

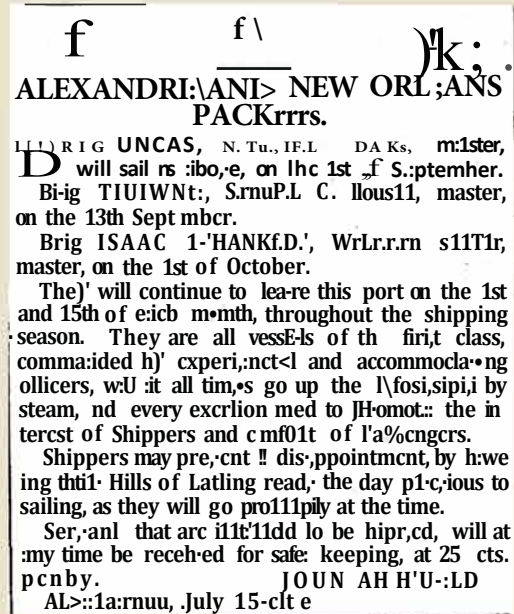
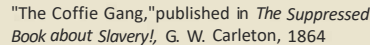
On January 1, 1808, the earliest date allowed by Article I, Section 9 of the United States Constitution, the *Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves* went into effect and stated, "It shall not be lawful to import or bring into the United States...any negro, mulatto, or person of colour ... as a slave." Passed by Congress the previous year, the act banned the United States and its citizens from participating in the international slave trade. While importing enslaved Africans was now illegal, selling and transporting enslaved people within the borders of the United States was not. Alexandria became one of the largest centers of the domestic slave trade in the country in the 1820s and 1830s.

Throughout the 19th century, hundreds of thousands of enslaved Africans and African Americans were forcibly transported from the Chesapeake region to the Deep South. Depleted soils and a general shift from tobacco to grain-based agriculture in the Chesapeake along with the westward expansion of the United States into the cotton and sugar-producing areas of the Deep South fueled this forced migration.

Some of these enslaved people were forcibly relocated as slave holders moved with their captives to these new regions, but many others were trafficked by established slave traders and slave trading firms. These companies purchased or consigned enslaved people and forcibly transported them by ship from ports such as Alexandria, Richmond, Norfolk, and Baltimore to destinations like New Orleans, Charleston, Savannah, and Mobile. Those not trafficked by sea were chained together in coffles and made to walk hundreds of miles to depots to the south and west like the one at the Forks of the Road, outside Natchez, Mississippi.

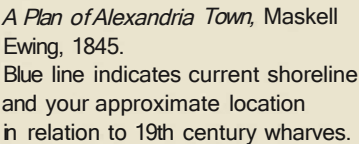
Map showing the distribution of the slave population of the southern states of the United States. Compiled from the census of 1860. Henry S. Graham, Edwin Hergesheimer, and Thomas Leonhardt, 1861

library of Cong-ess



Regular service to New Orleans aboard Brigs
Uncas, *Tribune*, and *Isaac Franklin*, advertised in
the *Washington Globe* 7/15/1835.

These ships are known to have docked at Fowl e's, Irwin's, and Janney's wharves, located along this section of the waterfront.



Arlington County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1790-1912.
George O Dixon ETC v. William H Irwin, 1850-003.
Local Government Records Collection,
Arlington County Records.

The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia



Slave pen of Price, Birch & Co., Alexandria, VA. This building, located at 1315 Duke Street, served as the headquarters for a number of slave traders between 1828 and 1861, including the firm of Franklin & Armfield.

National Archives, ARC Identifier 528808

In February 1828, Isaac Franklin of Sumner County, Tennessee, and John Armfield of Guilford County, North Carolina, formed the slave trading firm of Franklin & Armfield and soon after leased a large, brick house on upper Duke Street. From its headquarters and jail at 1315 Duke Street, Franklin & Armfield quickly became one of the country's largest and most notorious slave trading firms.

Based in Alexandria, Franklin & Armfield partnered with other slave traders in cities and towns across the Chesapeake region, from the Blue Ridge mountains to the Eastern Shore, from Baltimore to Richmond. In the summer months, the firm transported people overland to Natchez, Mississippi, where the firm had another facility. Throughout the rest of the year, the firm operated a regular packet service to New Orleans, with a ship departing Alexandria as often as every two weeks. People held captive less than a mile away at 1315 Duke Street were brought here to the waterfront where they boarded ships like the *Uncas*, *Tribune*, and *Isaac Franklin*. Once onboard, it took about a month to reach New Orleans, where the firm had yet another jail.

After the firm of Franklin & Armfield ended their operations in Alexandria in February 1837, a series of slave traders used the slave jail complex until May 24, 1861. On that morning, the day after Virginia voted to secede from the United States, the Union Army crossed the bridges over the Potomac and landed by steamboat here on Alexandria's wharves and occupied (liberated) Alexandria. 1315 Duke Street is now the home of a museum of the domestic slave trade and is operated by the Office of Historic Alexandria.



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA EST. 1749