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## **Newspaper Report of Nat Turner's Insurrection: Richmond Enquirer Digital History ID 357**

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### **Document:**

A fanatic preacher by the name of Nat Turner (Gen. Nat Turner) who had been taught to read and write, and permitted to go about preaching in the country, was the bottom of this infernal brigandage. He was artful, impudent, and vindictive, without any cause or provocation, that could be assigned. He was the slave of Mr. Travis. He and another slave of Mr. Travis a young fellow, by the name of Moore, were two of the leaders.... And by importunity or threats they prevailed upon about 20 others to cooperate in the scheme of massacre.... They were mounted to the number of 40 or 50; and with knives and axes--knocking on the head, or cutting the throats of their victims.... But as they went from house to house, they drank ardent spirits--and it is supposed, that in consequence of their being intoxicated, or from mere fatigue, they paused in their murderous career about 12 o'clock on Monday.

A fact or two, before we continue our narrative. These wretches are now estimated to have committed sixty-one murders! Not a white person escaped at all the houses they visited except two....

Early on Tuesday morning, they attempted to renew their bloody work. --They made an attack upon Mr. Blunt, a gentleman who was very unwell with the gout, and who instead of flying determined to brave them out. He had several pieces of firearms, perhaps seven or eight, and he put them into the hands of his own slaves, who nobly and gallantly stood by him. They repelled the brigands--killed one, wounded and took prisoner (Gen. Moore), and we believe took a third who was not wounded at all....

The militia of Southampton had been most active in ferreting out the fugitives from their hiding places....But it deserves to be said to the credit of many of the slaves whom gratitude had bound to their masters, that they had manifested the greatest alacrity in detecting and apprehending many of the brigands.... It is said that from 40 to 50 blacks were in jail--some of whom were known to be concerned with the murders, and others suspected. The courts will discriminate the innocent from the guilty.

It is believed that all the brigands were slaves--and most, if not all these, the property of kind and indulgent masters. It is not known that any of them had been the runaways of the swamps and only one of them was a free man of color....

Nat, the ringleader, who calls himself General, pretends to be a Baptist preacher--a great enthusiast--declares to his comrades that he is commissioned by Jesus Christ, and proceeds under his inspired directions--that the late singular appearance of the sun was the sight for him, etc., etc., is among the number yet taken. The story of his having been killed at the bridge, and of two engagements there, is ungrounded. It is believed he cannot escape.

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