

## SERVILE INSURRECTION.

### The Federal Arsenal at Harper's Ferry in Possession of the Insurgents.

## GENERAL STAMPEDE OF SLAVES.

### United States Troops on their March to the Scene.

Dispatches from our Special Correspondent.  
WASHINGTON, Monday, Oct. 17.

The report that negroes have taken possession of Harper's Ferry, and now hold the Government Armory, has created great excitement here. It is said that troops from Fort McHenry, Baltimore, will be dispatched forthwith to the scene of disorder.

Dispatches to the President and Secretary of War confirm the report from Harper's Ferry. The President has telegraphed to Postmasters at Frederick and Baltimore for particulars. The train was fired into on the Bridge, and one man was killed. The insurgents have possession of the Bridge. A special train at Baltimore has been ordered to carry on troops. Frederick Volunteers have offered services.

WASHINGTON, Monday, Oct. 17.

The latest account says the insurgents are Government employes, headed by one ANDERSON, lately arrived there. It is believed to be an Abolition movement to protect runaways. A large number of negroes stampeded last evening from several localities. It is supposed that they are making for Harper's Ferry.

RELAY HOUSE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD, }  
Monday, Oct. 17. }

Gov. FLOYD announced in the Cabinet meeting this morning that two months ago he received an anonymous letter stating that an Abolitionist movement was on foot, which would exhibit itself first at Harper's Ferry, about the middle of October, but he treated it with levity, and had not thought of it since. This seems to give the key to the insurrection.

A train has just arrived here with three companies, but without ammunition.

The eighty-five marines in company are fully equipped and supplied, and may divide. The marines were ready at Washington dépôt in one hour and twenty minutes from the first notice of the order.

BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD, }  
PLANE NUMBER 4—9 P. M. }

Our train of seventeen cars, with two hundred and ten Baltimore troops, eighty from Marines, and one hundred and twenty from Frederick, is just going on. Besides the above, there are one hundred and eighty Artillerymen from Fort Monroe. These constitute the whole force. Major REYNOLDS has command, until Major LEE, who is behind on a special train, with ammunition, comes up.

The insurgents have pillaged the pay-office. Governor WISE has ordered out the Jefferson Regiment, and a horseman has been dispatched by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, with the Governor's orders. This messenger will endeavor to pass through the country, and deliver his message by three o'clock to-day. It is yet doubtful whether the troops will make an attack to-night or wait for daylight.

MONOCACY BRIDGE, Monday, Oct. 17.

A train has just returned from Harper's Ferry having been refused permission to pass. The insurgents are increasing. The baggage-master of the train was permitted to pass into the town, when he was marched into the Armory, where he found about six hundred runaway negroes. Mr. WASHINGTON, of Jefferson, also came down with his wife and servant. The latter was taken prisoner, and Mr. WASHINGTON and his wife were tied in their carriage. The place appeared to be deserted by the inhabitants. A few only remained. The baggage-master was permitted to return.

The same party reports about two hundred white men engaged in the insurrection. Everything had been plundered, and all appeared determined to fight. Mr. DIFFEX, master of trains, has telegraphed from Martinsburg, via Wheeling, that a body of armed men have taken possession of the Armory at Harper's Ferry and have planted guns in one bridge; they have stopped all our tonnage, and mail trains bound East are at the west end of the bridge. The telegraph wires are cut and there is no communication East. A body of armed men are getting ready to leave here at once to clear the bridge, that our trains can pass.

There is great excitement all through the neighborhood. It is now evident that the insurgents have fortified themselves and will make a desperate resistance. The Directors and families of the Pennsylvania Central Railroad are on an excursion, and have also been stopped at Harper's Ferry.

The following are the first dispatches received from the scene of disturbance, that were communicated to the Government:

"The express train east has been detained at Harper's Ferry in consequence of the railroad bridge and Armory being in the possession of an armed organized band of Abolitionists. They are 100, and perhaps more, in number. I took my baggage master and

## Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands

"General Stampede of Slaves," New York (NY) *Times*, October 18, 1859  
<https://stampedes.dickinson.edu/document/new-york-ny-times-general-stampede-slaves-october-18-1859>

proceeded through the bridge, when I was stopped by three men having arms, who ordered me to halt or be shot down. I retired from the bridge and made my escape. I have been frequently shot at, and so have many others. All the watchmen of the bridge and Armory are under arrest. Moreover, every bridge around is guarded. HARWOOD, the colored man, has been shot through the left side, greatly endangering his life. Inform the United States officials at once. There are some eight or ten men in the neighborhood of the Ferry in the greatest anxiety to know the issue of this dreadful affair. The captain of the band told me to notify you that no other trains should pass the bridge. Had you not better notify the Secretary of War of the circumstance?"

Our train is ordered to let Major LEE overtake us. The Frederick companies went at 3 o'clock, P. M., but have not since been heard from. We take on at this place two additional pieces of artillery, and an additional supply of ammunition from Frederick.

HARPER'S FERRY, Monday, Oct. 17.

Train arrived and halted below town, where runners communicated the state of affairs. Jefferson County Regiment had entered town, from Virginia side, and Frederick troops crossed the bridge; there had been a deal of firing. Some nine persons killed.

Mr. BECKHAM, Agent of the Railroad Company, was shot through, and his murderer fell almost at the same instant, pinned by a rifle ball from a friend of Mr. BECKHAM,

The troops have landed, and are in the town. The insurgents are willing to surrender, but on terms of safe conduct out of difficulty, otherwise they threaten to sacrifice the lives of LEWIS WASHINGTON and Col. DANGERFIELD, who they now hold as prisoners. Capt. AARON STEPHENS, of Norwich, Conn., is now dying of wounds, and makes the following statement:

"The plan has been concocting for a year or more. The parties rendezvoused at a farm a few miles from here, rented for the purpose by Capt. BROWN, of Kansas notoriety, under the name of Smith. Among the insurgents are KAGG, of Ohio; TOBB, of Maine; W. J. SEAMAN and Mr. BROWN, of Ohio." Q.

Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands