



Exploring Diversity in Pennsylvania History

Fugitive Slaves and the Underground Railroad
in Pennsylvania

Student Worksheet

The Cost of Caring: Expense Book, Vigilance Committee of Philadelphia, 1854-55 PAS Papers, HSP

In 1852 the Vigilance Committee was created during a meeting of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, with Robert Purvis, an ardent abolitionist, as head of the General Committee. The purpose of the committee was to continue the work of the Vigilant Association in assisting and protecting fugitive slaves. Considerable expenses could be incurred when assisting runaways – not only food and transportation but additional expenses such as clothing, shelter, and medicine.

Philadelphia Nov. 1st 1854 Expences of the Vig. Comm of Phil^a

1854

Nov. 1 st	To Paid Wm. Bagnell	30.00
	Freight on Trunk of E. Frances	1.25
	Postage on letter to Canada	.10
	Porter	.50
Nov. 4 th	John Cawon	2.25
	2 ½ days board pd.	1.25
	?? Shirt of Waistcoar for Blow	1.00
	1 Cab	37¢
	6 Days board Blow	3.00
	Cash to Blow	2.50
	Shorter 1 Carriage	.50
	2 ½ yds of Canton Flannel	<u>31.00</u>
		\$34.03
" 9 th	To Laws, Porter	.25
" 13 th	Eliza McCoy	2.50
	Shorter, & Vale	.87
	13 Days boarding Eliza McCoy	6.50
	Letters	<u>.06</u>
	Amount Carried over	\$10.18

Philadelphia Jan. 5/55

1854

Nov 13 th	To Letters 6¢ Chas. Gilbert \$2.50	2.56	
" 14	2 ½ days board of do ¹	1.25	
"	Laws Porter	.25	
" 15	½ Days board, H. Wills	.25	
"	Redden, ½ days board	.25	
"	Laws Porter	<u>.25</u>	\$14.92
" 18	Robt [B]elt, 4 days board	2.00	
"	Vassar Smith 4 days board	2.00	
"	E. Cole, 4 days board	2.00	
"	M. Cole, 4 days board	2.00	
"	Laws Porter, 2 Trips	<u>.50</u>	\$8.50
" 22	Benj. Johnson Cash	2.00	
"	Board to do	.50	
"	Porter	.25	
" 28	John Wesley Gibson	2.00	
"	2 days board	1.	
"	Porter to Boat	<u>.25</u>	\$3.25
Dec. 13	John Fairfield	12.00	
" 16	Patsy Smith, mending Hose	.18	
"	1 Pair Pants	1.62	
"	Telegraph Dispatch to Coffin ²	.50	
"	Patsy Smith, 12 day board	6.00	
"	Cash to do	2.68	
"	Jesse Williams board & Cash	4.00	
"	1 Coat \$2 Shoes \$1.15	3.15	
"	Shaving, &c.	18 ³ / ₄	
"	Henry Allen	<u>.37</u>	\$11.51
" 17	[Kit] Nickless board 3 days		1.50
"	Henry Bank	1.50	
"	Isaac Williams	1.50	
"	Cash to each of the above	7.50	
"	3 Pairs of Shoes	3.45	
"	Porter	<u>.25</u>	\$15.70
" 29	Wm. Thompson	1.00	
"	John Brown	1.00	
"	Porter & Board	1.12	
"	John Stewart	2.00	
"	Wm. H. Stewart	2.00	
"	Staunch Tilghman	2.00	
"	Carriage, Shorter	<u>.50</u>	
		9.62	
Dec 30	To Clothing	1.00	

¹ Ditto, meaning Chas. Gilbert

² Levi Coffin, regarded by some as the "President" of the Underground Railroad at this time.

"	Laws Porter	.25	
"	Paid Freight on Trunk	1.75	
" 31	Catherine Kane	3.00	
"	James Stewart	3.00	
"	David Seagol [?]	3.00	
"	Harriet Tubman	4.00	
"	Benj. Johnson	<u>3.00</u>	\$19.00
1855			
Jan 2 nd	Verena Mercer	2.50	
"	Peter Derrickson	2.00	
"	Chas. Parnell	2.00	
"	John Robinson & wife	3.00	
"	Board 1 day to	2.00	
"	Mrs. Mercer 2 days board	1.00	
"	Mrs. Buchannon	.50	