On May 26, 1837 a Canadian brig sailed out of Bridgetown harbor bound for Halifax, Nova Scotia. On board were Nathaniel T. W. Carrington (1801-1855), a thirty-six year old Barbadian sugar planter, his ailing wife, Kitty, and their three-and-a-half year old son, Richard. The purpose of the trip was the restoration of Mrs. Carrington’s health. Their destination was New York; however, since no vessel was sailing at that time for the United States, the Carringtons decided to travel with friends and visit Canada first. Before returning to Barbados eight months later, Nathaniel Carrington toured Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Boston and New York. In addition, for five months the Carringtons boarded at the farm of Daniel Lent in Newtown, Long Island (now part of the borough of Queens, New York City) and from there made two excursions: one to New Brunswick, New Jersey and another to Philadelphia. Nathaniel Carrington’s experiences, what he saw and did as well as the people he met, were daily recorded in his journal — the only full-length travel account of Canada and the United States ever written by a Barbadian.

The number of eyewitness accounts — diaries, journals, and letters — written by foreign visitors to Canada and the United States in the nineteenth century is extensive and yet Nathaniel Carrington’s journal is a valuable contribution to the literature of the period. Almost all journals published to date were written by Europeans — mostly rancorous English travelers — and so events, places, and people are viewed from a European perspective. Carrington’s opinions and observations, on the other hand, reflect his West Indian background. Everything he saw and commented upon during his travels was tem-
pered by his years in Barbados or "Little England," as it is sometimes called. Life on that small island (only 166 square miles), in the warm Caribbean climate, differed greatly from the rural Canadian maritime provinces and urban America. In Barbados, Carrington says, "everybody is known and judged by the simplest action of his life," but in New York, "nobody knows you or cares about you." He was reared in a single crop, slave-holding society where the plantocracy emphasized the importance of cash crops and the established Anglican Church. Barbadians like himself valued their political liberties, prized their ties to England, and readily accepted their colonial status. Factors such as these had a strong influence on Carrington and at least partially explain the homesick planter's critical remarks about America. Although he spent only five days there, Philadelphia proved a pleasant diversion and he much preferred its more genteel inhabitants to the "rabble" and filth encountered in Manhattan.

Carrington was not a man of exceptional talents or outstanding personality. He was neither a brilliant man nor profound thinker and, it should be recognized at the outset, he never intended to study Philadelphia's system of government or analyze its social institutions. Diaries were common in his generation, and he merely wished to keep for himself and his children a day-to-day record of his experiences in a foreign city. Publication was not anticipated. Therefore, one cannot compare his personal, informal and sometimes coarse travelogue to the skilled efforts of a scholar like Tocqueville or professional writers like Trollope, Marryat and Dickens. His pen, nevertheless, does provide us with vivid glimpses of everyday life.

The journal, written in a neat, legible script on thirteen quires, was later bound between hardboard covers. After he and his wife died, the small volume passed into the hands of his son, Sir John Worrell Carrington, then to his grandson, Vice Admiral John Walsh Carrington, and presently is in the possession of his great-grandson, Roger C. E. Carrington, a solicitor, of Hampshire, England.

James C. Brandow
Monday, 30th Oct. At 4 o'clock this morning we got up and made ready for our journey, so long contemplated, to Philadelphia. Mr. Lent kindly accompanying us. At 6 o'clock we were ready to be off & a very cold ride we had of it to Williamsburg ferry. The thermometer was at 52° in our room although we had a fire or rather the remains of one in the room. The wind was too high to put it out but it evidently was several degrees below freezing as all the ponds and pools were frozen over completely. Arrived in New York and made our way to the steamboat at the foot of the Battery. 1 We were almost the first passengers on board but they soon came in from all quarters and at a few minutes past 9 there were upwards of 150 persons on board when the boat started. We had a fine view of the surrounding scenery on Staten Island and the Jersey coast. There are some fine villas for gentlemen doing business in the city of New York on Staten Island. For the most part Jersey presented a barren, uninhabited aspect. The steamboat took 34 miles to Amboy and the car-boxes (into which our baggage had been put on board the boat) were fixed to the train of the cars on our landing. The railroad cars by steam were all ready on our arrival and we were all soon seated and ready for starting in this rapid moving conveyance. 2 Kitty took notice of the milestones as we passed & we were wheeled on at no less rate than 20 miles an hour or a mile in 3 minutes. The fire from the steam engine has several times put the surrounding wood on fire, in consequence of which they have lately cut a deep trench on each side about the distance from the road that the sparks fly, thereby preventing the communication passing by the

