

___**Richard Allen**___

**Confession of *John Joyce, alias Davis,*
Who was Executed on Monday, the 14th of March, 1808.
For the Murder of *Mrs. Sarah Cross;*
with an Address to the Public, and People of Color.
Together with the Substance of the Trial,
and the address of the Chief Justice Tilghman, on his Condemnation.**

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___Excerpts___

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC, AND PEOPLE OF COLOUR. . . .

READER, hast thou conceived murder in thy heart? tremble! tremble! The eye of God is upon thee! his providence will supply a clew for thy detection. “Be sure your sin will find you out.” The path of sin is descending, and for this reason, the feet of the wicked become swifter to do evil, as they approach nearer the bottom of the step, where the gulf of ruin lies. Would’st thou O man avoid the gallows? Avoid the ways that lead to it. Thy maker commands “that thou shalt not steal.” Labour with thy hands and thou will provide things that are honest, and with a good conscience enjoy them. Fly for thy life from the chambers of the harlot. Know, O young man, that her steps take hold of hell. Secret crimes shall be all dragged to light and seen by the eye of the world in their horrid forms. The solemn record is standing: “Whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge.” Go
10 not to the tavern; the song of the drunkard will soon be changed to weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Drunkenness hurls reason from the throne, and when she has fallen, Vice always stands ready to ascend it. Break off, O young man your impious companions. If you still grasp there hands they will drag you down to everlasting fire.

Cry out like the ancient Patriarch, “O my soul come not thou into their secret, to their assembly mine honor be not thou united.” Perhaps the person at this moment reading is a female of ill fame--if thy reputation be not yet quite blasted, pause, thou art on the way to ruin. The midnight revel, the polluted couch, thy diseased body, and thy affrighted conscience testify against thee. Perhaps thy Mothers heart is already broken.

Poor miserable Creature! it is not yet too late. Hast thou made some guilty assignation this
20 very night? Break it off; for thy soul's sake break it off; to-morrow thou may'st be in Hell. Ask the
protection of the Magdalene Society, lately established in this City; above all, let the eyes that have
been full of fornication, become fountains of tears; smite on thy breast and cry, "God be merciful to
me a sinner."

People of Colour:

TO you, the murder of Mrs. Cross, speaks as with a voice of thunder. Many of you fear the
living God, and walk in his commandments; — but, oh, how many are slaves of Sin. See the
tendency of dishonesty and lust, of drunkenness and stealing, in the murder, an account of which is
subjoined. See the tendency of mid-night dances and frolics. While the lustful dance is delighting
30 thee, forget not, that "for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Be these, O man, O
woman of colour, thy resolutions:

"In God's name and strength, I will never more attend a frolic. Drunkards and swearers,
Whoremongers and Sabbath breakers, I have done with you for ever. These hands supply my wants.
I will seek the recovery of the character I have lost. Next Lord's day I will go to divine worship. If
my clothes are not so good as my industry shall, with God's blessings, soon make them, I will
nevertheless go. My Creator, and all good men, would rather see me in rags, in the house of God
than in the gayest attire in a riotous tavern, or in the chambers of pollution. Who can tell, but that
my injured, my offended MAKER, may have mercy on my soul, for Christ's sake, who came to
save the lost. O my injured parents, my unhappy wife, my miserable children, I pray that I may be
40 enabled to do all that can be done, for repairing the evils I have made you suffer. God of heaven,
have mercy upon me!" Go, pray for strength to put these resolutions into execution. — At the feast
of the gospel there yet is room; But if thou wilt fill up the measure of thy iniquity, and despise
knowledge, be assured, this *little* Book, in the day of judgment, shall be a swift Witness against
thee. [End of section]