



**AN ACCOUNT OF THE STILL FAMILY HISTORY
WRITTEN BY DR. JAMES STILL**

I was born in Washington Township (now Shamong), Burlington County, State of New Jersey, April ninth, one thousand eight hundred and twelve, at what was called the Indian Mill. . . My father's name was Levin Still and my mother's name was Charity. They were born in Maryland, and were slaves. My father bought his freedom, and then undertook to free his wife by bringing her to New Jersey. . . .

My mother. . . was born a slave, and in slavery reared to womanhood. Four children were born to her in her time of servitude, two sons and two daughters. Her anxious spirit longed for freedom, and no way presented itself but that of flight, and escape by flight she effected at a convenient season, leaving two little boys in bondage, and taking with her two little daughters. She fled to New Jersey, and took up her abode there. Often did she have cause to tremble for fear of her old taskmaster, well knowing that the law was against her, and that he had a right by the laws of her country to claim her and her children, and carry them back to slavery. . . .

The loss of the two little boys left behind in slavery was a great grief. She frequently spoke of them, and wondered where they were, whether dead or alive.

Forty-five years rolled away and on their bosom bore here long-absent son Peter to her arms again. . . . He served in slavery. . . , and by saving and industry was enabled to buy his freedom of his master whilst living in Alabama. Having purchased his freedom he set out toward the North to look for his relations, of whom he knew nothing, and had heard nothing from the time he was five years old. He came to Philadelphia in eighteen hundred and fifty, found his own brother clerk in the Anti-Slavery office there, and from him learned the whereabouts of his mother and brothers. From thence he came to my house, and we took him to see our mother. . . . After spending a little time among the relatives whom he had never before met, he made up his mind to try to relieve the family whom he had left behind in slavery.

He set his face southward, and, reaching Alabama, told his wife and children of his success in the North, and set about planning to release them. . . . He bade them a hopeful farewell and came North to consult friends. . . . Some counseled one way and some another. . . .

A gentleman finally volunteered to go and bring his family to him. This person reached Alabama, found those who he was seeking, and succeeded in conveying them several hundred miles on their way North. He was overtaken, however, by their master, who captured them, carried the slaves back to bondage, and killed the man who had generously volunteered to risk his life in their behalf.

Peter, at hearing this news, was nearly heartbroken. He next proposed to collect money to purchase his wife and children. After traveling about for five years, he gathered the sum of five thousand dollars, with which he bought them. They were delivered to him in eighteen hundred and fifty-five, the wife, two sons, and a daughter. They arrived at my house on January thirteenth of that year, and after showing his family to anxious friends who were interested, Peter settled down with them in Burlington, New Jersey.

*Early Recollections and Life of
Doctor James Still (1877)*