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1 According to advertisements in New York newspapers, the Camden and Amboy Railroad, linking New York and Philadelphia, operated a steamboat ferry between Manhattan and South Amboy, New Jersey. From there passengers took the train to Bordentown where another steamboat completed the trip to Philadelphia. The fare was $3 and passengers who left the Battery at 9 A.M. were scheduled to arrive in Philadelphia by 5 P.M. For an Englishman’s description of one of these American “floating cities”, see Patrick Shirreff, A Tour through North America (Edinburgh, 1835), 17.

2 The first tracks of the Camden and Amboy Railroad were laid in 1831 and construction was completed in 1834. The New Jersey Legislature granted it exclusive railroad rights between New York and Philadelphia and it became a rich and powerful corporation. Public criticism of the railroad finally resulted in the loss of its monopoly in 1873 but it should be noted thousands of settlers followed its rails and the route “became lined with prosperous and attractive towns.” Roger Avery Barton, “The Camden and Amboy Railroad Monopoly,” New Jersey Historical Society, Proceedings, New Series, XII (1927), 405-19; Wheaton J. Lane, From Indian Trail to Iron Horse: Transportation in New Jersey 1620-1860 (Princeton, N.J., 1939), 281-370.
leaves. There are several peach orchards of several acres extent along the railroad. The distance is thirty-five miles. There are several cars for passengers, some of them will carry upwards of 25 persons. At Borden Town we took the steamboat again and embarked on the waters of the mighty Delaware River, on board which we dined for $1 each. On board this boat, as on board the other too, a man had parcels of type and stamps for printing persons' names on visiting cards, etc. On board the first boat I purchased one of them to mark my name and Kitty's, for $3/4 with a vial of the ink. The man said we might mark clothes with the same ink too; this I hardly believe. He sold very many sets and proved by many specimens that it could be very easily done. At ½ past 4 o'clock we landed on the wharf of Philadelphia and immediately proceeded to a private boardinghouse that the captain had recommended to us but the old Quakeress could not accommodate us. She, however, kindly recommended us to another house where we were soon comfortably domiciled at No. 43 Fifth St., corner of Library St. After supper Mr. Lent and myself took a walk to explore this city of Quakers. We soon found ourselves at the market, through which we walked. It is a long, covered building running through the centre of the street, about 20 feet wide, and is said to be at least a mile in length but this I very much doubt. On each side, benches are fixed for the meats and vegetables to be exposed for sale, allowing the buyers to pass through. Not the least scent disturbed our olfactory nerves except in the part where the fish were exposed for sale. Lamps are hanging at convenient distances all through the market.

Tuesday, 31st Oct. After breakfast this morning, we all, even Richard, started to visit the market again. We walked through it from end to end. It is by no means as well supplied as the Fulton Market in New York. Large spaces on the benches are void. Here you see meats and there vegetables. In Fulton Market the meats are by themselves and the vegetables, fruit, etc., by themselves; the fish has its own market. Having fully explored the market to our satisfaction, we proceeded farther and took a long walk about the city. Running

