1859. John Brown Writes to the New York Tribune from Kansas

On Sunday, the 19th of December, a negro man named Jim, came over to the Osage settlement, from Missouri, and stated that he, together with his wife, two children and one other negro man, were to be sold within a day or two, and begged for help to get away. On Monday, the following night, two small companies were made up to go to Missouri, and forcibly liberate the five slaves, together with other slaves. One of these companies I assumed to direct. We proceeded to the place, surrounded the buildings, liberated by the slaves, and also took certain property supposed to belong to the estate. We, however, learned before leaving, that a portion of the articles we had taken belonged to a man living on the plantation as a tenant, and who was supposed to have no interest in the estate. We promptly returned to him all we had taken. We then went to another plantation, where we freed five more slaves, took some property, and two white men. We moved slowly away into the Territory, for some distance, and then sent the white men back, telling them to follow us as soon as they chose to do so. The other company freed one female slave, took some property, and, as I am informed, killed one white man (the master), who fought against the liberation. . . . Eleven persons are forcibly restored to their “natural and inalienable rights,” with but one man killed, and all “Hell is stirred from beneath.” It is currently reported that the Governor of Missouri has made a requisition upon the Governor of Kansas for the delivery of all such as were concerned in the lastnamed “dreadful outrage.” The Marshal of Kansas is said to be collecting a posse of Missouri (not Kansas) men at West Point, in Missouri, a little town about ten miles distant, to “enforce the laws.”