's, M's, N's and W's. These black scribes were required to practice until they had it all right. At last the maps were all done.

About sixteen days out of Mobile they sighted Cape May, New Jersey, on the starboard side. It was the entrance of Delaware Bay. The captain dropped anchor since it was close to nightfall. At dawn, with a local pilot out from Cape May, they would undertake the hundred miles

or so up the Delaware River to the Philadelphia docks.

It was earliest light the morning of that last day that Horatio called them all together in their corner of the deck. They were partly sheltered from an icy December wind by part of the ship's superstructure. Some had wrapped their blankets around them for they were southerners unused to this weather and they had no overcoats.

Horatio looked quietly over them, his eyes resting at last on Kader's face. High above them the sailors were scrambling and shouting in the rigging. The ship was underway once more and indistinctly to the west they could see the Delaware shore.

"I have something very important to tell you all. I only hope I have done the right thing. We will land at Chester tonight or tomorrow and when we do, you will all be free!" The words coming from Massa Horatio were at first unbelievable, incomprehensible! Horatio continued, "From the start, we thought it would be better not to tell you what was happening until you were in the North. So I have told little lies to you, especially you Kader, since you asked me about it. But now I'm telling the simple truth. Tomorrow you will all be free, and we will have a lot of work to do. You must all go to school, learn to read and write, and we must find houses and jobs for you and clothes for this cold weather, and you must learn how to take care of your money so bad people don't get it away from you.

We will have a million things to do, but the Quakers will help us."

As Horatio continued talking, the reality of his words was finally reaching his listeners. Their mouths open, the tears streaming down their faces, they were crying out words like "Glory, Glory," "Kingdom Come," "Sweet Jesus," "Parted da watahs, Moses done led us to da Promised Lan'!" They were hugging one another, dancing, jumping, while still watching and heeding Horatio. The fact was that no slave, no matter how well treated, had not spent a good part of his life dreaming of being free.

Horatio now said, "The ship is going to Philadelphia, but it passes Chester where we are going, and though I was afraid to make the suggestion, Captain Putnam has offered to stop for a minute at the Chester dock since there are twenty-five of us. He says he will make a special stop for twenty-five passengers! That will make things a lot easier for us. So I want you to be all packed up and ready here on the deck when we arrive in Chester. Everybody put on as much clothing as you have. It's easier to carry that way and we don't want people getting sick from the cold. Use your blankets too, but we'll get coats for you as soon as possible."

The blacks were in a delirium of joy now as the purport of what was happening crept into their brains. The impossible, the unattainable had somehow come for them!

"Oh," Horatio added, "Now you will be free, you will need family names. It's up to you to pick the names you want. That's part of

being free, but once you pick a name, then your children will keep that name in the future."

As the ship proceeded up the bay, the shores on both sides became clear. The passage narrowed to five miles, then three, as they passed Newcastle and Wilmington on the port side. They could see farm houses, villages, trees bare for winter time, and they could see cattle and wagons. They had all wrapped themselves in their blankets against the sharp wind. Even Phoebe and Ben were wearing blankets now!

Captain Putnam came over to Horatio now and said, "That's Pennsylvania there off the port bow. We'll be at Chester in thirty minutes!"

Horatio shook hands with the captain. "I know you're in a hurry (carrying the mail,) and I can't thank you enough for being so helpful. All my people are grateful. We won't ever forget this journey!"

A wide understanding smile crossed the captain's leathery face. He shrugged and said, "We help if we can." Then he was off.

Horatio now shouted, "Everybody ready?" It wasn't always easy to shepherd such a large flock, but with Kader, Milton and Brandon doing their part, the disembarkation was quickly accomplished. The Queen had slipped up to the dock amid some other ships and only minutes later was moving out into the river once more. The

captain was waving one last time. The South Carolinians were standing apart with sour expressions on their faces, no doubt begrudging the time taken for this unscheduled stop. Kader's eyes searched the ship for his friend Matt, then found him waving and shouting from high on a mast.

Now Horatio led his family up the wharf to a little waiting-room with a hot stove in the center. Then he went to a livery stable to arrange some transportation. Jake Westerman, the livery man, was an acquaintance who quickly produced an old omnibus when told of Horatio's problem--how to get his family of twenty-five a couple miles out the Philadelphia Road to his house? The omnibus with canvas sides part way up, had length-wise benches for about twenty people and they could put the children and luggage down the center. Jake himself would drive the team. They soon loaded up with Horatio and Phoebe on the seat next to Jake. This is how they arrived at the Johnson's big stone house.

With creaks, squeaks and ruckus the old vehicle came to a halt at Horatio's door. The door was thrown open and there stood Aunt Pennell, her look of inquiry instantly wiped away when she spotted Horatio and Phoebe. "I declare," she called out, her voice breaking with emotion, the tears of joy in her eyes. She rushed down the steps, heedless of the cold wind. In a trice she was hugging Phoebe, kissing Horatio, and crying out, "Where is that Ben, where is

he?"

