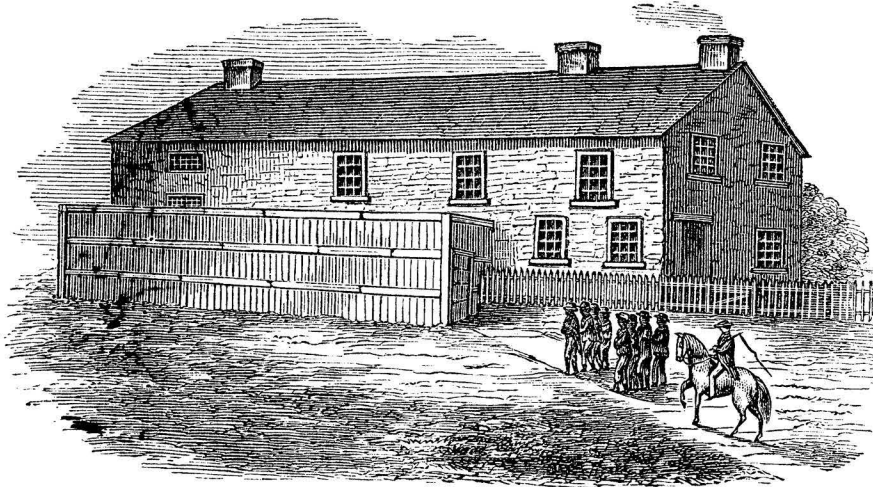


By the Kansas Historical Society

## The Trials of John Doy



The St. Joseph, Missouri, jail where John Doy was held during his trials.

By 1859 the Underground Railroad was helping slaves escape through Kansas Territory. Proslavery Missourians, called "border ruffians," continued to pursue them. A group of people in Lawrence realized it was too dangerous for formerly enslaved African Americans to remain in town. They decided to move some of them to Canada using the Underground Railroad. Dr. John Doy was one of the men who volunteered to undertake this task.

Missouri ruffians captured John Doy, his son Charles, and 13 African Americans near Holton, Kansas Territory, on January 24, 1859. Doy was taken to St. Joseph for trial and, subsequently, was imprisoned. The trial of John Doy resulted in "No verdict." At a second trial in June he was convicted of "negro stealing" and sentenced.

The capture and pending trial of John Doy made national news. Edward H. Grant covered the story for the St. Joseph *Free Democrat*. He was against slavery and often sent news stories to the eastern newspapers telling about the abolitionist cause in Missouri. This allowed readers back East to follow the story of the conflict between pro- and antislavery groups. This newspaper article written by Grant provides details about the trials of John Doy.

**\$200 Reward!**

Ranaway from the subscriber, living in Saline county, on the 4th inst., two Negromen, named Jim and Jack--each aged about 25 years.

**Jim**  
is dish-faced; has sore eyes and bad teeth; is of a light black or brown color; speaks quick, is about 5 feet 7 inches high; had on when last seen, blue cotton pants, white shirt, white fullered coat and new custom-made boots.

**Jack**  
had on the same kind of clothing with shoes, has a very small foot, wears perhaps a No. 6 shoe, and has heavy tacks in the heels; is about the same height and color of Jim. They are doubtless aiming for K. T.

**A reward of \$100 each will be given if taken outside of the State, or \$50 each if taken in the State, outside of Saline county.**

**C. D. WILLIAMS,**  
Spring Garden, P. O., Pettis county, Missouri.  
Harrisonville, Mo., June 7th, 1860.

*Slaves were valuable property to their masters.*