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Chapter 1 : Slavery: Definition and Abolition | www.nxgvision.com - HISTORY

The Underground Railroad is an amazing story with people coming together to fight for one basic American right: freedom. Unfortunately, over the years, the idea of the Underground Railroad has become romantic and surrounded by myths.

One of the first martyrs to the cause of American patriotism was Crispus Attucks, a former slave who was killed by British soldiers during the Boston Massacre of 1770. Some 5, black soldiers and sailors fought on the American side during the Revolutionary War. But after the Revolutionary War, the new U. Cotton Gin In the late 18th century, with the land used to grow tobacco nearly exhausted, the South faced an economic crisis, and the continued growth of slavery in America seemed in doubt. Around the same time, the mechanization of the textile industry in England led to a huge demand for American cotton, a southern crop whose production was unfortunately limited by the difficulty of removing the seeds from raw cotton fibers by hand. But in 1793, a young Yankee schoolteacher named Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin, a simple mechanized device that efficiently removed the seeds. Congress outlawed the African slave trade in 1808, the domestic trade flourished, and the slave population in the U. By 1860 it had reached nearly 4 million, with more than half living in the cotton-producing states of the South. History of Slavery Slaves in the antebellum South constituted about one-third of the southern population. Most slaves lived on large plantations or small farms; many masters owned fewer than 50 slaves. Slave owners sought to make their slaves completely dependent on them, and a system of restrictive codes governed life among slaves. They were usually prohibited from learning to read and write, and their behavior and movement was restricted. Many masters took sexual liberties with slave women, and rewarded obedient slave behavior with favors, while rebellious slaves were brutally punished. A strict hierarchy among slaves from privileged house slaves and skilled artisans down to lowly field hands helped keep them divided and less likely to organize against their masters. Slave marriages had no legal basis, but slaves did marry and raise large families; most slave owners encouraged this practice, but nonetheless did not usually hesitate to divide slave families by sale or removal. Slave Rebellions Slave rebellions did occur within the system— notably ones led by Gabriel Prosser in Richmond in 1800 and by Denmark Vesey in Charleston in 1822—but few were successful. The slave revolt that most terrified white slaveholders was that led by Nat Turner in Southampton County, Virginia, in August 1831. Abolitionist Movement In the North, the increased repression of southern blacks only fanned the flames of the growing abolitionist movement. Free blacks and other antislavery northerners had begun helping fugitive slaves escape from southern plantations to the North via a loose network of safe houses as early as the 1700s. This practice, known as the Underground Railroad, gained real momentum in the 1830s and although estimates vary widely, it may have helped anywhere from 40,000 to 100,000 slaves reach freedom. Although the Missouri Compromise was designed to maintain an even balance between slave and free states, it was able to help quell the forces of sectionalism only temporarily. Kansas-Nebraska Act In 1854, another tenuous compromise was negotiated to resolve the question of slavery in territories won during the Mexican-American War. Four years later, however, the Kansas-Nebraska Act opened all new territories to slavery by asserting the rule of popular sovereignty over congressional edict, leading pro- and anti-slavery forces to battle it out—with considerable bloodshed—in the new state of Kansas. In 1857, the Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court involving a slave who sued for his freedom on the grounds that his master had taken him into free territory effectively repealed the Missouri Compromise by ruling that all territories were open to slavery. The insurrection exposed the growing national rift over slavery: Brown was hailed as a martyred hero by northern abolitionists, but was vilified as a mass murderer in the South. Civil War The South would reach the breaking point the following year, when Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln was elected as president. Within three months, seven southern states had seceded to form the Confederate States of America; four more would follow after the Civil War began. Abolition became a goal only later, due to military necessity, growing anti-slavery sentiment in the North and the

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self-emancipation of many African Americans who fled enslavement as Union troops swept through the South. When Did Slavery End? Despite seeing an unprecedented degree of black participation in American political life, Reconstruction was ultimately frustrating for African Americans, and the rebirth of white supremacy—including the rise of racist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan KKK—had triumphed in the South by Almost a century later, resistance to the lingering racism and discrimination in America that began during the slavery era would lead to the civil rights movement of the s, which would achieve the greatest political and social gains for blacks since Reconstruction.