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3 The boardinghouse of Mrs. Caroline Spencer.
4 The market houses which Carrington refers to (there were others) were built in the middle of High Street (now Market Street) and stretched for eleven city blocks. All these buildings or sheds were demolished in 1839. Agnes Addison Gilchrist, "Market Houses in High Street," *Historic Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1953), 304-12. *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, XLIV, Part I.
through Broad Street, a railroad passed into the country by which the
country people bring down their provisions to market and passengers
are also conveyed to different parts of the country. Before we returned
we had walked several miles. The city is laid out and built at right
angles so that you can see an immense distance before you. There is
by no means the bustle and quantity of business down here that there
is in New York. I think that as much is done in the latter city in one
week as in a month here. We visited a brick manufactory where we
saw several hundred thousand bricks both raw and burned. In conse-
quence of the cold weather they have ceased for the present. After
dinner we visited Peale's Museum where we saw several hundred
specimens of beasts, birds, fishes, etc., etc. The skeleton of a mam-
moth elephant is fixed up. I should think it is about 13 feet high and
nearly 20 feet long. The tusks are upwards of 6 feet long. A great
many Indian utensils & curiosities are here but daylight failed us
before we could look over half the curiosities and specimens. The lady
at the door told us we might return next day and see it. I will then
endeavor to be more particular in the description. What has become
of the race of this mammoth elephant has never been discovered.
Several times bones have been found in different parts of the States
but a live animal has never been seen. After supper we retired to our
room and amused ourselves in practicing the printing business with
our types. We make poor hands of it. Practice may improve us
otherwise our money will be spent in vain. Good night!!

5 The Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad, connecting the western part of the state with Philadelphia,
began construction in 1828 and was completed in 1834. Its depot in the city was located at Broad and
Vine streets. J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884 (Philadel-
phia, 1884), III, 2173-4

6 Philadelphia's grid system of streets, dating back to the idea of William Penn and his surveyor in 1682,
was not without its critics. In 1842 Charles Dickens commented "It is a handsome city, but
distractingly regular. After walking about it for an hour or two, I felt that I would have given the world
for a crooked street." Charles Dickens, American Notes (New York, 1842), 39. Another Englishman
thought it regular — "to a fault." Shirreff, 23

7 The Philadelphia Museum, originally called Peale's Museum, was opened in 1784 by Charles
Willson Peale (1741-1827) and operated by his sons after his death. It was then located on the third floor
of the Arcade, America's first office building, on Chestnut Street between Sixth and Seventh streets, and
had an extensive collection of natural history, Indian artifacts and historic portraits. Charles Coleman
Sellers, Mr. Peale's Museum. Charles Willson Peale and the First Popular Museum of Natural Science and

8 For decades people from all over the world traveled to Philadelphia to see the Museum's major
attraction — its mastodon. Unearthed at a farm in Ulster County, New York in 1801, scientists as well as
country bumpkins marveled at the reconstructed skeleton while in the press it was described as "the
LARGEST of terrestrial beings" and "ninth wonder of the world." Ibid, 123-58. Today (if anyone is
so inclined) it can be seen at the Geologisch-Palaontologische und Mineralogische Abteilung des Hess-
schen Landesmuseums in Darmstadt, West Germany.
Wednesday, 1st November. Fine, clear, bright morning and remained so all day. After breakfast took seats in an omnibus for the Fairmount Water Works. The chaps finding we were strangers put us down upwards of a mile short of our destination which we had to walk and inquire our way. At length we reached this magnificent undertaking of man. The Schuylkill River is dammed up and made to turn 6 large wheels of 18 feet diameter, which work large force pumps, throwing the water 75 to 80 feet up to 5 large basins or reservoirs of considerable dimension, built of brick and cemented, and handsomely sodded and paled round, affording a pleasant walk and fine view of the city, being considerably higher than the tops of the houses. The water is then conveyed by log pipes to all and every part of the city and can be made available in cases of fire by applying the leather leading pipes (generally used with fire engines) to the hydrants or tubes at the sidewalks of the streets. The water is deliciously fine and used by all the inhabitants of the city. Near the water wheels are two fountains, one is a large marble basin with a marble image of a child astride of a large fish and from the tongue of the fish, a stream of water is cast up 8 or 10 feet high and comes falling back in the child's face; round it are 4 other tubes, each casting up 4 streams of water. The other is some image holding up one arm with a bird from which a stream of water is thrown upwards by the force of the pumps to some height. By opening the hydrants or tubes in the streets the whole city may be washed thoroughly in a few minutes. No traveler that is as far as New York should omit coming to Philadelphia purposely to see these water works and I am sure he would feel himself gratified for the trouble

9 The Yellow Fever epidemics of the 1790s prompted Philadelphia to seek a source of pure, sanitary water and these waterworks, consisting of a dam, pumphouse and reservoir, were built in 1819-22. Frederick Graff, a Philadelphia engineer, designed the project — the nation's first municipal waterworks — and it became the model for other American cities. New York City did not complete its waterworks until 1842. Sam Bass Warner, *The Private City, Philadelphia in Three Periods of its Growth* (Philadelphia, 1968), 81.

