

## The Abolitionist's Journal: Memories of an American Antislavery Family

**James D. Richardson**

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James D. Richardson's biography *The Abolitionist's Journal* concerns the extraordinary life of George Richardson, an antislavery advocate and traveling Methodist preacher.

George Richardson kept a 300-page journal that became battered as it survived his long journeys on horseback. His engrossing saga begins with his early years in rural New York, where he lost most of his right arm in a threshing accident. He came to regard the incident as God's "blessing," freeing him from farm work so that he could pursue his true vocation of preaching.

Even before the Civil War, Richardson was anguished by the thought of captive human souls. He joined the Union forces as a chaplain, serving with a Black regiment. Following years of battle, he ventured to Texas with his wife and son; there, he helped to establish a college to educate emancipated slaves. Later, the school became part of Austin's Huston-Tillotson University.

Amid the tumult of the defeated South, vengeful racism persisted, along with whippings, "warning shots, arson, and lynching." As a white man filling the minds of "Negroes" with supposed "unsafe aspirations," Richardson was threatened with violence and even death.

*The Abolitionist's Journal* includes the writings of George's wife, Caroline, who supported her husband's work with patience, intelligence, and strength. And, over a century later, James Richardson and his wife retraced George's travels through nine states, from Civil War sites to his quiet Colorado grave.

Written by George Richardson's great-great-grandson, who himself left a successful journalism career to become an Episcopal priest, this book draws inspiration from its ancestor's example of remarkable fortitude and commitment. With compelling spiritual and historical resonance, *The Abolitionist's Journal* is a testament to the struggles and triumphs of a passionate, exemplary family.

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