Alexandria to New Orleans: The Human Tragedy of the Interstate Slave Trade

Four-Part Series

Published October, 2014 in the Alexandria Gazette Packet. Donald Sweig, who retired in 2002 after more than 27 years as the county historian for Fairfax County, holds a Ph.D. in American history from the College of William and Mary. This article is drawn from his earlier scholarly, statistical analysis of the Alexandria-to-New Orleans slave trade, which was awarded the Charles Thomson Prize by the National Archives of the United States, and The Organization of American Historians, and from his doctoral dissertation "Northern Virginia Slavery." He is an occasional contributor to The Connection Newspapers.
**History**

**Alexandria to New Orleans: The Human**

By Donald M. Sweig, Ph.D.

This is the first article in a four-part series.

On May 17, 1828, the following advertisement appeared in the Alexandria Phenix Gazette:

Cash in Market—
The subscribers having leased for a term of years the large three story brick house on Duke Street, in the town of Alexandria, D.C. formerly occupied by Gen. Young, we wish to purchase one hundred and fifty likely young negroes of both sexes, between the ages of 8 and 25 years. Persons who wish to sell will do well to give us a call, as we are determined to give more than any other purchasers that are in market, or that may hereafter come into market.

Any letters addressed to the subscribers through the Post Office at Alexandria, will be promptly attended to. For information, enquire at the above described house, as we can at all times be found there.

This was neither the first nor the last such notice to appear in Alexandria or Washington newspapers, but it commenced the business operations of the most successful interstate slave-trading operation in the history of the United States. Over the next eight years, John Armfield in Alexandria purchased from local planters and shipped to his partner Isaac Franklin in New Orleans at least 5,000 Virginia and Maryland slaves. Franklin and Armfield, as the firm came to be known, were engaged in the trade of slaves and sale of slaves within the United States; in compliance with the law, they did not bring into the country any African or West Indian blacks.

The international slave trade involving all the major nations of Europe as transporters, much of Africa to supply the slaves, and both North and South America and the West Indies as markets for the enslaved blacks had begun in the middle 15th century and continued in Cuba and Brazil until nearly the middle of the 19th century. In all, between 10 and 15 million blacks were forcibly transported across the Atlantic Ocean. Of this number, fewer than 400,000, barely 4 percent, were imported to all of British North America. Nevertheless, this 400,000 was sufficient to establish racially based slavery in every British North American colony, a situation which persisted in all of the new American states at the time the federal Constitution was adopted. The Constitution, reflecting the needs and desires of Carolinians and Georgians, prohibited interference with the importation of slaves by the federal congress until 1808, a period of 20 years. The need for such a prohibition is ample testimony of the inclination of many of the founding fathers to restrict the slave trade at the earliest possible date.

Indeed, George Mason, of Fairfax County, opposed the ratification of the Constitution by Virginia because (among other issues) it allowed this “infamous traffic” to continue for another 20 years. The importation of blacks into the United States barely survived the 20-year protection provided by the Constitution. On March 2, 1807, Congress prohibited further importation of slaves after Jan. 1, 1808. This same legislation expressly allowed the interstate transportation of slaves providing that duplicate copies of manifests listing slaves transported should be kept and certified by U.S. Customs officials. Thus, Franklin and Armfield operated within the law of the United States.

In fact, this statute, by prohibiting importation of slaves, yet allowing the interstate transportation of slaves, combined with a surplus of slaves on the worn-out tobacco farms of Virginia and Maryland and a need for more slaves to operate the newly developing cotton and sugar plantations of the deep South (Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama, east Texas), a need which could be supplied in no other way, acted to create the interstate trade which was so profitable for Franklin and Armfield.

Location on the Potomac River, in the heart of a region with many surplus slaves, made the City of Washington and the town of Alexandria an early transfer point for buyers and sellers of enslaved African-Americans. As early as 1802, an Alexandria grand jury had complained of the “Grievance of persons coming from distant parts of the United States into this District for the purpose of purchasing slaves.” It referred to the “wretchedness and human degradation” of marching black slaves “in our streets ... loaded with chains as though they had committed some heinous offence against our laws.” It lamented that “interposition of civil authority cannot be had to prevent parents being wrested from their offspring, and children from their parents, without respect to ties of nature.”

In 1816, vituperative Virginia congressman John Randolph declaimed against this “nefarious traffic” in the House of Representatives and insisted it was not necessary that “this city should be made a depot for 

The historical marker outside 1315 Duke St., now the home of the Northern Virginia Urban League Inc.

