

Detroit: he then shook them cordially by the hand, and, wishing them God speed, returned to the town, while they struck into the midst of the wilderness, and continued to march in what they supposed to be a westerly direction for several hours, when they suddenly came upon an opening in the woods, which proved to be a settlement: when within five hundred yards of one of the houses, they halted, and, after concealing the negro in a thicket, Rankin walked up to the house—a small log building—for the purpose of making inquiries, and of obtaining useful information, if possible. On entering, he found it occupied by an old man and two women. He asked one of them for a drink of water, which was given in a very surly manner; but he was not easily discouraged, and, after thanking them for the water, he very coolly took a chair, and sitting down without waiting for an invitation, attempted to enter into conversation with the old man; but he found it no easy matter to do so, as he gave very short answers, and began to put several questions which were rather embarrassing; so he wished them good morning, and took his departure: but, as he was turning the corner of the house (the windows being open), he heard the old man remark, ‘I guess that ere chap aint after no good—he aint no better than he should be, I calculate—if it was n’t for my sore foot, I guess I would follow him, and see what he is about;’ to which one of the women replied, she ‘dare say he had some nigger hid in the bush:’ this remark Rankin supposed was called forth by his having asked the old man whether he was an Abolitionist. He, however, got the drink of cold water, which refreshed him very much, ascertained that it was two o’clock, that the road beside which the house was built was the main road leading from Cleveland to Black River, and that it was more or less settled all the way.

“On returning to the place where the negro was concealed, he found him anxiously looking out for him; and not thinking it safe to remain so near the clearing, they again struck into the woods, and continued to walk for a couple of hours, as nearly as they could guess, in a westerly direction, taking care always to keep out of the range of the settlements, till they came to a deep ravine, with a beautiful little stream winding through it. They descended and refreshed themselves with a drink of delightfully cold water, after which they climbed up the opposite bank and lay down in the shade of the surrounding trees. They had several times, within the last hour, heard shots in different directions around them, but supposed them to proceed from sportsmen, and, as they were at a considerable distance, took very little notice of them, particularly as they had seen several flocks of pigeons during the day; but after having remained here about twenty