Ben peeked out of the end of the omnibus. "I'm here Aunt Pennell, and I have some friends too! Guess thee'll be surprised!" Aunt Pennell seized him and hugged him down to the ground.

"I declare! We had no idea when you would get here but we thought you would be here weeks ago. I can't tell you how relieved I am to see you." She was laughing and crying and talking when she spotted Dodie, wrapped in a blanket, peeping out of the omnibus. "What's this, what's this, an Indian?" Then Kader's Tom peeked out. "Another Indian! What's all this?" Then the blacks started climbing down from the omnibus. Five, ten, fifteen, twenty, finally twenty-two counting the babies!

Aunt Pennell was beside herself. Horatio put his arm around her waist and said, "Pennell, we're going to have some visitors for a while!"

Aunt Pennell gasped, "Oh my goodness, Oh my, Oh my! Twenty Indians!" Horatio laughed. "There are twenty-two, and they aren't exactly Indians as thee'll see, if thee looks closely. They are part of my black family from Alabama. We decided to bring them home with us so they can be free!"

Aunt Pennell adjusted her glasses. Horatio then said, "It's true they are a little bit Indian. Ralina here is more Creek than anything else and her children are part-Creek. Her people owned most of Alabama when I first went there. Pennell, what we have to do is find a place for them all to stay where it's warm and dry and they

need some warm food. I think we have enough rooms for them all though it may be a little crowded. They are my family. I even remember when Kader here was born! And Sarah here is Louise's daughter. Thee have heard about many of them. Sarah was the head cook at Tugaloo. It's nothing for her to feed forty people!"

"So this is Kader!" Aunt Pennell took Kader's hand. "I never knew anyone with the name 'Kader,' but Horatio used to talk about thee when he told me about Nansemond Plantation. Kader is a fine name! And Sarah! Maybe ~~the~~'ll just help me in the kitchen. See what we can whip up. We'll need somebody who knows how to feed forty people!"

Horatio now called out over the hubbub, "Let's get that baggage into the house. It's too cold to be visiting out here in the wind. All of you, go into the house--you too, Mr. Westerman, please come inside and we'll find something to warm you up."

Kader edged over to Horatio. "Do dis be yo' big house, Massa Horatio? Where be da quatahs?"

Horatio clapped Kader on the back. "Kader it will take a while to get used to things. This is my house but there are no 'quarters' since there are no slaves. There are no slaves in Pennsylvania since that is against the law here. You are all free now and one of the first things you must do is start calling me 'Doctor Horatio' ~~or~~ or 'Doctor Johnson.' No more 'Massa!' This lady is Aunt Pennell. She is an aunt of my wife who died six years ago and she keeps house for me. You can call her 'Aunt Pennell,' or 'Miss Pennell!'"

With much bustle, the families and their luggage were quickly

moved into the house. Aunt Pennell hugged Ben once more and told him, "Before thee takes off thy blanket, take thy friends Tom and Dodie and run across the road to Uncle Josh Willard and tell them we need milk, eggs and butter enough for twenty-five people. We got a big addition to our family. Also ask Aunt Lydia if she will please mind stepping over here for a minute?"

Then taking Sarah in tow, Pennell started kettles boiling for tea. Then she had a conference with Horatio. "We'll get fires started in all the rooms. Those three empty rooms out in the barn? We'll put some of them out there. We'll want fires out there too. Now we have the attic, but no beds up there. I just thought...remember those gunny sacks we have stacked in the apple shed? Well, some of the young men can stuff them with straw or hay in the barn until we have enough for mattresses. We'll make a dormitory in the attic. We have the two spare bedrooms--Kader and Ralina in one, Milton and Sarah in the other, small children in with their parents. Kader's Tom and Dodie in with Ben, Weezie in with Phoebe. We don't want anyone to feel frightened or forgotten in this strange new place!" Horatio embraced Aunt Pennell, whose instant practical attack on their problems filled him with admiration and gratitude.

Just then, Aunt Lydia Willard knocked. "Pennell, what on earth are thee up to now? I just left those boys helping Josh get all that milk and butter and they'll be over in a minute!"

Breathlessly, Pennell summarized the situation. She wanted to enlist

the aid of Aunt Lydia and Uncle Josh particularly since they were so influential in the Quaker Meeting. They had a dairy across the road and they had many children still at home. There could be no quicker way to spread the word. Lydia would send out her boys to the Quaker houses up and down the road. It would be better than the newly-invented telegraph.

This was an emergency. What they needed was blankets and bedding, food and coats, warm clothing of all sizes. If the Quakers could give these things, fine. If they could lend them, then ask the ladies to sew their initials or a mark of some kind in the corner. The garments would be returned later.

Aunt Lydia joined whole-heartedly in the planning. Within the half-hour, her boys had carried the message to the farms and houses a mile in each direction. Two hours later, Uncle Joshua and Aunt Lydia would drive their wagon by and pick up all the donations--bedding, clothing, even food--anything to help the new-arrivals.

Of course at First Day Meeting they could outline the needs of the blacks. Jobs and permanent homes must be found. The Friends' Meeting would help.