10 Not always! Only the year before it was reported a lovely young girl almost drank a glass of hydrant water which contained "a nondescript animal resembling a centipede." *Public Ledger and Daily Transcript*, October 6, 1836.

11 Known by various titles as "Water Nymph and Bittern", "Nymph of the Schuylkill" or "Leda and the Swan", this life-size, wooden sculpture by William Rush, is that artist's best known work. The allegorical figure was controversial in its day and caused quite a stir in the Quaker City because the model, Miss Louisa "Nancy" Vanuxem, a celebrated local beauty, posed in the nude (chaperoned, of course.) In 1854 a bronze cast of the original was placed in Fairmount Park and about 1900 the almost totally decayed wooden one was removed. Henri Marceau, *William Rush, 1756-1833* (Philadelphia, 1937), 26-9.
and expense. We were near a shot tower at least 200 feet high of brick but we could not gain admittance as the owner was out. By the steamboat this evening several Indians were expected from New York on their way to take up their settlement in the distant States allotted them by the Government in lieu of their territory purchased by them. But after all these Indians did not make their appearance much to the disappointment of the assembled multitude and the loss of the circus which had issued bills that the Indians would be at it in the evening.

The citizens here don’t seem to believe the capture of the Susquehanna. The morning papers have added to the report from what a Boston captain had stated that he saw a large vessel on fire on the very evening the Susquehanna is said to have been captured and that as a schooner was in company with her, he thought that they had rendered all the assistance that was needed and did not make for her. This tale too does not seem to be much credited.

Thursday, 2nd Nov. 1837. Fine, clear morning and pleasant, cool day altogether. After breakfast we all went to a bookstore, corner of Chestnut and 5th Street, purchased 7 Bibles for our friends in Barbados, a penknife, etc.

Agreeably to arrangement, Miss Spencer, the daughter of our landlady, took us to the Mint to see the process of

12 Fairmount was considered the “great Lion” of Philadelphia and proved so popular with tourists that three omnibus lines had to be established to run there from various parts of the city. “The first thing a visitor is recommended to do by way of recreation, is to ride out and see the water works. Until he has seen them, he has seen nothing.” *A Guide to the Lions of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1937), 59. Certainly Charles Dickens was impressed. “The Waterworks, which are on a height near the city, are no less ornamental than useful, being tastefully laid out as a public garden, and kept in the best and neatest order.” Dickens, 39.

13 James Cooke’s Equestrian Circus performed regularly at the Olympic Arena on Chestnut Street near Ninth Street.

14 When the packet Susquehanna, sailing from Philadelphia to Liverpool, stopped off the Delaware capes to purchase fresh oysters from a small fishing boat, a false alarm was raised in the city and along the eastern seaboard, that the vessel had been captured by pirates in “a long, low, black schooner.” Many fantastic stories circulated and the wildest of rumors were reported in the press. Several ships, including a revenue cutter with troops on board, were sent in pursuit and at a public meeting, outraged Philadelphians voiced their indignation and promised quick punishment to the culprits. In searching for conspirators within the city, one unfortunate gentleman was actually arrested, brought before a judge and required to post bail. On November 3, it was announced the packet was sighted on its true course. Only when the Susquehanna finally reached Liverpool (after an otherwise uneventful crossing), did the crew and passengers learn of the consternation and embarrassment their preference for oysters had caused. Scharf and Westcott, I, 649-50. To one New York editor, the whole ludicrous episode made Philadelphia look “ridiculous.” *Morning Herald*, November 14, 1837.

