

Harrold, Stanley. *Subversives. Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003.

p. 66:

For several sessions of Congress, Gates, Giddings, Leavitt and Weld lived together near the Capitol at Ann G. Sprigg's boarding house, which Weld named the Abolition House.

p. 81-82:

There also were some prominent blacks and whites in Washington who had inside information about Torrey's and Smallwood's activities. Besides Congressmen Gates, Giddings, and Slade they included black clergymen Daniel Payne and William Nichols, white abolitionist Joshua Leavitt and white attorney David A. Hall – a colonizationist. The three congressmen knew several of the first escapees to depart Washington with Torrey's and Smallwood's help. When Torrey made his first clandestine trip north in August 1842 with a total of fifteen men, women, and children, among them was Robert, a cook, who had been employed in behalf of his owner at Ann Sprigg's boarding house. In a letter to his son, Giddings provided an informed if disingenuous account of the escape and the underground railroad. Robert he reported, had "left Wednesday evening ... and the next he was heard from he was 'way up there in York State,' full tilt for Canada ... Some swear that there is a Subterranean rail road by which they travel underground. Men, women & children all go. Whole families disappear like the baseless fabric of a vision & leave not a wink behind." (Giddings to Joseph Addison Giddings, 13 August 1842)

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During the early fall of 1842 Smallwood led two more escapes ... Among the escapees was John Douglass, who, hiring his time from his Georgetown master, worked as a waiter at Ann Sprigg's. He had nursed Gates through an illness and when, several months before the escape took place, his master threatened to sell him to a trader, Gates directed him to Torrey, who "told him how to get off." (Gates to Joshua Giddings, 5 December 1848).