A view inside 1315 Duke St. of the Freedom House Museum that was formerly part of the slave pens.

Section of a ship’s manifest for a shipment of slaves from John Armfield, in Alexandria, to Isaac Franklin in New Orleans in March, 1832. Each slave was entered on the manifest as to name, height, age, and complexion, as required by federal law.

Source: National Archives

Photos by Louise Krafft/Gazette Packet

October, 2014

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com
slaves.” Yet the newspapers continued to carry advertisements for the local traders. Samuel J. Dawson, Jesse Bernhard, and Samuel Meek advertised to buy in Georgetown; John W. Smith and E.P. Legg were among those who operated at Alexandria. By the 1830s, James H. Birch, William H. “Yellow House” (from the color of the building where he conducted his business) Williams, and Joseph W. Neal and Company bought slaves in Washington City, as did numerous planters who came to buy for themselves. Alexandria was soon recognized as “the best place most favored” for beginning such journeys.

Isaac Franklin was operating as a slave trader in Mississippi as early as 1819. In 1824, he was operating as a slave trader in Mississippi. John Armfield, who operated the Alexandria firm, was a careful and successful businessman. He, like his partner Franklin, is reputed to have made over half a million dollars (in 19th-century value) in the slave trade. How then did this business operate in the City of Alexandria?

John Armfield purchased slaves at the firm’s “establishment” on Duke Street from 1828 until 1836. He not only purchased slaves brought to him by farmers and planters, but had agents or buyers at Richmond and Warrenton in Virginia, and at Baltimore, Frederick, and Easton in Maryland. The majority of the slaves were transported to New Orleans by ship from October through April of each year.

THE FIRM used whatever ships were available such as the Shenandoah of Georgetown and the Ariel and James Monroe of Norfolk, often sharing these ships with other traders. By 1834, they owned four ships of their own; the United States, the Tribune, the Uncas, and the Isaac Franklin, which was built at Baltimore especially for their trade. The ships sailed from Alexandria once a month at first and later once every two weeks. A typical cargo was from fewer than 100 slaves to more than 250, the average being a little less than 200. Once a year, during the summer, they transported slaves by “coffe,” or chain gang, overland to Mississippi.

The best descriptions of Franklin and Armfield’s Alexandria “establishment” come from abolitionist writings of the early 1830s. Many abolitionists came to Washington to protest slavery and the slave trade before the Congress, and several of these men came across the river to Alexandria, inspected the slave “prison or jail” on Duke Street, and recorded what they saw. By this time, Franklin and Armfield were at the height of their business.

The Rev. Joshua Leavitt of New York visited the “establishment” in late January 1834. Leavitt had been told that Armfield “bore the character of a gentleman, of fair character for integrity and openness in his dealings, and one who was ever ready to afford any facilities forredressing whatever abuses might grow out of the nature of his business.” George Drinker, an Alexandria Quaker and abolitionist, confirmed this essentially positive picture of Armfield and added that Armfield was very careful to avoid purchasing or transporting free blacks, and often went “to much trouble and expense ... to keep his business free from every thing that would contravene the laws.”

The following year, 1835, a Boston abolitionist, Professor E. A. Andrews, recorded that Armfield had by his efforts to prevent kidnapping and his honorable mode of dealing “acquired the confidence of all the neighboring country.” In fact, Andrews had been assured that this reputation extended even to the Alexandria slave community, and that when faced with being sold, many Alexandria slaves requested that they “be sold to Mr. Armfield.” Even so, trading in the buying and selling of other human beings was at all times a nasty and disreputable business.

To be continued in next week’s Gazette Packet.

Author
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Franklin and Armfield's slave-trading establishment was located near the outskirts of what was then, in the 1830s, the town of Alexandria. The main building was three stories, handsomely painted, with green blinds. Appended to the main building was a large yard, perhaps 300-feet square, enclosed by a high “close board fence” neatly whitewashed and filled with numerous small buildings. Over the door hung a simple sign: “Franklin and Armfield.” Inside the fence was a high brick wall, also whitewashed, with the enclosed courtyard about half covered by a roof. The pavement inside the wall was reported to be clean, with a pump in the center to provide an “ample supply of water.” In the roofed area was a large table where the slaves sat, with benches. The floor was made of boards and a small fire was kept burning. The abolitionist visitors found the establishment “in bad order.” But Armfield was no humanitarian. It was to his financial interest to have the slaves appear fresh and healthy, and John Armfield was a man who protected his interest carefully.