15 The store of George & Byington sold an assortment of goods besides books.
coining money. But it unfortunately happened that this was not one of their days for coining. We, however, saw the machinery at work for milling the silver into certain required thicknesses. We also saw the process of smelting the silver and casting into molds. The machinery is all worked by steam and moves at a rapid rate. In the yard or court of the building, we saw a large, white-headed eagle, the size of a half-grown turkey cock. It appeared to be a dull, stupid animal. Our next excursion was to take seats in an omnibus and go to the Navy Yard, from which the Pennsylvania (the largest ship on the American waters and said to be only excelled by one of Russia) has just been launched. We could not get very near her as the bridge against which she lay a fortnight since, has been partly removed. She is a four-decker and is now rigging and will be ready for sea in the course of 6 months. We were also unfortunate enough not to be able to get in the Navy yard, strangers being excluded the last two days. On our way home we stopped at a shot tower from which we were also excluded, it being the Boss' (Masters as they are termed here; in Latin, Ox's) particular order that strangers should not go up the tower. In the evening we ascended the tower of the Congress Hall (the building where the Declaration of Independence was signed by the 56 members) and saw the clock strike the hour of 4 on the great bell, I suppose, of several

16 The second United States Mint in Phialdelphia was located on Chestnut Street between Thirteenth and Broad streets. It was an impressive edifice of white marble, in the style of an Ionic temple, and was designed by William Strickland, one of Philadelphia's most accomplished architects. Opened in 1833 and used until 1901, it was demolished in 1903. Agnes Addison Gilchrist, William Strickland, Architect and Engineer, 1788-1854 (New York, 1969), 81. Franklin Peale (1795-1870), son of Charles Wilson Peale, was responsible for many of the steam engines and machinery used in the mint. "The small steam engine, so architectural in design, that for many years drove the steam coining presses until their increase called for a greater power, was, from its high finish and silent movement, a most attractive object to all visitors to the mint, was of his design, and was constructed under his personal supervision." Eugene S. Ferguson, ed., Early Engineering Reminiscence of George Escol Sellers (Washington, 1965), 77.

17 The U.S.S. Pennsylvania, a ship-of-the-line, was the largest sailing warship ever constructed for the U.S. Navy. It was built by Samuel Humphreys, the naval architect, and launched on July 18, 1837 before a crowd of 150,000 spectators. For most of its career it was a receiving ship and was burned in Norfolk Navy Yard in 1861 to prevent its falling into Confederate hands. Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, V, 250.

18 Sparks' Shot Tower was built in 1808 and used until 1907. A circular, brick building standing 175 feet high on Carpenter Street between Second and Front streets, it is now a children's recreation center.
thousand pounds weight.\textsuperscript{19} At this house we are boarding at, we have the pleasure of Mr. William Haly's company, brother of E. B. & J. Haly of Broad Street, Barbados, the notorious cheats.\textsuperscript{20} This man is a lawyer and, as a Philadelphia lawyer, is said to be smart. Lawyers of this place are proverbially spoken of as having the gift of the gab. In the evening we went down to the wharf where the New York steamboat comes in to see the Indians land but the wharf being so crowded, the captain put in at a nearer wharf and landed them; we followed in the wake of the mob and saw three of them but I understand there are 35 of them.\textsuperscript{21} It was no sight to me as I have seen plenty in Halifax and Prince Edward Island.\textsuperscript{22}

Friday, 3rd Nov. Clear, bright day, After breakfast we all started and bought a cloak for Richard in Market Street; Kitty and Richard then returned home and Mr. Lent & myself proceeded to explore the city and the curiosities. First, we made our way to the first shot tower mentioned in the first day's tour here.\textsuperscript{23} We were fortunate enough this day to meet with the old gentlemen at home and he very kindly admitted us and answered all our questions. The tower is 160 feet high, also has 258 steps to ascend it by to the top; from the 2nd floor

\textsuperscript{19} The Declaration of Independence was signed in the State House or Independence Hall (restored in 1828 by William Strickland's steeple and clock) and not Congress Hall. Since both buildings are on the same block, it would not be uncommon for a visitor to confuse the names.

\textsuperscript{20} Because of his aversion to the Bridgetown merchants, Carrington, it seems, was unduly hostile. William H. Haly, a man of "amiable deportment, high moral character and legal attainments," was burnt to death coming to the aid of his fellow citizens on December 27, 1851. He was helping to remove some pianos from Kindall's Music Store when the walls and ceiling collapsed. The Philadelphia Bar, out of respect for the deceased, observed thirty days of mourning. Public Ledger and Daily Transcript, December 27-31, 1851.

