

PHILIP YOUNGER

I served in slavery fifty-five years, and am now nearly seventy-two years old. I was born in Virginia, went, at ten, to Tennessee; at twelve, to Alabama: was, all the time, body servant of a military man.

I hired my time, and made some money. I bought my wife's freedom first, and sent her away. I got off by skill. I have children and grand children in slavery.

I had rather starve to death here, being a free man, than to have plenty in slavery. I cannot be a slave any more,--nobody could hold me as a slave now, except in irons. Old as I am, I would rather face the Russian fire, or die at the point of the sword, than go into slavery.

We are placed in different circumstances here--some drag along, without doing much,--some are doing well. I have a house; I have taken up fifty acres of land, and have made the payments as required; I have other property besides. Here is Henry Blue, worth twelve thousand dollars; Syddles, worth a fortune; Lucky, worth a very handsome fortune; Ramsay, a great deal of land and other property, at least twelve thousand dollars; all these were slaves at some time. And there are many others wealthy, through their own skill and industry.

Before I came here, I resided in the free States. I came here in consequence of the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill. It was a hardship at first; but I feel better here--more like a man--I know I am--than in the States. I suffer from want of education. I manage by skill and experience and industry--but it is as if feeling my way in the dark.

From, Benjamin Drew, *A North-Side View of Slavery. The Refugee: or the Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada. Related by Themselves, with an Account of the History and Condition of the Colored Population of Upper Canada*: <https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/drew/drew.html>

Questions to Consider:

What was Philip Younger's life like in the United States?

How did he get to Canada? Did he come straight from enslavement to Canada?

What are his life like in Canada?

How does he feel about being in Canada?