

He was with his family but a short time when he was arrested as an aristocrat and friend of the royalists. He was thrown into prison, tried, and sentenced to the guillotine. The day was fixed for his execution. It was to have taken place at sunrise. About midnight, a few hours previous to the fatal moment, the jailer, probably bribed by some friends, came to his cell and silently led him out and placed him in a large room containing only a chair and a table with a lighted candle upon it. So silently and quickly was the exchange made that it seemed like a dream. Coming to himself he was sure that it was intended for his escape. He searched for some secret door in the wall, some loose board in the floor, but in vain. Seating himself in the one chair, he almost gave up hope, when it occurred to him that he had not looked behind the table. He removed the table, and there was a hole in the wall. He plunged into it head foremost, wormed through, and fell some ten feet to the ground, hurting himself somewhat. When he arose he found himself outside the prison, and soon gained the street. He was startled by the approach of a man on horseback who, passing by, said, "Under yonder tree is a passport and a horse." What it meant he could not tell, but determined to go and find out. At the tree he found a passport, a horse, and a peddler's cart, and without further inquiry or delay he mounted and drove away, nothing doubting that it was designed for him. He never knew to whom he was indebted for his escape, but when the sun rose which was to witness his execution he was a goodly distance from his prison, and soon peddled his way into Germany, where he remained several years. Here for a support he learned the trade of making musical instruments like the flute, fife, and clarionet, which business he followed during the most of his subsequent life.

When Napoleon had gained control of the government of France and became First Consul, the policy of the government changed toward the exiled royalists. Amnesty was declared in 1802, and their estates were returned to *émigré* nobles. The de Chabrier de Peloubet family obtained from Napoleon certificates of indemnification. The sentence of the republican court was reversed on condition that they continued subjects of the French government. From this condition Joseph Alexander never departed by taking out naturalization papers in this country, although a resident here for forty years.