Now Horatio's home was a bee-hive of activity with everybody assigned a task. In the kitchen Sarah had pitched in with enthusiasm when she saw the great black Philadelphia cooking range and the magic of a zinc-lined sink with piped drains and a pump that brought water

directly to the kitchen! Ben led Sarah's boys to the root cellar where they gathered sacks of potatoes, carrots, onions, and walnuts to carry to the kitchen. Sarah and Pennell were boiling water, rolling dough and preparing pork roasts sent over by Aunt Lydia. Pennell immediately had seen that Sarah was a prize. She must try to get Sarah to stay on. Their former cook, Hedwig Huntzleman, had moved west to Iowa with her family months before.

The young men were filling gunny sacks with hay, then distributing them for mattresses to the various sleeping chambers as Horatio directed. Others were building and tending fires or carrying in loads of wood from the cords stacked in the open woodshed by the barn.

Now the house filled with tantalizing odors from the kitchen and at early twilight, Uncle Josh and Aunt Lydia drew up with a wagon piled high with blankets, bedding, coats, much clothing, some great pots of soup and stew, some loaves of bread and chocolate cakes.

It was eight o'clock before dinner was ready and all was organized. They augmented the dining room table which would accomodate only twelve, with two smaller tables and they brought in from the woodshed the benches that Aurelia had had made so the family could sit in the orchard in fine weather.

Two whale-oil lamps suspended by pulleys from the ceiling glowed brightly over the tables with an added glow from numbers of candles.

The tables were loaded with pitchers of cider and milk, pork roasts, great bowls of mashed potatoes, carrots, fresh bread and biscuits, cheese, butter, cream, jellies and jams, bowls of apples with much more in the kitchen where the chocolate cakes and ten fresh apple pies awaited.

The blacks were surprised and confused to be thus entertained in the Big House itself--sitting down with the white family. Horatio and Pennell told Sarah she must come in from the kitchen and sit with them also.

Horatio and Pennell sat side by side at the head of the table. With everyone at last present, Horatio said a brief blessing: "We thank Thee Lord for helping our black sisters and brothers leave the land of bondage. We ask Thy help with impending tasks. We will find jobs and homes for our friends and teach them what they must know to survive in freedom. And now, Lord, Thou knowest Thy children are very tired and hungry so we ask Thy blessing on this feast." Amen."

Sober faces and tears of happiness quickly gave way to animation as everyone attacked the mountains of steaming food. Rosabel, Weezy and Lollie kept the bowls replenished from the kitchen.

Not before midnight of that eventful day was everyone asleep in his warm bed. So much had happened the blacks would not

fully comprehend for some time the great change wrought in their lives.

The Chester Quakers were not strangers to the business of freeing Negroes. The Friends' Society, starting with Pastorius at Germantown in 1688 and with later influential 18th Century leaders such as Anthony Benezet and John Woolman, had gradually cleansed themselves of the evil of slavery, then gone on to lead the abolitionist movement in America.

Up and down that road almost every Quaker family at one time or another had aided escaped slaves, feeding them, hiding them, and helping them get further north or to Canada.

Horatio's black family didn't need hiding for they were legitimately free. They did need help in getting settled and the Quaker Meeting was ready to help. At First-Day Meeting, the children their plight was considered. Within the week, /were enrolled in the Quaker school where the young teacher, Amelia Sharpless, also engaged to teach reading and writing and some ciphering to the older blacks for three hours each Saturday afternoon.

Amelia's father, Ephraim Sharpless, who was a master-carpenter and builder, agreed to hire Kader and Brandon as carpenters and also sixteen-year-old Jean Louis (John Looey), Kader's son who had been named for the architect who built Tugaloo House. John Looey would be an apprentice. Ephraim had contracted to build several buildings. Horatio asked Ephraim to teach the blacks

how to handle and save their money. Ephraim was a second-cousin of Aurelia's and of course, related to Uncle Caleb Sharpless whose farm one-half mile west Horatio had inherited through Aurelia. They decided that Kader, his family and nephews would move to Uncle Caleb's empty farmhouse, now in need of repair, and Kader could live there rent-free for a year in return for making the necessary repairs.

The three nephews, Arthur's Tom, Apple and Rennie--sons of Kader's brother Arthur--took the family name of Johnson as did all of Kader's family. The only exception was Chester, Kader's son-in-law, who chose the name Ingram since he was a son of Alvin who had been a Cypress Creek slave of the Ingram family. Jobs were found for all the young men and they had time off on Saturday afternoons for the special lessons at the Quaker school.

Milton's mother Ellen had told him he was an Ingram, so he and Sarah, with their boys took that family name. When Pennell, now sixty-three and suffering from arthritis, discovered how invaluable Sarah was as cook and housekeeper, she asked her to stay and that was arranged on the spot for Sarah had hoped she might stay. So Milton, Sarah and their sons moved into the three rooms in the stone barn and Horatio had a new iron heating stove installed. They found a job for Milton in a Chester locksmith shop run by old David Lloyd, a Welsh Quaker. The three boys were enrolled in the Quaker school.

