

DAVID A. HALL
News Clips 1843 - 1844

Baltimore Sun, November 25, 1843, p. 3

[Correspondence of the Baltimore Sun.]

WASHINGTON CITY, Nov. 25, 1843.

Your statement this morning, of the indisposition of the President, was correct. He attended the cabinet meeting to-day, and this afternoon walked out a little, but was too much indisposed in the evening to receive company, and retired to his chamber.

Information having been received last evening, by Captain Goddard, of the "Auxiliary Guard," that an attempt would be made, during the night, to decoy a number of slaves and transport them from this city, via Pennsylvania, to Canada, that indefatigable officer, accompanied by a portion of our vigilant police officers, repaired to the neighborhood of a colored man named John Bush, who resides in the low grounds, east of the City Hall. Stationing themselves at such points as would enable them to watch any movements, they soon perceived Bush leaving his house in disguise, who mounted an old horse and pretended that he was going off in search of some stray horses. As soon as he had loitered off some distance, a consultation was held by the officers, when it was determined to surround and search the premises without delay. The dwelling was accordingly entered, but no other discovery made than the presence of an infant negro child, which was ascertained to be a slave. From the house they proceeded to the stable;—but were told, with great apparent sincerity "*Oh! there is nothing there,*" "*why, bless your souls, you can find nothing in the stable;*" however, the officers thought it best to look and judge for themselves. A lantern was found, and they proceeded. In this stable they found a two horse spring wagon, with curtains closely buttoned down—the horses harnessed—a variety of bundles, parcels, &c. all ready for a start; and, to cap the climax, *no less than four likely colored women, and two children, looking as innocent as lambs, quietly and comfortably seated in the wagon!*

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Some of the officers took possession of the stable and its interesting inmates, whilst the remainder awaited further developments on the outside. But a few minutes had elapsed, when a *white man*, having a colored man and woman in company, approached the stable door—he directed his colored companions to enter—they did so—and of course soon found themselves in the same predicament with the party first discovered. Unfortunately, however, the watch on the outside, supposing this white man to be one of their own party, suffered him to decamp, which he did without much ceremony. A stout black fellow, followed by two women, next made their appearance; the fellow was taken into custody, but the women, suspecting something wrong, availed themselves of the darkness of the night and the difficulty of tracking them in that neighborhood and made their escape. Ten colored persons, in all, are apprehended, as follows; two males and three females belonging to Robert Beall, Esq.; one male, slave of Henry N. Young, Esq.; one female, slave of widow Young, and a woman and two children belonging to Mr. McDonald, on Capitol Hill. Three others were to have completed the party, as follows: woman belonging to D. A. Hall, Esq.; woman owned by Mr. Allison Nailor, and a woman living with a Mr. James: these did not arrive in time to be arrested; their baggage was in the wagon.

It is known that a negro fellow, named Thomas Smallwood, who formerly lived here, but for some months past has resided in Toronto, Canada, arrived here, with the wagon and horses on Thursday night. He is yet at liberty. Bush's wife delivered up a bundle of letters, directed to slaves here, dated at Toronto, and signed by negroes who once lived here, but who have ran away, from time to time, and are now residents there. One of these letters (the latest) is dated 30th October last, and advises them to escape from this "land of bondage" and go there and join them "on Queen Victoria's lands." The officers took possession of the horses and wagon; as well as all the slaves. The latter were all committed to jail; they retain the former, where the owner is requested to come forward, "prove property, pay charges and take them away." Bush was arrested, and gave bail

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in the sum of five hundred dollars for his appearance at court. One of the women confessed that she had paid Smallwood to convey her to Canada, a year ago, but he had delayed it until now.

Last night, a free negro named Lloyd Douglass, was arrested upon a charge of stealing a coat, the property of Mr. William Marshall. The coat was fully identified on Douglass' back, and for want of security, he was committed to jail by justice Goddard.

About five o'clock, this afternoon, a fire was discovered in a frame house, occupied by Mr. Loveless, on Louisiana Avenue, which, together with the house adjoining, occupied by Mrs. Langfitt, was partially injured. I am informed it was occasioned by a little girl, accidentally setting fire to some shavings in the cellar, with a match she was playing with. The fire men, as usual, were prompt, and worked nobly.

The motion for a new trial, in the case of Miss Hall and Miss Reed, found guilty of "assault and battery with intent to kill," was argued before His Honor Judge Dunlop, to-day. Messrs. Fendall and Bradley appeared for the prosecution, and Messrs. Brent, Jones and Hoban, for the defence. The argument occupied the Court until 4 P. M., when the Court refused a new trial. A motion for arrest of judgment was then made by the Counsel for the defence, and Saturday next appointed for a hearing.

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[Correspondence of the Baltimore Sun.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15, 1843.

A few days since, I furnished you with a full account of an attempt to abduct a number of slaves from this city, for the supposed purpose of transporting them to Canada. Within a few days past, the horses and wagon found in Bush's (the negro) stable, with the six negroes snugly seated therein, has been advertised as being found astray, and the owner requested to come forward and take them, in the usual form of law. Yesterday, D. A. Hall, Esq., appeared as the attorney of a Mr. Torry, and demanded them. The persons having them in charge, however, refused to deliver, upon the ground that Mr. Torry had not yet proved the property. It is stated that an individual named *Torry*, and dignified with the title of *reverend*, was in this District about the period of the attempted abduction, but took leave without much ceremony. The circumstances, thus far, have awakened an interest throughout this District which will not soon be allayed; and it must be apparent that the abductors have a much keener eye on their pockets than on the liberation and happiness of the slaves. If the slaves would study their own best interests, they would promptly inform on any individual who would make a single suggestion of the kind to them.

About 11 o'clock last night, a trunk, containing valuable clothing and other property, was either lost or stolen from behind a hack, between 13th street and the steamboat Augusta. There is some reason to apprehend that the driver knows more than he has yet told. What is his number?

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Criminal Court

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John Bush, indicted for enticing and aiding slaves to escape, was found guilty in four cases. The prisoner was defended by Messrs. Jones & Jones and D.A. Hall, Esq. The trial, which was one of great interest occupied nearly the whole day, and a number of witnesses testified in behalf of the prosecution.

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In the case of John Bush, security was required by the Court, in the sum of five hundred dollars in each case, for his appearance at the next Criminal Court, when the motion for a new trial will be argued.

National Intelligencer, December 3, 1844, p. 3

The Rev. Charles T. Torrey, whose trial commenced before the Baltimore City Court on Friday last, on a charge of aiding in the abduction of slaves, has been found guilty on each of the three indictments on which he was arraigned. The offence is punishable by confinement in the State Penitentiary. On the rendition of the verdict by the jury, the counsel for the accused gave notice that they would move the Court for an arrest of judgment and a new trial.

National Intelligencer, December 31, 1844, p. 3

The case of the Rev. Charles T. Torrey, recently convicted at Baltimore of abducting slaves, was disposed of by Baltimore City Court on Saturday, when the motion which had been previously submitted for a new trial, and in arrest of judgment, was overruled, and the prisoner was sentenced, on three different indictments, to six years and three months imprisonment in the penitentiary.