The yard was a kitchen where the slaves’ food was prepared, and a tailor shop where the slaves’ clothing was made. Before embarking for New Orleans, each slave was provided with two entire sets of clothing from the shop. The visiting Boston abolitionist Andrews found the clothing well made of good materials, with the women’s wardrobe showing “considerable taste.”

In the corner of the yard was a hospital, which in January 1834 contained a sick old woman, whom Armfield had refused to buy, and a young woman with an infant beside her on a pillow, indicating a recent childbirth. In July 1835 the hospital was empty. Each of the slaves was provided with a blanket which was hung in the sun during the day. Both men and women were provided with the iron bars, door grates, and security bolts to be seen everywhere. This was a clear reminder that the blacks were not there by choice, and that the facility was, in fact, a prison.

Most of the slaves appeared to these visitors to be contented. The Rev. Joshua Leavitt could not discover “any indication of de-spondency or unhappiness.” Andrews reported the slaves “were standing about in groups, some amusing themselves with rude sports, and others engaged in conversation, which was often interrupted by loud laughter.” Several of the women were clutching young children tightly to themselves, as if to prevent any separation.

Leavitt was able to visit the Tribune, which was loading at that time in the Alexandria harbor. He was told by Armfield that the firm had purchased its own ships to prevent overcrowding, which resulted in the slaves becoming sick and arriving at the market “in bad order.” But Armfield was no humanitarian. It was to his financial interest to have the slaves appear fresh and healthy, and John Armfield was a man who protected his interest carefully.

The hold of the Tribune was divided into two compartments, one to transport about 80 women and the other about 100 men. On either side were two platforms, running the whole length of the vessel, one raised a few inches, and the other about half way up to the deck. On the platforms, which were about 5 1/2 to 6 feet deep, the slaves would lie as closely together as possible.

The captain of the Tribune observed that the slaves were not forcibly confined, that he did not even lock his hatchway, but allowed the slaves to come on deck as they pleased, and that he never had the least difficulty with them. Leavitt, a minister, commented that the enslavers should also “lock down the hatchways upon the mind of the slave, and keep him from a free enjoyment of the light of heavenly truth.”

The visit to Alexandria altered Leavitt’s view of the trade. While adamantly opposed to slavery in all forms, he refused to condemn Armfield. “The very men who sell him out to be turned into a man and woman and sell him to a merchant to be turned into a slave are the same men who say they are against slavery.”

When Franklin and Armfield’s ships arrived in New Orleans, they were required to turn in to the Collector of Customs a Passageway from main office building to city. On left is iron gate to men’s section. On right is iron gate to women’s section.

To be continued in next week’s Gazette Packet.

Alexandria to New Orleans

The human tragedy of the interstate slave trade.

Historical background:

Part II

Continued from last week’s Gazette Packet

History

Alexandria Gazette Packet

This Week’s Content

To be continued in next week’s Gazette Packet.

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Alexandria to New Orleans

By Donald M. Swieg, Ph.D.
Continued from last week’s Gazette Packet.

The extent of the forced separation and sale of young slave children away from their mothers has long been a vexing question, and historians have often been especially concerned with this issue. In 1931, the historian Frederick Bancroft asserted that “the selling singly of young [slave] children privately and publicly was frequent and notorious.” He added that such children were “hardly less than a staple in the interstate slave trade.”

In 1975, two American scholars (Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman), utilizing computer analysis, declared that this was not so, that the percentage of black slave children under age 13 sold at New Orleans was only 9.3 percent, and amounted to no more than 234 per year. The historian Herbert Gutman attacked these results in the New York Times, claiming that the computer had “trivialized the number of children sold.” A careful analysis of the shipments by John Armfield in Alexandria to Isaac Franklin in New Orleans, however, provides a different and more useful understanding of the number of young slave children sold separately in the Alexandria to New Orleans trade.

Statistical analysis of the 3,570 slaves on the Alexandria manifests shows that 145, or 4.5 percent, were under age 10, and 308, or 8.62 percent, were under age 13. Thus, it would appear that the percentage of children in the Alexandria shipments supports the computer analysis. On closer examination, it is not so simple.