The transition to free, northern black would not always be easy and smooth despite all the help from Horatio and the Quaker Meeting. Husbanding their own money and providing for their own future were things southern black slaves were never taught, but must learn here in the North. At first, the family held close together, each hesitant to explore the unknown, for they, like all southern blacks, had learned from training and experience that serious trouble lay just beyond the plantation border for any black not armed with a pass and express permission of his master. In the South, any white person could question them or assault them verbally or physically, and the white patrols would stalk blacks away from their masters, bringing punishment swift and severe.

Horatio understood the adjustment would take time. He kept them all together at his house for a few days. With all the fires going, they were using lots of wood so he organized the younger men into a wood-gathering detail. Some brought wagon-loads of dead branches and tree trunks down from the woodlot while others cut up and stacked the fuel.

Then, one bright winter day, he, Kader, Ralina, Brandon and Kader's Tom drove over to Uncle Caleb Sharpless' farmhouse. Horatio, having decided that Kader's family might move there, thought they should look it over. It had been standing empty since the previous April when the tenants precipitously joined

the California Gold Rush.

With Kader driving, they had stopped the wagon at the barn door. Inside the barn, they found Caleb's buggy, two wagons, a wealth of agricultural implements, harnesses, and stalls for horses and cows. In one of the stalls they noticed a kind of nest made of old horse blankets on a pile of straw. Later, when Kader's Tom looked behind the barn, he discovered a little smoldering fire with a pot of some kind of stew on some rocks. He called the others.

"Looks like there may be a visitor here," mused Horatio, his eyes searching the thick trees that grew along the creek a hundred yards away.

Looking about them, they walked slowly from the barn up the drive under a row of tall, bare, elm trees to the kitchen entrance of the big house. It was a twelve-room stone house of considerable antiquity, having been built by Uncle Caleb's grandfather in pre-revolutionary days. Horatio wanted to see the condition of the house since he planned that Kader could make repairs in lieu of rent. He noticed the steps were rotten and the porch sagged where the stone piers needed re-building. Once inside, they looked through the cold, cob-webby, dark rooms, all dusty, but in good order as the tenants had left them in the springtime. Bedding, dishes, pans, furniture were all there. Upstairs, opening some shutters to admit light,

Horatio glimpsed a dark figure darting behind the barn.  
"Somebody came back to get that stew," he said. They saw  
no more of the mysterious stranger that day.

Horatio had been overcome with emotion when they entered the parlor. Paintings of Uncle Caleb and Aunt Hannah (with their square glasses and benign expressions,) looked down from the wall. The parlor was as he remembered it from the time he was interviewed there twenty-five eventful years before. He had been summoned for a gentle inquisition on the subject of human slavery. He had told Caleb then, "If I were a slave-owner, I would free my slaves."

Now he whispered to the room, "Uncle Caleb, does thee know what I have finally done?" He glanced up at Uncle Caleb on the wall. Horatio knew Caleb would be pleased with him this day. Now he smiled to himself thinking how he had passed that long-ago test and gone on, with their blessing, to marry Aurelia. Much later, in 1845, the old couple died, both over ninety, and having survived their own family, left their farm to Aurelia.

Horatio thereupon suggested she sell the farm, but she said, "Horatio, we mustn't do that! It's been in our family for one hundred sixty-five years. Maybe one of the boys will want it later!" So they arranged with a young Quaker couple, cousins George and Miranda Lewis, to live there and farm the 200 acres.

It was the Lewises who caught gold-fever and left that spring for California. Horatio and Pennell had watched them start west in their tall Conestoga--heading for Cumberland, Maryland and the National Road which led out toward Independence, Missouri, where thousands of emigrants were converging on the great trail to the far west.

He hadn't found other tenants, so the fields had lain fallow and the house unoccupied for eight months.

GABRIEL

Gabriel had caught a crippled pigeon that morning--a pigeon with a broken wing. "I'se sorry, pidge, but it's yo' or me," he said as he despatched the frightened bird and stripped it of its feathers. With an old knife he found in the barn and sharpened on a whetstone, he quickly gutted the bird and popped it in a little iron pot of boiling water.

For two weeks now he had been hiding at this vacant farm where he felt reasonably safe from discovery and where he found food and useful things in the barn. The iron pot had been full of old nails which he dumped out before scouring it with sand and filling it with water at the creek. He had found phosphorus matches in the barn and made little fires at the back of the barn for cooking. He used dry sticks so there would be little tell-tale smoke. The barn was a cornucopia of necessities for him. He found a heavy, old woolen coat hanging there with some worn mittens in the pocket. With old horse blankets he had made a fine, warm bed on heaps of dry hay, in one of the stalls.

On the way here it had been touch and go, freezing both day and night in his thin clothing--catching sleep in isolated sheds or in damp holes under up-rooted trees, narrowly averting capture again and again for the patrols were active along this northern border. He had brought along with him a little cloth bag of mouldy biscuits and some apples, but his food was soon

gone. He had found nuts and shriveled berries in the woods.