\textsuperscript{21} The deputation of Sauk and Fox warriors, led by chiefs Black Hawk and Keokuk, had just left Washington where they signed a treaty ceding their Mississippi lands. In Philadelphia, "the proud lords of the forest" were entertained as visiting royalty by the city fathers and were the object of much attention during their brief stay at Schrack's Exchange Hotel on Bank Street. Ibid., November 4, 1837. Details of the treaty were printed (a la The New York Times) in The National Gazette and Literary Register, October 31, 1837.

\textsuperscript{22} Carrington's visit to Prince Edward Island and his meeting with Micmac Indians is to be printed in The Island Magazine, XI (Spring-Summer, 1982). His visit to Halifax will be published in the Nova Scotia Historical Review and the trip to Boston in The New England Quarterly.

\textsuperscript{23} Beck's Shot Tower, near the Schuylkill River at Twenty-first and Cherry streets, was erected in 1808. Lack of demand forced it to close in 1828. Carrington does not mention the view but one city guidebook noted that, "Any one who will take the trouble to ascend to the top of either of these towers [Sparks' or Beck's] will, of course, be rewarded by a fine view of the city and surrounding country." A Guide to the Lions of Philadelphia, 46.
the smaller shot is run, the lead being melted up there. The shot is run through pans like what we use but cemented at bottom with some prepared paste which we did not collect from the Boss. The small shot falls at least 100 feet before it reaches the tub of water at bottom. The larger shot is run from the top floor where the lead is also melted. From the great number of towers in the States, shot has become so cheap that for the last three years they have not run any shot at this tower. This visit being over, on our way home we fell in with a steam machine for planing and grooving the tongues for floor boards at the same time and it is astonishing how soon a board is planed, grooved and tongued at once. The shavings or chips are used to raise the steam so that it is done extremely cheap. We then fell in with a cast iron foundry and saw several molds ready prepared for casting but the men were at dinner and were not to begin before 3 o'clock, before which time our dinner hour would arrive too. We, however, inspected the works and had the use of the most complicated engine I have seen yet, explained to us. It planes, turns, drills, etc., etc., at the same time. We stopped at the Hall of Independence and looked in at one of their courts. A black man was on his trial for stealing a $100 bill which he alledged he found in the street. Three lawyers were employed & were ingeniously questioning the witnesses. These gentlemen have no gowns or bands as our men have. After dinner Miss Spencer kindly obtained us tickets to visit the Asylum for the Blind. Today was an exhibition day and it was crowded to excess. We, however, saw the books by which these unfortunate children of Adam are taught to read. We also saw them examined in geography which they are also taught by raised lines and letters on the map. They sang and played several tunes on the fiddle, violincello, flute, organ, harp, etc., etc. Finally, we were shown several articles of their handicraft. We purchased a little basket made by the boys and a guard for a watch by the girls. Poor things, some of them looked cheerful and happy, others rather
dejected, particularly the males. After tea Mr. Lent and myself walked down to the wharf to see what time the boat leaves in the morning for New York. At 6 A.M. we hope, God willing, to be on board and off for New York and finally our destination, Long Island. We took an omnibus to go to the Blind Asylum and a young woman, a boarder in the house, very kindly put off the expense of her passage on me, as she did the return one too. Miss Spencer offered to pay me but as she had procured us the tickets of admission I refused. Miss has played bo peep tonight & I suppose I never shall see her again. I have half a mind to tip her a bill & leave it with the servant. Proud puss, fare thee well. Paid Mrs. Spencer's bill, $18, 4 days abode & 1 supper for Kitty, Richard and myself. Not a small sum is it? Fare thee well, Philadelphia, perhaps I never more may put my foot on your shores but upon the whole I like you better than New York because you are cleaner, quieter and more regular and I think your inhabitants are rather civiler than the Yorkers. Fare well. Fare thee well!! And if forever, still forever fare thee well!!! Adieu!! Adieu!! Adieu!!! Land of Quakers!!!

27 The accomplishments of Friedlander's students were considered extraordinary and tours as well as exhibitions were regularly scheduled to promote the efforts of the school. For examples of the literary work done by its pupils in 1838, see ibid., 137-46.