In January 1829, the Governor of Louisiana signed into law new legislation prohibiting the separate sale of children under 10 years of age, or of mothers from children of similar age, except orphans. This meant, of course, that single children under age 10 purchased in Virginia or Maryland by John Armfield could not be sold in New Orleans by Isaac Franklin. Indeed, the apparent necessity for such statutory prohibition of the separation and sale of young slave children in Louisiana, clearly indicates that such sales were frequent and common.

Further, this new statute greatly affected the way in which Armfield bought slaves.

Among the slaves in the shipments from Alexandria to New Orleans before the new law took effect, single children under age 10 comprised about 13 percent, and under age 13 over 20 percent. This is over twice the 9 percent predicted by the computer analysis of Fogel and Engerman. For the first three shipments after the new law went into effect, the percentage of single children under age 10 shipped by Armfield dropped from 13 percent to zero, and of children under age 13 from 20 percent to 3 percent.

Clearly, the new Louisiana legislation had a significant effect on which slaves were purchased by John Armfield.

That this was not mere coincidence is apparent by two other factors. Prior to February 1829, Armfield advertised in the local papers for slaves from 8 to 25 years old. The next advertisement in April 1829, when the sale of children under 10 was prohibited in New Orleans, offered to buy “likely Negroes from 12 to 25 years of age, prime field hands.” The offer to buy young children, who he could not sell, had been withdrawn. Additionally, there was an enormous increase in the number of children listed on the manifests ages 11 and 12 over the number ages 9 and 10 in Armfield’s shipments after April 1829. He was again buying in accordance with the law, in order to maximize his profit. Armfield exhibited little concern about keeping slave children with their mothers, when he purchased so many single children ages 11 and 12. And, the true cost of such transactions was paid by the African-American children he bought and by the mothers from whom the children were separated.

Finally, the trader that Andrews spoke with on the Potomac steamer asserted that he sold many young children separately in Carolina (where there was no law prohibiting their sale), but added: “they won’t go in Mississippi; Armfield never takes them if he can help it.” This was in 1835; back in 1828 when he could still sell young, slave children, Armfield obviously “took them,” as 20-percent of his slave shipments were such children. When he changed his advertisements to buy slaves and when he bought no children under age 10 after the new Louisiana law, Armfield was simply responding to market reality, and was not acting out of any concern for African-American slave children. Armfield, a businessman, simply bought what he could sell.

It was also no coincidence that in 1833, 1834, and 1835, the very time Armfield was visited by abolitionists who had come to Washington to press antislavery with the Congress, that Armfield increased his purchases of slaves in family groups. Abolitionism was very strong in the early 1830s, and the breaking of slave families by the slave trade received special condemnation by the abolitionists.

It was thus for good reason that Armfield’s assistant assured visiting abolitionist Andrews, in 1835, that “they were at great pains to prevent” the separation of families and “to obtain, if possible, whole families.” In one instance, “the clerk continued “they had purchased, from one estate, more than 50, in order to prevent the separation of family connections; and in selling them, they had been equally scrupulous to have them continue together.” This had cost the firm “not less than one or two thousand dollars, which they might have obtained by separating them,” as they sold better in small lots. It was, the Reverend Leavitt thought, ultimately profitable for the firm to lose on an isolated sale in order to gain the good will of farmers and planters in Maryland and Virginia.

Armfield told Leavitt that “he would never sell his slaves so as to separate husband and wife, or mother and child.” The trader said he had been offered a troublesome slave “for twelve and one half cents, if he would carry him to New Orleans.” Armfield asserted that he had refused to purchase this slave, even at such an attractive price, as “the fellow had a wife in the neighborhood and they did not like to be separated.” It is unlikely that Armfield actually bought with such care. And, a cursory analysis of the slave sale records in New Orleans indicates that Franklin regularly divided slave families for easier sale. But, it was shrewd business for Armfield to have good public relations with the local Maryland and Virginia slave owners.

Whatever Armfield said or Leavitt heard, it is obvious from the high percentage of young, single, African-American slave men and women that Armfield shipped from Alexandria to New Orleans, that the sale and transportation of local Virginia and Maryland slaves resulted in many broken families and many separations from family and kin. For the African-American slaves involved, the price of Armfield’s profit was very high indeed. This was especially so before it became good business to buy slaves in families. Even so, at all times, the ready market for prime-age, single men and women in the Deep South and the high percentage of such individuals among the Alexandria shipments testify to the disastrous effect of the marketplace on African-American slave families.

