



Rebel Underground

**Sons of Confederate Veterans
Major John C. Hutto Camp #443
Jasper, Alabama**

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**The Major John C. Hutto Camp's October Camp Meeting
will be in Jasper, Alabama on
Sunday 18 October 2026 at 2:00 pm**

The Final Hangings of John Brown's Raiders By Doug Cubbison



Portrait of Albert Hazlett | public domain

John Brown was an insurgent and abolitionist famous for his violent raid on Harpers Ferry, (West) Virginia, on October 16–18, 1859. However, several of his Raiders were not captured or killed but escaped.

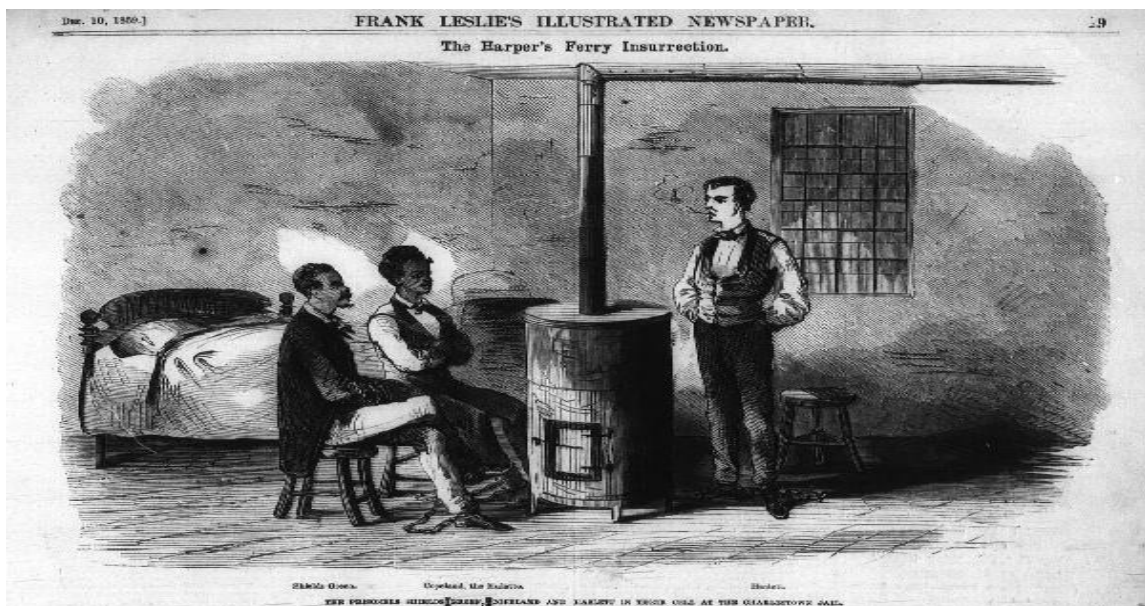
Albert Hazlett was one of them. Born in 1836, Hazlett had lived in Indiana County, Western Pennsylvania. By 1857, the young man could be found fighting in Bleeding Kansas with John Brown, where Hazlett was a "brave and efficient" soldier.

During Brown's Harpers Ferry Raid, Lieutenant Albert Hazlett and friend Osborne Perry Anderson were guards and sentries at the Arsenal's Engine House. The authorities arrived and exchanged fire with Brown on Monday, October 17, 1859, and as evening approached, knowing they were trapped and fearing death or capture, Anderson and Hazlett escaped using fog, mist, and darkness to do so. They found their way carefully into the community of Harpers Ferry, located a small boat on the Potomac River, and continued through Pennsylvania's Franklin and Cumberland Counties. Anderson returned

to York, Pennsylvania, to his family, crossed into Canada, and was saved.

Hazlett attempted to pass as a stranger and fugitive as he arrived in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He had a coarse, rough beard, clothing torn and ragged, and was filthy, dirty, and exhausted. The sheriff felt he was, in fact, a vagrant. Unfortunately, he also had in his possession four loaded revolvers and two Bowie knives. He was thrown into the new 1854 Cumberland County Prison, one block east of the square. He claimed the alias "William Harrison," and was six feet tall, in a red flannel jacket with pockets, a striped muslin shirt, dark pants, and a dark slouch hat.

On October 29, Hazlett appeared before a judge in Carlisle on a writ of habeas corpus, inside the Cumberland County Courthouse. There was not a jury for his hearings; rather, all met in the small office of Judge James H. Graham. Present were the prisoner, sheriff, Judge Frederick Watts of Cumberland County—serving as counsel representing the interests of the State of Virginia—and a defense team led by attorney W. J. Shearer, with assistance from attorneys William H. Miller and Alexander Sharp. A reporter from the Carlisle newspaper was also present. There was a warrant from the Pennsylvania governor requesting the release of Albert Hazlett to Virginia authorities.



Albert Hazlett and fellow raiders Shields Green and John Anthony Copeland in their cell in the Charles Town, Jefferson County, Virginia (now West Virginia) jail | public domain

Hazlett claimed that he was the wrong person but failed to convince the judge. While “there is no evidence that we have any man in our custody named Albert Hazlett,” Judge Watts, from the Virginia warrants, mentioned “clothing the prisoner allegedly wore the day of the raid” and that “the revolvers found on the stranger were identical with those found in the hands of the insurgents.” Watts had three witnesses, although they did not support the claims in question. Still, Hazlett’s four revolvers were relatively rare, being from the Massachusetts Arms Company, and just like those Brown had purchased.

Following three hearings, Judge Graham ruled “...that strict justice has been done. ...” Judge Graham confirmed Hazlett’s revolvers from the Harpers Ferry Raid and ordered Hazlett back to Virginia, “even though the evidence linking him to Harpers Ferry was circumstantial.” Hazlett arrived at the Charles Town Courthouse on November 5, was arraigned, and—after what was not really a legitimate judicial trial—was executed on March 16, 1860, along with another of Brown's Raiders, the last of the group to be hanged.

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