

### WILLIAMS' GANG

William H. Williams operated a slave pen in Washington, D.C., known as the Yellow House, and actively trafficked in enslaved men, women, and children for more than twenty years. His slave-trading activities took an extraordinary turn in 1840 when he purchased twenty-seven enslaved convicts out of the Virginia State Penitentiary in Richmond with the understanding that he carry them outside the United States for sale. When Williams conveyed his captives illegally into New Orleans, allegedly while en route to the foreign country of Texas, he prompted a series of courtroom dramas that would last for almost three decades. Based on court records, newspapers, governors' files, slave manifests, slave narratives, travelers' accounts, and penitentiary data, *Williams' Gang* examines slave criminality, the coastwise domestic slave trade, and southern jurisprudence as it supplies a compelling portrait of the economy, society, and politics of the Old South.

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## Abbreviations

AAS	US Slavery Collection, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts
ADAH	Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery
BLHBS	Baker Library, Harvard Business School, Cambridge, Massachusetts
BECHSA	Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society Archives, Buffalo, New York
LSA	Louisiana State Archives, Baton Rouge
LVA	Library of Virginia, Richmond
NA	National Archives, Washington, D.C.
NAMS	National Archives Microfilm Series
NARA	National Archives & Records Administration
NONA	New Orleans Notarial Archives
NOPL	New Orleans Public Library
RSPP, PAR	Race & Slavery Petitions Project, Petition Analysis Record
SHC	Southern Historical Collection, the Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
UNO	Supreme Court of Louisiana, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans

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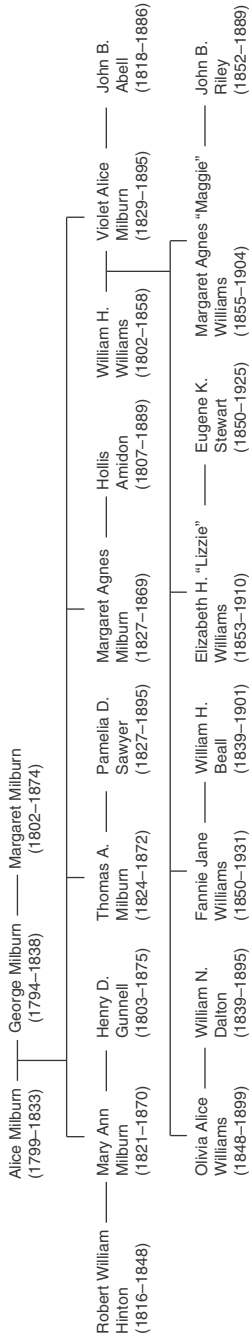
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1 Williams-Milburn genealogy.