To be continued in next week’s Gazette Packet.

Photograph of the former Franklin and Armfield “Slave Pen,” during the Civil War. The building had been sold to Price, Birch & Co. in 1850.

Photograph of the former Franklin and Armfield “Slave Pen.” The iron gate and barred window was commented on by northern abolitionists. It was thus for good reason that Armfield’s assistant assured visiting abolitionist Andrews, in 1835, that “they were at great pains to prevent” the separation of families and “to obtain, if possible, whole families. . . . In one instance,” the clerk continued “they had purchased, from one estate, more than 50, in order to prevent the separation of family connections; and in selling them, they had been equally scrupulous to have them continue together.” This had cost the firm “not less than one or two thousand dollars, which they might have obtained by separating them,” as they sold better in small lots. It was, the Reverend Leavitt thought, ultimately profitable for the firm to lose on an isolated sale in order to gain the good will of farmers and planters in Maryland and Virginia.

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CATHERINE BLACKWELL with four children, ages 8, 5, 3 and 1; and Amelia two months to nine years; Butler — mother and three children; Paine — infant son and three other children; Gaige girls aged 10; Lucy David — age 22, her father or grandfather? If, as seems likely, he bought more families it was surely because he needed to do so, most likely for solid business reasons. The local planters from whom Armfield bought his slaves were the prime targets of the abolitionist pressure not to sell slaves or divide slave families, and many planters may have had misgivings about the moral rectitude of human bondage. If a planter saw slave families owned by a neighbor torn apart, he might decide to manumit his slaves in his will, rather than consign them to a similar fate. But, if he had confidence that the trader would at least respect the family ties, the planter could, perhaps, allow his executors to sell the slaves and, at the same time, still keep peace with his conscience. Therefore, the significant increase in the percentage of slaves apparently purchased in family groups after 1834, combined with Armfield’s excessive assurance to the abolitionists regarding his respect for slave family integrity, suggest that Armfield was responding to social pressure and protecting the source of his slaves by buying rather than separating more slave families.

But, despite the assurances given to both Leavitt and Andrews that groups of slaves who were acquainted and family groups sold easier and for a better price, and that the firm would never sell so as to separate husbands and wives or mothers and children, and despite the increase of slave families in Armfield’s shipments, the high percentage of apparently husbandless mothers and of young single adults suggests that such separations were quite common, especially before it became better business to buy families after 1834. It also seems unlikely that John Armfield and his partner made a fortune trading slaves in only eight years, and became the largest dealer in Virginia and Maryland by asking every slave they bought whether or not he wanted to leave home. Armfield may or may not have purchased the problem slave, that he was offered for “twelve and a half cents,” but it seems most improbable that so shrewd a businessman as he, would refuse what was apparently a free slave, whom he could sell in New Orleans for $500 to $1,000, simply because the slave had a wife on a nearby plantation. The large number of single women among Armfield’s slaves, the 80 percent of women with children but without an apparent husband, the 84 percent of males without any identifiable family, all suggest that African-American family disruption of all kinds was common. Armfield and his agents simply bought what would sell.

In the case of the young children after 1829, and of families after 1834, what would sell worked to the benefit of the slaves. But the ready market for prime-age, single men and women in the Deep South and the higher percentage of such individuals among the Alexandria shipments testify to the disastrous effect of the slave trade on African-American slave marriages and families. And, the number of slaves involved was not insignificant. Leavitt reported in 1834 that 1,000 slaves had been shipped the previous year and that Franklin and Armfield alone would dispatch 1,200 slaves in the coming year. For 1835, the available manifests (others are still missing) indicate that over 1,400 slaves were exported that year. A veritable surfeit of slaves flowed from Alexandria to New Orleans: 318 in three weeks in February; 201 in March; 352 in five days in October; 344 in 10 days in November; 281 in December; 140 in January 1836. A total of 977 slaves were shipped in the last three months of 1835 alone (1,117 with the January ship). In November 1836, Armfield’s last shipment, an astounding 254 slaves were dispatched on one ship, the Isaac Franklin. The majority of these slaves probably came from northern Virginia and southern Maryland, but it seems significant that even the Baltimore trading houses complained of difficulty obtaining slaves, and only 208 slaves were shipped from Baltimore in 1836. All of this testifies to the business success of John Armfield as a trader, and to the importance of his “establishment” on Duke Street in the history of Alexandria.