One time he dared to take five eggs from a chicken house, braving the uproar made by the chickens. No one had chased him and in the woods he had carefully cracked the shells to suck out the contents. Sometimes he pilfered from corncribs or found some corn or grain left in the fields after harvest. One time he crept close to a farmhouse porch where he found six cherry pies cooling on a bench. He snatched one, the pan just cool enough to touch. At that moment the door opened while he crouched at the side of the house. He heard an elderly-woman's trembling voice exclaim, "Why I would have sworn I made six pies! I was planning to! Well, never mind, we'll still have plenty!" Gabriel then ran behind her woodshed where he gulped down the pie in three minutes, leaving the pan where the old lady would thankfully find it later, for it told her she lost a pie, but had not lost her wits!

It had been very difficult getting this far. While Gabriel was strong and young (he thought he was about seventeen,) he had been sick of hunger and exposure when he found the deserted farm. He decided to stop to rest and recover, for he was fairly sure he was in Pennsylvania now, though he dared not ask anybody.

Down at Oakdale Plantation on the Virginia Eastern Shore, his grandfather had told him he must just keep heading north

and it might be about 150 miles to Pennsylvania. His grandfather, Old Bob, had once driven the master's carriage north through Maryland and Delaware to Philadelphia. Old Bob often told him about that trip. Then when the master decided to sell thirty blacks including Gabriel to a slave dealer, Gabriel had told Bob of his hope to escape to freedom in the North. Bob had looked worried and sober. "It ain't easy, Gabe. If'n dey catches yo' dey ain't gwine treat yo' noways nice." But Bob thought about how the previous year the master had sold Gabe's mother and some others of their family. They were gone just like dead.

After thinking a while, Bob had said, "If'n yo' gets sold down to Loosiany, ain't nevah gwine get free dar. Reckon yo' is right to try now. Yo' is young an' 150 mile ain't bad fer a young feller, but ah tells yo' sho' stay away from da roads an' da towns an' jes' keep a-headin' no'th, a-walkin' at night an' a-hidin' in da bushes by day. Dey's some white folks dat might would hep yo' but bettah jes' trus' yo'sef."

Now Bob had entered whole-heartedly into the scheme. "Ol' Bob, he ain't nevah gwine be free, but it sho' do his heart good if'n Gabe get free! So ah says leave tonight. Don't do no good a-waitin' 'til dey 'spect sumpin'!" Then Old Bob brought out the cloth sack of mouldy biscuits he was saving to feed his two chickens. He killed and cooked one of the chickens

that afternoon for Gabe to take along. Gabe had not thought much about what he would eat on the way, but that had been the greatest problem. The chicken had lasted three days.

He had hugged his grandpa, then slipped away at dusk with those instructions ringing in his ears: "Always keep a-headin' no' th. Don' stop fo' nuthin'. Dey won't know yo' is gone befo' mo'nin', so yo' make tracks tonight!" Old Bob gave him two old shirts to wear over his own clothes. "It be plenty col' up dar in da no' th."

That had been six weeks ago. Bob had told him to look for moss growing on the north side of tree trunks, so he would know the direction he was going on cloudy days. He had been lucky to find this quiet retreat. The fields here had lain fallow this year, but there were many frosted volunteer plants. He found lots of food--corn, potatoes under their shriveled vines, even carrots and turnips, and in the orchard a positive wealth of old apples, many fallen, some not, some fermented and others sweet. He found peaches dried naturally in the sun as well as grapes turned to raisins and lots of walnuts. He could live well here for a long time.

Crouched that morning by his pigeon-stew, he thought he heard the wheels of an approaching wagon. With a headlong dash, leaving stew and fire, he hid himself in the bushes near the creek, peeking out to see what was happening. He saw five persons alight

from a wagon near the barn. There was a well-dressed white man, but the others appeared black--a middle-aged man and woman, a young man and a boy! Gabriel hoped they wouldn't notice anything amiss. He wanted only to be left alone. He wished he had had time to smother the fire.

The strangers disappeared into the barn where Gabe could hear them talking indistinctly. Then he saw the black boy come around the barn and discover his fire and stew pot. The black boy called the others and they all came out to look at the fire. The ~~white~~ man gestured, then seemed to be looking directly at Gabe's hiding spot. Gabe shrunk back carefully.

Next, he saw the visitors walk up the driveway to the old, stone farmhouse where they disappeared once more. Gabe waited some minutes before rushing up to rescue his stew before they came back. Finding the pot too hot to touch, he grabbed handfuls of dry grass for pot-holders, picked up the pot, kicked dirt over the fire, then ran back to the cover of the bushes.

It was at this moment that Horatio had opened the upstairs shutters and briefly saw a dark moving figure near the barn.

Gabriel pondered going on his way north, but decided to remain a while. They had not attempted to find him even though they knew he was near. Perhaps they would go away and he would be left as before in this hospitable spot where he had food, fire and shelter. When the stew had cooled, he ate it all

ravenously while keeping an eye on the visitors.

