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John Brown's Fort at the Murphy Farm Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, WV *Marching to a Monument for Freedom* | Richard Fitzhugh

Courtesy of Richard Fitzhugh

This painting by Richard Fitzhugh portrays a procession of the Niagara Movement delegates as they made their pilgrimage to John Brown's Fort on August 17, 1906. Here, ceremonies were devoted to the memory of the well-known abolitionist John Brown.

Originally constructed as the Harpers Ferry Armory's guard and fire engine house, Brown made it famous when he and his followers took refuge inside the structure during their failed 1859 raid on the armory. John Brown's Fort, as the structure became known, was sold and shipped to Chicago to the 1891 World's Columbian Exposition. In 1895, the fort returned to Harpers Ferry when it was rebuilt in a field on Murphy's farm that overlooked the Shenandoah River. The fort moved to its present location near its original site at the armory in 1968.

As a resident of Shanghai, WVA at the time, arts and illustrator Richard Fitzhugh was commissioned by the Harpers Ferry Historical Association and the West Virginia Branch of the NAACP to prepare this painting to accompany an exhibit at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

The caption on this illustration which appeared in 'Harper's Weekly' in November 1859 reads: "The Harper's Ferry Insurrection. The U.S. Marines storming the Engine-House. Insurgents firing through holes in the wall" (Historic Photo Collection, Harpers Ferry NHP).