Franklin and Armfield retired from the slave-trading business late in 1836. Two of the firm’s ships, the Tribune and the Uncas, were sold to William H. (Yellow-House) Williams, a well-known trader in the federal city. The “slave pen” on Duke Street and the ship Isaac Franklin were sold to George Kephart, Franklin and Armfield’s former agent. Kephart may have been less careful about his reputation and more anxious for a fast profit than Armfield. He is reputed to have shipped as many as 400 slaves at one time in the Isaac Franklin.

In the early 1850s, the Duke Street estate...
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establishment was conveyed to “Price, Birch and Co.,” slave traders who had operated in Washington City, and had been driven from the District of Columbia by the slave-trading prohibition of the Compromise of 1850. This firm’s name was on the building when it was captured by Union troops in 1861.

The available evidence indicates that John Armfield was neither an iniquitous barbarian nor an enlightened humanitarian, but rather a shrewd businessman. When it was good business to divide families and sell young children, he did so. When it became better business to maintain the slaves in family units, he did that. Because Armfield was on good terms with the selling farmers and planters of Virginia and Maryland, and because he was able to monopolize the local trade, he was clearly operating by, or establishing himself, the local standards for moral and ethical propriety in the buying, selling, and treatment of slaves. Other traders operating in this same market would have been subject to these standards in order to stay in business. To do less for the slaves might have jeopardized the willingness of owners to sell their slaves; to do more would have increased costs, decreased profits, and given the edge to Armfield’s competition.

Standards for slave traders became more restrictive as time passed. The number of young children sold singly declined in response to legal, and presumably, public pressure. At the same time, the proportion of slaves sold in family units increased — also because of social pressure. Yet, the large number of young, single men and women not sent south from Alexandria indicates that African American slave marriages and families were frequently disrupted to obtain those slaves most marketable at New Orleans — the prime field hands.

Finally, and most importantly, analysis of the business orientation of the slave traders must not be allowed to obscure the personal, human experience of the African-American slaves, who were the essence of the trade. It was the African-American men, women, and children who were bought, separated from their families, sold, and transported to New Orleans (not John Armfield, Isaac Franklin, nor the northern abolitionists), who testify, even in their silence, to a new and painful understanding of the human tragedy that was the real and actual cost of the Alexandria—New Orleans slave trade.

Epilogue: John Armfield eventually retired to his plantation in Beersheba Springs, Tenn. He died there on Sept. 20, 1871 (apparently at age 74). His slave-trading partner, Isaac Franklin, died on his Tennessee plantation on April 27, 1846, at age 57. Franklin’s estate has been estimated to have been valued at perhaps $750,000 (in 19th-century value), most acquired from his slave-trading operations. All of the Franklin and Armfield “establishment” on Duke Street in Alexandria, except the original house built by General Young, was torn down after the Civil War. That original building at 1315 Duke Street, and some of the adjacent land to the west, was archaeologically investigated in the 1980s and is still standing today, and is a National Historic Landmark.

Detailed information regarding the lives and fate of the thousands of African-American slaves bought by John Armfield in Alexandria and later sold by Isaac Franklin in New Orleans may be lost to history. Doubtless, many of their descendants are still living in Louisiana, Mississippi, east Texas (and elsewhere), a testimony to the hardiness of their forebears who endured the painful experience of being the essence of the Alexandria-New Orleans slave trade.

May 17, 1828, this advertisement appeared in the Alexandria Phenix Gazette

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**Phenix Gazette**

**Saturday Morning, May 17, 1828.**

**NO. 303.**

**Cash in Market.**

The subscribers having leased a term of years the large three story brick house on Duke Street, in the town of Alexandria, D.C., formerly occupied by Gen. Young, we wish to purchase one hundred and fifty likely young negroes of both sexes between the ages of 18 and 25 years. Persons who wish to sell will do well to give us a call, as we are determined to give more than any other purchasers that are in market, or that may hereafter come into market. Any letters addressed to the subscribers through the post office at Alexandria, will be promptly attended to. For information, write to the above despatched house, as we can at all times be found there.

**FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD.**

Washington, Alexandria, and Baltimore.

Steam Packet Line.
Section of a ship’s manifest for a shipment of slaves from John Armfield, in Alexandria, to Isaac Franklin in New Orleans in March, 1832. Each slave was entered on the manifest as to name, height, age, and complexion, as required by federal law. 
National Archives