In a while, they closed the shutters, came out to walk around the house, the white man pointing and gesturing here and there, then locking the door, they mounted the wagon and drove away without looking again at his fire. It was as though they were telling him he was safe here, but then, he knew he must not trust any white man.

A half-hour after the wagon was gone, he crept up to the barn again. Should he move on? Well, he better stay a while anyway and gather food. Thus he spent the remainder of the day gathering walnuts and raisins. By evening he had a fair pile of walnuts on the barn floor. Next morning, using an old hammer, he shelled the nuts. "No use packin' all dem ol' nutshells," he told himself, then shoveled the shells out behind the barn. He put the food in covered jars to keep it from rats and squirrels.

Some days went by with Gabe sleeping lightly, his ear cocked for the sound of wagon wheels. One day, some white hunters walked across the field but didn't see Gabe who hid at the corner of the barn. Two days later, there were snow flurries, then about mid-morning he heard wagon wheels again. Quickly pouring his little collection of nuts and raisins into his cloth sack, he fled to the bushes again.

This time, there were two wagons and many people, but they were all black! The middle-aged black man unlocked the door

of the big house. The people were moving in and out, taking in boxes and carpet bags. Soon, some of the shutters were thrown open and then Gabe saw smoke start to rise from the chimneys. They were going to stay, and they were all black! Could they be just getting the house ready for the white owners or would they live there themselves? It didn't seem at all likely to Gabe that black people would live in a fine house like that. But after a while, they moved their wagons into the barn, unharnessed the teams and bedded down the horses. Gabe waited to well after dark, watching the lighted windows in the house, then was driven by the cold and snow into his pile of horse blankets where the barn seemed warmer and more friendly with the presence and smell of the horses.

That was where Brandon and Kader's Tom found him sleeping snugly in the morning. He abruptly awoke when he heard them talking. There they were, two friendly black faces looking down at him, speculating about who he might be and what he was doing here.

Frightened, he jumped up, eyes wide, trembling in his outsize tattered overcoat, retreating to the farthest corner of the stall. They saw he was a half-grown boy clutching something in his hands. It was his little sack of raisins and nuts. Bits of straw stood out from his wooly, black head.

"Ain't no need to be skeered," said Brandon. "We is yo' friends."

We's gwine be livin' heah now. What yo' 'fraid of? Ah is Brandon an' dis heah be mah brothah, Kader's Tom. Now Kader, dat be our daddy, an' he an' all our fambly dey done moved into da big house. What be yo' name?"

The fugitive looked from face to face. For over six weeks he had talked with no one. Maybe these were the friends he needed so badly. He slowly said, "Ah be Gabriel, but dey all calls me Gabe. Ah be headed fo' up-no'th to Pennsylvany where ah aims to be free. Where we be now? How far to dat Pennsylvany?"

Brandon smiled broadly when Kader's Tom blurted out, "Why yo' be in Pennsylvany right now! Dis heah be Pennsylvany fo' sho' an' yo' is a free niggah. But yo' still bettah watch out for dem patterollers what comes up from Virginy!"

Gabe's eyes grew wider and a trace of a smile crossed his face. He had made it after all!

Then Brandon said, "We all bin slaves down in Alabamy jes' a few weeks ago an' den Doctah Horatio, he done led us up to freedom. Dis heah farm, it belong to Doctah Horatio an' he be da bes' friend black folk evah had! We's gwine live heah leastways fo' a yeah or two 'til we all gets well-settled. We's gwine have jobs an' save our wages an' maybe buy us a little farm all our own. We is all one big fambly. Tom, how many we got?"

Kader's Tom counted on his fingers, mumbling to himself.

"Ah reckon we is about fo'teen countin' dem fo' little babies, but den we got Apple, Rennie an' Arthur's Tom--dat make seben-teen all togethah! We is a good fambly!"

Now Brandon asked, "Has yo' had yo' brekfas'? We's feedin' dese heah horses den we's havin' our brekfas' up in da big kitchen. Yo' come along an' meet our mammy an' daddy an' yo' gets yo'sef a good brekfas'!!"

Like any normal seventeen-year-old, (even ones who had not been half-starved for weeks,) Gabe quickly agreed to have a big breakfast. So he was taken up to be introduced to the black family who ~~soon~~, made him feel welcome. When they had fed him and heard his story, Kader said, "Ah ain't right sho' about it but ah'll talk to Doctah Horatio, an' ah belieb yo' oughta stay right heah wid us. Why yo' is jes' like one of my own boys--cain't let yo' sleep out in da snow, starvin' an' all. We's a big fambly but dey's gwine be plenty food fo' ever'body when we all gets our jobs."

At breakfast, Gabe and John Looey sat side by side. Kader noticed they were about the same size. After breakfast he took the two boys over to Horatio's house to ask what might be done for Gabe.

Gabe was uneasy about thus walking boldly down the road, going up to knock at a white man's door and being conducted into the doctor's book-lined study with its blazing fire and frightful skeleton hanging in the corner. Horatio, seeing the boy's discomfort, asked Sarah to bring them some tea and a plate of cookies.

"Now then," said Horatio, "Where did we find this young man?"