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Chapter 2 : Harriet Tubman and other leaders of the Underground Railroad

The "Underground Railroad" was a marvelously improvised, metaphorical construct run by courageous heroes, most of whom were black: "Much of what we call the Underground Railroad," Blight.

Edit Even at the height of the Underground Railroad, fewer than 1, slaves from all slave-holding states were able to escape each year just over 5, court cases for escaped slaves recorded , a quantity much smaller than the natural annual increase of the enslaved population. Although the economic impact was small, the psychological impact on slaveholders of an informal network to assist escaped slaves was immense. Under the original Fugitive Slave Law of , the responsibility for catching runaway slaves fell on officials of the states from which the slaves came, and the Underground Railroad thrived. With heavy political lobbying, the Compromise of , passed by Congress after the Mexican-American War , stipulated a more stringent Fugitive Slave Law. Ostensibly, the compromise redressed all regional problems. However, it coerced officials of free states to assist slave catchers if there were runaway slaves in the area, and granted slave catchers national immunity when in free states to do their job. Thus, many Northerners who would have otherwise been able and content to ignore far-away regional slavery, chafed under nationally-sanctioned slavery. This led to one of the primary grievances of the Union cause in the Civil War. Vigilance committee The escape network was not literally underground nor a railroad. It was figuratively "underground" in the sense of being an underground resistance. It was known as a "railroad" by way of the use of rail terminology in the code. Individuals were often organized in small, independent groups; this helped to maintain secrecy because individuals knew some connecting "stations" along the route but knew few details of their immediate area. Escaped slaves would move north along the route from one way station to the next. Churches also often played a role, especially the Religious Society of Friends Quakers , Congregationalists, Wesleyans , and Reformed Presbyterians as well as certain sects of mainstream denominations such as branches of the Methodist church and American Baptists. Without the presence and support of free black residents, there would have been almost no chance for fugitive slaves to pass into freedom unmolested. There were the "conductors" who ultimately moved the runaways from station to station. The "conductor" would sometimes pretend to be a slave to enter a plantation. Once a part of a plantation, the "conductor" would direct the runaways to the North. They would stop at the so-called "stations" or "depots" during the day and rest. The stations were out of the way places like barns. While resting at one station, a message was sent to the next station to let the station master know the runaways were on their way. There were also those known as "stockholders" who gave money or supplies for assistance. Using biblical references, fugitives referred to Canada as the "Promised Land" and the Ohio River as the "River Jordan", which marked the boundary between slave states and free states. Some groups were considerably larger. However, abolitionist Charles Turner Torrey and his colleagues rented horses and wagons and often transported as many as 15 or 20 slaves at a time. Most escapes were by individuals or small groups; occasionally, there were mass escapes, such as with the Pearl incident. The journey was often considered particularly difficult and dangerous for women or children, yet many still participated. In fact, one of the most famous and successful abductors as people who secretly traveled into slave states to rescue those seeking freedom were called was a woman, Harriet Tubman. Southern newspapers of the day were often filled with pages of notices soliciting information about escaped slaves and offering sizable rewards for their capture and return. Federal marshals and professional bounty hunters known as slave catchers pursued fugitives as far as the Canadian border. Because strong, healthy blacks in their prime working and reproductive years were seen and treated as highly valuable commodities, it was not unusual for free blacks – both freedmen former slaves and those who had never been slaves – to be kidnapped and sold into slavery. Some buildings, such as the Crenshaw House in far southeastern Illinois, remain as physical components of this process, known as the " Reverse Underground Railroad ". Under the terms of the Fugitive Slave Act of , when suspected fugitives were seized and brought to a special magistrate known as a commissioner, they had no right to a jury

