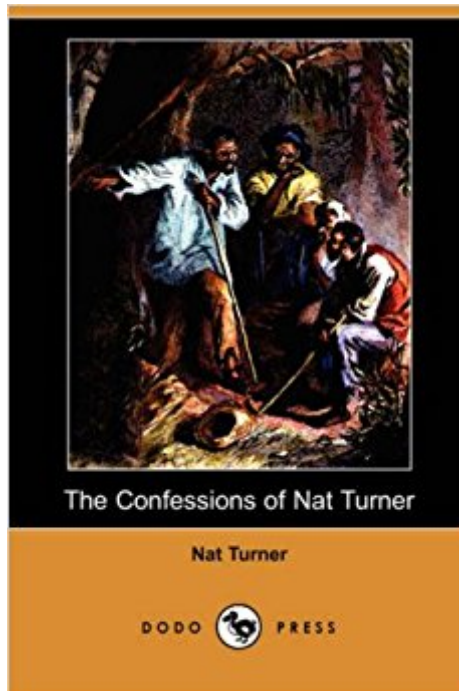




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The Confessions Of Nat Turner (Dodo Press)



Synopsis

Nat, commonly called Nat Turner, (1800-1831) was an American slave whose slave rebellion in Southampton County, Virginia, was the most remarkable instance of black resistance to enslavement in the antebellum southern United States. His methodical slaughter of white civilians during the uprising makes his legacy controversial, but he is still considered by many to be a heroic figure of black resistance to oppression. His rebellion was suppressed within 48 hours, but he eluded capture until he was discovered hiding in a cave and then taken to court. In November, 1831, Nat was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. He was hanged in the same month in Jerusalem, Virginia, now known as Courtland, Virginia. After his execution, his lawyer, Thomas Ruffin Gray, took it upon himself to publish *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1832).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I had heard of the slave rebellions before the American Civil War in the first half of the 1800s however this was the first record of one that I have read. This is the actual historical document by Thomas Gray who interviewed Nat Turner in his jail cell before Turner was executed. The document is short and was an easy read on my Kindle app for Android. It seems to be a terse narrative sticking to factual events with very little commentary or explanation from Turner. However Gray who documented the conversation has a few things to say about the events. Turner's backstory is interesting providing a snapshot of an intelligent, literate and thoughtful man who felt compelled to his violent actions. I was reminded of other historical figures who felt driven, almost divinely inspired

to some action. Some of the commentary from Gray seems to be slanted towards portraying Turner as crazy. However I wonder if at least part of the romantic portrayal, romance as in the Arthurian legends or Joan of Arc or other fantastical narratives, is a product of Gray and his perspective. During the events there are several times when slaves of the households attacked by Turner and his mob, whose size seemed to grow and shrink during the events, assisted their owners against Turner, assisted Turner's group in some small way, or just stayed out of the way. I use the word mob as that seems to be the best choice. Several times during the narrative Turner mentions attempts to organize the mob in the face of white resistance, attempts which did not go well. I wonder if the whites had had some military training or other organized violence training which the slaves did not have.

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