



Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom: The American Negro His History and Literature

William Craft, Ellen Craft

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Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom. William and Ellen Craft. The American Negro. His History and Literature. Ellen Craft (1826–1891) and William Craft (September 25, 1824 – January 29, 1900) were slaves from Macon, Georgia in the United States who escaped to the North in December 1848 by traveling openly by train and steamboat, arriving in Philadelphia on Christmas Day. She posed as a white male planter and he as her personal servant. Their daring escape was widely publicized, making them among the most famous of fugitive slaves. Abolitionists featured them in public lectures to gain support in the struggle to end the institution. As the light-skinned mixed-race daughter of a mulatto slave and her white master, Ellen Craft used her appearance to pass as a white man, dressed in appropriate clothing. Threatened by slave catchers in Boston after passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the Crafts escaped to England, where they lived for nearly two decades and reared five children. The Crafts lectured publicly about their escape. In 1860 they published a written account, *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom; Or, The Escape of William and Ellen Craft from Slavery*. One of the most compelling of the many slave narratives published before the American Civil War, their book reached wide audiences in Great Britain and the United States. After their return to the US in 1868, the Crafts opened an agricultural school for freedmen's children in Georgia and worked the farm until 1890. Their account was reprinted in the United States in 1999, with both the Crafts credited as authors, and it is available online at Project Gutenberg and the University of Virginia.

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