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trial and could not testify in their own behalf. Technically, they were guilty of no crime. The marshal or private slave-catcher needed only to swear an oath to acquire a writ of replevin for the return of property. Congress, dominated by the numbers of southern Congressmen elected because slaves were counted into total population, had passed the fugitive slave law because of public sympathy for the fugitives and the lack of cooperation by the police, courts, and public outside the Deep South. In some parts of the North, slave-catchers needed police protection to exercise their federal authority. Despite their resistance to pro-slavery laws, several states made free blacks unwelcome. Indiana, whose area along the Ohio River was settled by Southerners, passed a constitutional amendment that barred blacks from settling in that state. Terminology Members of The Underground Railroad often used specific terms, based on the metaphor of the railway. People who helped slaves find the railroad were "agents" or "shepherds" Guides were known as "conductors" Free or escaped blacks, sometimes whites, that helped guide fugitives were "abductors" Hiding places were "stations" "Station masters" hid slaves in their homes Escaped slaves were referred to as "passengers" or "cargo" Slaves would obtain a "ticket" Similar to common gospel lore, the "wheels would keep on turning" Financial benefactors of the Railroad were known as "stockholders". The Railroad itself was often known as the "freedom train" or "Gospel train", which headed towards "Heaven" or "the Promised Land", i. The Underground Railroad , painting by Charles T. Webber William Still , [21] often called "The Father of the Underground Railroad", helped hundreds of slaves to escape as many as 60 a month , sometimes hiding them in his Philadelphia home. He kept careful records, including short biographies of the people, that contained frequent railway metaphors. He maintained correspondence with many of them, often acting as a middleman in communications between escaped slaves and those left behind. He published these accounts in the book *The Underground Railroad* in According to Still, messages were often encoded so that messages could be understood only by those active in the railroad. The additional word *via* indicated that the "passengers" were not sent on the usual train, but rather via Reading, Pennsylvania. In this case, the authorities were tricked into going to the regular train station in an attempt to intercept the runaways, while Still was able to meet them at the correct station and guide them to safety, where they eventually escaped either to the North or to British North America, where slavery had been abolished during the s. Quilts of the Underground Railroad Since the s, claims have arisen that quilt designs were used to signal and direct slaves to escape routes and assistance. According to advocates of the quilt theory, there were ten quilt patterns that were used to direct slaves to take particular actions. The quilts were placed one at a time on a fence as a means of nonverbal communication to alert escaping slaves. The code had a dual meaning: The quilt design theory is disputed. In addition, Underground Railroad historian Giles Wright has published a pamphlet debunking the quilt code. Songs of the Underground Railroad Many popular, nonacademic sources claim that spirituals and other songs, such as "Steal Away" or " Follow the Drinking Gourd ", contained coded information and helped individuals navigate the railroad, but these sources offer very little evidence to support their claims. Scholars who have examined these claims tend to believe that while the slave songs may certainly have expressed hope for deliverance from the sorrows of this world, these songs did not present literal help for runaway slaves. For example, a song written in about a man fleeing slavery in Tennessee by escaping to Canada, entitled *Song of the Free* , was composed to the tune of *Oh! Every stanza ends with a reference to Canada as the land "where colored men are free". Slavery in Canada had been in rapid decline after an court ruling, and abolished outright in I have never approved of the very public manner in which some of our western friends have conducted what they call the underground railroad, but which I think, by their open declarations, has been made most emphatically the upperground railroad. He went on to say that, although he honors the movement, he feels that the efforts serve more to enlighten the slave-owners than the slaves, making them more watchful and making it more difficult for future slaves to escape. These were generally in the triangular region bounded by Toronto, Niagara Falls, and Windsor. Nearly 1, refugees settled in Toronto, and several rural villages made up mostly of ex-slaves were established in Kent County and Essex County. Another important center of population was Nova Scotia, for example Africville and other villages near Halifax, see Black Nova Scotians.*

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Important black settlements also developed in other parts of British North America now parts of Canada. These included Lower Canada present-day Quebec and Vancouver Island, where Governor James Douglas encouraged black immigration because of his opposition to slavery and because he hoped a significant black community would form a bulwark against those who wished to unite the island with the United States. Upon arriving at their destinations, many fugitives were disappointed. While the British colonies had no slavery after , discrimination was still common. Many of the new arrivals had great difficulty finding jobs, in part because of mass European immigration at the time, and overt racism was common. For example, the charter of the city of Saint John, New Brunswick was amended in specifically to exclude blacks from practicing a trade, selling goods, fishing in the harbour, or becoming freemen; these provisions stood until Thousands of others returned to the American South after the war ended. The desire to reconnect with friends and family was strong, and most were hopeful about the changes emancipation and Reconstruction would bring.

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Chapter 3 : Underground Railroad “Dixie Outfitters

In the days of the abolitionist movement, the story of the Underground Railroad was largely about the freedom seekers themselves. Speakers and writers like Frederick Douglass or William Wells Brown could testify to the evils of slavery from their own experience.

