

## "John Brown, the Insurgent," November 21, 1859

We desire to contribute our share of testimony as to the true character of John Brown, now under the sentence of death at Charlestown, for the numerous crimes charged against him. The following statement is furnished us by John. D. Pennybacker, esq., the gentleman who has been elected to represent this District in the Senate of Virginia. We publish this statement in order to show that this "martyr," as his abolition friends call him, has heretofore been a finished highwayman and robber.

It may be proper to state that Mr. Pennybacker's knowledge of Brown and his movements in Kansas extended up to December, 1857, at which time Mr. P. left the territory, and heard no more of "Ossawatimie," until he developed himself again in the Harper's Ferry *foray* - *Rockingham Register*.

MR. PENNYBACKER'S STATEMENT. -I knew John Brown, or "Old Ossawatimie Brown," as we called him in Kansas. That my acquaintance with him may not be disputed, I will state the following, to the truth of which a score of reliable witnesses will testify: About two weeks or thereabouts before the battle of Black Jack, (south-side of Kansas River,) while examining surveys near Prairie City, four miles S. W. of Black Jack, I saw some eighteen or twenty men armed with Sharpe's rifles, issue from a house near by. One of their number approached my party (three in number) and hailing us, demanded our business. I replied that I was engaged in government work as Examiner, and intended to execute my duties, and should stop for no one. I thereupon rode on, leaving him to make such report as he thought fit. I camped that evening three or four miles from Prairie City. After eating supper, a pro-slavery man, in whom I had all confidence, informed me that he had been ordered to leave the country; that his property had been taken, and that Brown had declared his intention of "*wiping*" me "*out*" that night. Having only some five or six men and no arms except pistols I concluded it "the better part" to leave *immediately*, sending two armed men with my wagons toward Lecompton, myself and the remainder going towards Westport, Mo. We had not gone far until we found we were pursued by a number of men. Twelve miles from our starting point, at Bull Creek, they gave up the chase as we learned afterwards from Brown's men.

I learned at Westport that Capt. Pate was somewhere in the neighborhood of Prairie City with a *posse* sent to arrest Brown for the five murders he had committed on Pottawattomie Creek.

Some days after, with a prisoner for the U.S. authorities at Lecompton, and some twelve or fourteen men, I arrived at Black Jack, where I found Pate encamped. I remained all night with him, and the next morning Brown attacked us, (although Lieut. Brockett asked in a loud tone for a conference to explain our object.) with, I am confident, not less than 150 men. Our force numbered 27 men, all told. After three or four hours fighting, Brown having most infamously violated a flag of truce, we were his prisoners. *Our lives were only saved* from the fact that Brown's two sons at the time were prisoners at Lecompton.

While in his hands I heard Brown's son boast of the horses they had stolen from Missouri and elsewhere. I also saw a party start out for the purpose of *robbing* an Indian trading post, (Joseph Bernard's) and saw them return loaded with the goods, (some \$8,000 worth,) old Brown exclaiming as they came in "*Well done, my boys!*" Brown told me himself that his hand was against every man *free-State* or *pro-slavery*, who was not willing to join his band, and that he would kill one as soon as the other. His son Frederick was killed at Ossawatimie by Martin White, a *free-State* man who had refused to join Brown's company, and was thereupon robbed and ordered to leave the Territory.

John Brown was afterwards whipped at Ossawatimie, and I believe he then left the Territory. Of his subsequent operations there I know nothing. That he, without provocation, inhumanly murdered men in their beds, I know. That he committed robbery and theft of goods and horses, I heard from his own men, and saw with my own eyes; but that he ever gave as an excuse that he was attempting to run off slaves while doing this "Kansas work." I never heard from him or any one else. There was not a slave within forty miles of Pottawattomie Creek where he committed the murders, and not one of the murdered men had ever raised an arm against him.