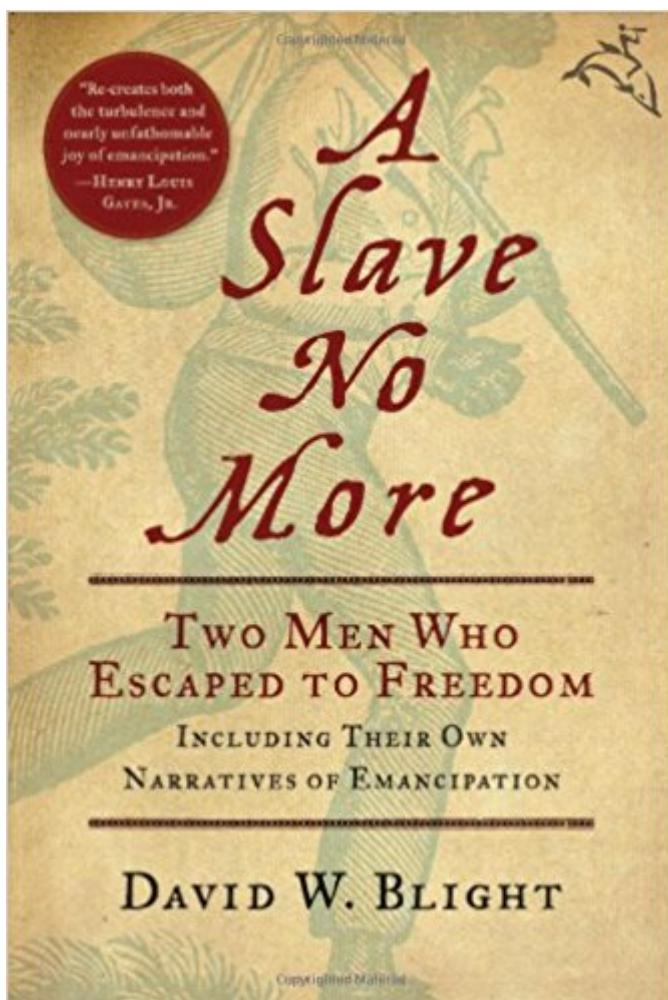


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# A Slave No More: Two Men Who Escaped To Freedom, Including Their Own Narratives Of Emancipation



## Synopsis

Slave narratives, some of the most powerful records of our past, are extremely rare, with only fifty-five post-“Civil War narratives surviving. A mere handful are first-person accounts by slaves who ran away and freed themselves. Now two newly uncovered narratives, and the biographies of the men who wrote them, join that exclusive group with the publication of *A Slave No More*, a major new addition to the canon of American history. Handed down through family and friends, these narratives tell gripping stories of escape: Through a combination of intelligence, daring, and sheer luck, the men reached the protection of the occupying Union troops. David W. Blight magnifies the drama and significance by prefacing the narratives with each man’s life history. Using a wealth of genealogical information, Blight has reconstructed their childhoods as sons of white slaveholders, their service as cooks and camp hands during the Civil War, and their climb to black working-class stability in the north, where they reunited their families. In the stories of Turnage and Washington, we find history at its most intimate, portals that offer a rich new answer to the question of how four million people moved from slavery to freedom. In *A Slave No More*, the untold stories of two ordinary men take their place at the heart of the American experience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Three fascinating works are packaged here: two unpublished manuscripts by former slaves Wallace Turnage (1846–1916) and John Washington (1838–1918), and an illuminating analysis of them by award-winning historian Blight. Turnage’s journal (a sketch of my life or adventures and

persecutions which I went through from 1860 to 1865) is about his attempted escapes and their dire consequences: from his first, when he didn't know where to go, to his successful fifth and last runaway. His account is particularly noteworthy in its revelation of the slave and free-black networks he found and utilized. Washington's *Memorys of the Past* moves from his most pleasant early childhood through the many trials of slavery and the disruptions of the Civil War, ending with his successful escape in 1862. As Blight observes, it's very much a coming of age story, offering a unique window on life (learning to read, falling in love, finding religious faith) in a slave society. Blight provides an accessible historical and literary context for the manuscripts and explores, as fully as possible, the men's lives not covered in their manuscripts (both are self-emancipated). These powerful memoirs reveal poignant, heroic, painful and inspiring lives. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

PRAISE FOR *ROWING TO FREEDOM* "Rowing to Freedom is a remarkable and rare volume. We are fortunate that David Blight, a foremost authority on the slave narrative, has applied his considerable skills as historian and detective to these extraordinary stories of 'ordinary' men. As if their own stories of slavery and the flight to freedom were not fascinating enough, Blight has filled in the details of their lives after slavery in a way that re-creates both the turbulence and nearly unfathomable joy of emancipation. The narratives of Turnage and Washington will surely take their place among the most moving and instructive examples of the genre." --Henry Louis Gates, Jr. "Together, Blight's meticulous research and the previously unknown autobiographical writings of these two men bring to life with unprecedented power the human dimensions of slavery and emancipation." --Eric Foner "Rowing to Freedom presents two of the most significant finds in the entire genre of slave narratives and of the primary material from the Civil War." --David Levering Lewis, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919* "David Blight combines the authority of a great historian with the humanistic zeal of a novelist . . . Rowing to Freedom is a compelling account of two men of remarkable courage who, by writing down their stories, sought to make themselves visible. Neither man could have wished for a more sympathetic or knowledgeable interpreter than David Blight." --Caryl Phillips, author of *A Distant Shore*

Great book, great service.

Enjoyed the book, everything was as stated

Exactly what I expected and wanted. Very interesting read from former slaves during the Civil War. Great price also. Thanks

It's nearly impossible to imagine what it must have been like to be a slave and to feel such an overpowering desire for freedom that someone is willing to do nearly anything to become free. The author gives us great insight into the lives of two former slaves and how they obtained their freedom. This is a worthwhile read for anyone interested in American history.

This was not fiction and I enjoyed learning about our history. There are so many stories to be told. These men were so fortunate to be able to write and share their stories.

Love the service it was fast and arrived earlier than what I expected. Satisfaction guaranteed. I think it was a great deal!!

This should be a must read for students of Black History especially. It was a most moving and informative book.

very good book

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