



0. PUNISHMENT for HELPING RUNAWAYS - Story
Preface

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Captain Robert Lee, from Norfolk, helped fugitive slaves. He knowingly risked his own freedom to help. This illustration, by C.H. Reed, depicts an engraving from William Still's book, *The Underground Railroad*. Because he was caught helping these fugitives escape, Captain Lee was arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced to the Richmond Penitentiary for 25 years. Image online, courtesy Dickinson College.

Slave owners routinely offered generous rewards for the return of runaways. If they were fortunate, however, runaways were no longer in the slaveholder's state. That, of course, was by choice.

But many freed slaves were not allowed to remain in their own state. They had no choice but to leave. If they wanted to stay, they needed special written permission.

Jonathan Walker, a white man, attempted to assist a group of slaves leave not just their state, but the country. He helped them sail to the Bahamas - and freedom - in 1844.

Walker was captured and branded with the letters "SS" (for "slave stealer") on the palm of his hand. The branding took place in the courtroom, where a fire had been built for that purpose.

Fined and imprisoned for more than a year, Walker moved to Michigan where he died (near Muskegon) in 1878.

Eighty years old at his death, Walker was immortalized by John Greenleaf Whittier in his famous poem, *The Branded Hand*. The most-quoted verse was:

*Then lift that manly right hand,
bold ploughman of the wave!
Its branded palm shall prophesy,
"Salvation to the slave!"*

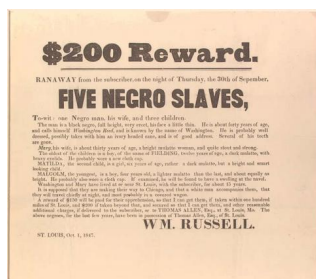
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/PUNISHMENT-for-HELPING-RUNAWAYS-Slave-Voices>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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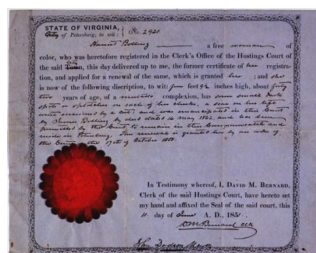
Media Stream



Reward Poster

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

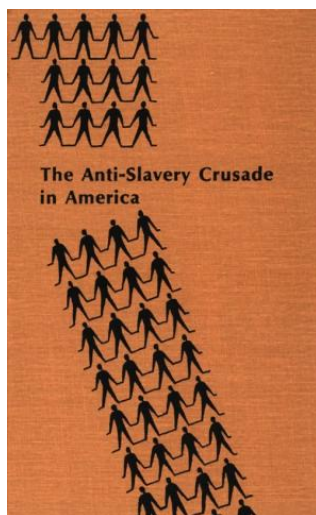
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Certificate of Freedom for Harriet Bolling

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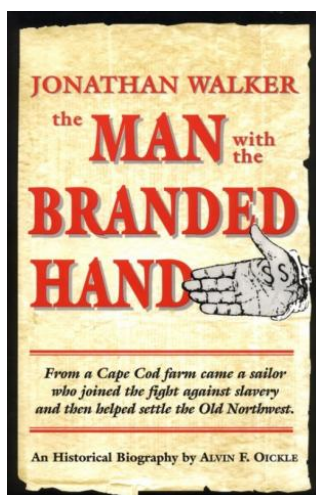
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The Anti-Slavery Crusade in America

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Jonathan Walker: Man with the Branded Hand - by Alvin F. Oickle

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Walker's Branded Hand

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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PUNISHMENT for HELPING RUNAWAYS

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