Kader first, then Gabe himself, told his story--his desire for freedom, the escape from Virginia, the starving time, the discovery of Uncle Caleb's deserted farm.

Horatio looked thoughtful. "I think you have earned your freedom Mr. Gabe Freeman. We have to plan how to keep you free. Your situation is different from that of Kader's family. They are all legally free. The Fugitive Slave Law, which is the law of the United States, says you are still a slave and must be returned to your master, even though there is no slavery here in Pennsylvania! But I and my friends are Quakers who will do everything possible to keep you free!"

Kader spoke up, "We all has freedom papahs 'ceptin' Gabe. At brekfas' ah seen dat Gabe an' John Looey looks about da same size

an' ah asks mahsef iffn we might get anothah papah for Gabe an'  
he could jes' kinda get lost among da res' of us, an' maybe if dem  
patterollahs comes snoopin' 'round, we could say he be John Looey  
(which of co'se he ain't) but dey ain't got no way of checkin' us  
all!"

Horatio smiled a bit, staring at the fire, then he asked John Looey to show him his freedom paper. The paper, from the local county court house said, "Jean Louis Johnson, a black male, age sixteen, has been this day freed by his master, Dr. Horatio Johnson of Chester, Pennsylvania." It was recorded and stamped at the courthouse where the clerk was a Quaker abolitionist and longtime friend of Horatio. As Horatio considered the problem, the boys were hungrily devouring the cookies, even though they had just come from a substantial breakfast.

Horatio decided what must be done. He told them to return to Uncle Caleb's where Gabe and John Looey must stay until he had a chance to visit the county clerk. He kept John Looey's paper. After they left, he took the paper to the clerk where they decided between them on an innocent bit of forgery. They added the name of Gabriel between Jean Louis and Johnson. Then they prepared an identical paper for Gabriel. The clerk showed Horatio the stamp on his desk then said, "I have to go over to Judge Condon's office for a minute. I'll be right back."

Horatio understood that he must quickly stamp the new freedom paper so the clerk could honestly disclaim any wrong-doing. When the clerk returned, Horatio had pocketed the two official freedom papers for a Jean Louis Gabriel Johnson.

He rode over to Uncle Caleb's where he spoke to Kader and gave the two boys their papers telling them, "If anyone, white or black, (and especially a patroller or someone you don't know) asks who you are, say you are Jean Louis Gabriel Johnson and you came here from Alabama with Dr. Horatio Johnson. Try not to be away from the farm together. Your papers now have the same name and that would be hard to explain. At the farm, Gabe is just one black boy in a big family of eighteen. If patrollers ever show up, I want you two boys to hide and somebody run over right away to get me. We'll do our best to keep the patrollers confused!"

That's how Gabe was protected by these good people. He was never discovered but continued to live with Kader's family even after legal emancipation during the Civil War. Locally he passed as "Gabe Johnson, one of Kader's boys." But in his mind he had wanted to call himself "Gabe Freeman," because freedom was so important to him. He told the others, "Ah done come no'th to be free an' now, thank hebbin, ah be free, so now ah is Gabriel Freeman!" Like the other blacks, he learned to read, write and cipher in the ensuing years and when he persuaded Weezie to marry him in 1856, he signed the wedding paper "Gabriel Johnson Freeman."

Uncle Caleb's old stone house came alive when the black Johnsons moved in. Pennell and Sarah came over regularly to teach Ralina, Lollie and Rosabel how to run a big household. The men and older boys all soon had jobs.

Horatio, acting through Kader and Brandon, made a plan for pooling their money for, as he told them, if they were to thrive and succeed in freedom, they would have to learn to handle and save money. For the first year or two they would all live at Uncle Caleb's and would pay rent in the form of labor on repair and maintenance. They planned to re-roof the house and the barn, to paint the window sash, doors and trim, repair foundations, paint the interior of the house and restore the rail fences where needed. Each worker would give his wages to Kader but everybody would get a small monthly sum for "pocket money" to spend as he chose. The money given to Kader would go in a common household and savings fund to be kept at the Chester Savings Bank. Their food, shelter and some clothing would be paid for by the fund.

Horatio told them that Mordecai had given him one hundred dollars for each freed slave--money which would be the foundation of their new bank account. He would act as guardian or conservator for two years. Also Mordecai gave money for craft-tools and forty-four woolen blankets--two per black. One day Horatio, with Kader, Brandon, Milton, ~~and~~ and Chester drove in two wagons up to Unterdorf's in

Philadelphia to make these purchases. Horatio wanted them to see the city and learn something of buying and selling. He showed them how they could get a discount by buying so much at the same time. The blacks were amazed both at the size and activity in the big city, and at the numbers of free blacks they saw walking about.

In Unterdorf's great store they feasted their eyes on the merchandise, much attracted, but they had no money. Horatio told them they might come back when they had saved enough to buy. That day he bought the blankets and complete sets of carpenter tools for Kader and Brandon, blacksmith tools for Chester, and locksmith tools for Milton. Additionally, he bought warm woolen coats for the four blacks. He told the men to paint the handles of their new tools when they got home so they would always recognize their own tools.

During the wagon trip home they discussed buying some stock for the farm and so stopped at Uncle Josh's dairy where he sold them three young fawn-colored milk cows and a heifer calf. Uncle Josh was upgrading his herd to purebred Guernsey and these four animals called "Alderney," ~~were~~ (of mixed ancestry) ~~which~~ he sold them for forty dollars. He said they would be fairly good milkers which was what Kader needed. They tied the cows to the back of the wagons to lead them to their new home at Caleb's farm. In time, Kader's family would get hogs, chickens, horses and such farm stock.

At Caleb's farm, Kader was accepted by everyone as the boss, just as his father, Erasmus, had been boss at the old plantations during the absence of the master or overseer. Kader was the oldest and he was the paterfamilias. Early on, he would call family conferences to discuss their needs and to divide the labor. In the spring, they would farm and make a good crop, but since he, Brandon, Chester and John Looey would keep their jobs elsewhere, they decided to put 23-year-old Arthur's Tom in charge of all the farming activity to be assisted by his brothers, Apple and Rennie, and by Gabe. Ralina and her girls were responsible for the cooking and household work. Kader's Tom, Weezie and Dodie, before they went to school, had to provide the kitchen and laundry with the necessary water and fuel for the day.

Horatio had resumed his medical practice soon after their return from Alabama, but he took a close and continuing interest in the welfare of his black family. He wanted them to develop thrifty habits for he knew from observation that intelligence, thrift and hard work led to prosperity. With their ready agreement, he had started bank accounts for Kader and for Milton. To Milton's account he added the money Milton and the boys had made on shipboard. Horatio used his considerable influence to encourage the two black families to save. He told them the time would come when they would want to buy farms or houses for themselves. The idea of

owning their own land was pleasing to contemplate.

Horatio told Kader that now was the time to save while they were living rent-free at Uncle Caleb's. He would allow them to keep any crop they could make in the year 1851, but he told them he wouldn't sell Uncle Caleb's /since it had been so long in his family. But if they saved enough, one day they could buy another farm of their own.

During the winter, with the help of old Job Morris, a Quaker neighbor known for his fine orchards, they pruned the gnarled old trees in Caleb's apple and peach orchard. Job told them the trees could be re-juvenated by pruning out about one-third of the old growth each year for three years. They reduced these prunings to firewood, stacking them in cords to be used when they dried out.

The northern winter seemed cruel and unending to them. But spring, when it came, was made sweeter by its tardiness. In March, the days lengthened, alternating warm, melting hours with re-imposed winter. Finally the sun triumphed, reaching warm fingers down to the decaying wood and leaves of the forest floor, reducing snowdrifts to shining puddles, mirrors that reflected the racing white clouds. Willow catkins swelled along the brisk-singing creek. Tiny, wild flowers pushed up bravely at the edge of retreating snowbanks. The smell of the steaming earth, the resinous buds of the poplars, the cacaphony of returned migratory birds--all filled them with

anticipatory joy, for they lived close to the earth and the time of life and abundance was approaching.

Arthur's Tom chaffed impatiently, waiting until the earth would be dry enough for plowing. Neighboring Quaker farmers who knew what grew well in this climate helped them to plan and plant the fields. Tom and his brothers were experienced with cotton which wouldn't mature in Pennsylvania, but they had grown corn and vegetables, and harvested hay for farm animals. They enlarged Caleb's old kitchen garden, enriching it through the winter with horse and cow manure. They would grow vegetables for their own big family and more for the nearby Philadelphia market.

With money from their account they bought seed to plant corn, wheat and oats on the newly-plowed broad fields. Unplowed were pasture and hay meadows for more farm animals that they had, as well as woodland beyond the creek. On twenty acres sloping down to the creek where the brown loam was especially rich and deep, they planted potatoes and strawberries. A Chester nursery provided the small plants and the seed potatoes. All the family helped cut the potatoes in sections, each with an eye, then plant them in this spot near the house where later, they could come out to aid with the hoeing and the harvesting.

From a retiring farmer they got a bargain, buying about a hundred red hens with their chicks, eight sows with their spring litters, and four more cows with calves.

Life took on a familiar routine, not unlike that they had known at Tugaloo Plantation. But here they were tasting freedom. At family conferences they could discuss their problems, make their plans, then decide how to divide the labor and the resources. They could drive the wagon into town without anyone's permission. Freedom was sweet, but it had serious responsibilities for no one directed their efforts as formerly. They must do that themselves. Horatio was encouraging them to be self-reliant. When Kader would ask him what should be done about something, Horatio would counter, "What do you think should be done?"

At age forty-four, Kader was discovering that he often already knew what should be done--in a word, he was learning that they could run their own lives, but that they must think through their problems, actions and probable results.

Kader was soon encouraging self-reliance in this way in the younger members of his family. If Arthur's Tom asked about a farm problem, Kader would say, "What does yo' think should be done?" Having worked in the fields since childhood, Arthur's Tom realized he knew as well as anyone how to proceed.