Unfortunately, over the years, the idea of the Underground Railroad has become romantic and surrounded by myths. It makes it next to impossible for historians to weed through everything, let alone the the average American citizen. Check in each week to read about a widely spread myth and the truth behind it. Tickets go on sale to the public on Wednesday, June 1st. And, of course, it is easy to see why. Men like William Still or women like Harriet Tubman, or couples like the Rotches were all abolitionists and worked as station masters or conductors on the Underground Railroad. We all logically know that not all abolitionists were working with the Underground Railroad. But there was quite a bit of division within the abolitionist movement on what should actually be done with freedom seekers. That meant petitioning the state and federal government to change laws to end slavery. This is essentially what the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment did. These abolitionists believed that if they petitioned and told the horrors of slavery enough, eventually the government would make the change. These are more likely to be the people like Nat Turner, leading rebellions, kidnapping or purchasing slaves to get them to freedom, or simply offering their homes and services to hide runaways. They believed that the government was morally wrong, and many believed God would overlook them breaking earthly laws to follow His Law. Thomas and Charity Rotch would have been similar to these abolitionists, but they are always very careful about their work, and definitely not as rebellious as some. Many Irish building the canals here in Ohio were strongly pro-slavery, fearing that freed slaves would move north and take their jobs! Many abolitionists simply focused on education for freed slaves, to make them productive and upstanding members of society. The four men above were all early organizers. Like the other two abolitionist groups above, some of the ACS believed that slavery should be abolished legally. Others believed that it had to be dismantled by any means necessary. However, they did unite on the idea of reparations. This is a politically charged word in modern times, as it was in the early s when Thomas and Charity were around. In , the ACS founded the colony of Liberia for free American blacks to settle and be able to live full lives. From , thousands of free blacks moved to Liberia, and then created an independent nation. We mentioned in an earlier blog post that the abolitionist movement is the first interracial movement in the U. Just like today, there were different ideas on how to best end slavery and what to do after. Men and women would gather, as today to argue the best course of action. And, like today, it seems that they chose to splinter off into groups of like minded people instead of opening a dialogue. While all had the same end goal, few seemed to be able to agree on how to reach it.

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Chapter 4 : Underground Railroad in the South: #UGRRMyth

The Underground Railroad was a network of secret routes and safe houses established in the United States during the early to mid 19th century, and used by African-American slaves to escape into free states and Canada with the aid of abolitionists and allies who were sympathetic to their cause.

Quakers and the Underground Railroad: More than a century before Dred Scott, in 1818, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends told its members "To live in ease and plenty, by the toil of those whom violence and cruelty have put in our power, is neither consistent with Christianity nor common justice. Slavery was, in Quaker eyes, a "national evil. What is to be done? On one side were people who believed slavery to be right and proper, and on the other were those who denied any legitimacy to the institution. In the middle were many people who may have had reservations about slavery but accepted its existence as the law of the land and part of the national compact. Harboring a "fugitive from labor" was a violation of both the United States Constitution and of Federal Law. TOP Quaker Approaches to Abolitionism The transition from slavery to freedom, particularly within a society where slavery is both legal and normative, raises questions about the position of the newly freed. Since in North America, slavery became almost exclusively connected with race, and people of African descent were therefore considered by many of the 18th and 19th century as "other" what was to be the status of freed people? Did they have the same rights, including access to the legal system, as whites? Where did they fit in the economy? Quakers of the 18th and 19th century were very aware that Quakers had once held slaves, people who had worked for Quakers but had not been paid for their labors. It was not enough to clear the Society of Friends of the sin of slave-holding but to look to the education of the freed people. According to Jonathan Dymond, an English Quaker: Quakers had a problem. They had determined that slavery was absolutely wrong, but lived in the United States lived within a society and under a government that held that people could be property. What if God and Caesar demanded different things? The Bible laid out the "Golden Rule" -- "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do you so even unto them" Matthew 7: For Quakers, when religious duty came into conflict with the law of the land, it was the duty of the Christian to suffer rather than obey. Pennsylvania Quaker William Jackson made this point in an pamphlet: No one is under any moral obligation to lend himself as a tool to others for the commission of a crime, even when commanded by his government to do the wrong If you believe in the Golden Rule, what should you do when the fugitive comes to your door? TOP Violence and Non-Violence Quakers had a history of going to jail for their beliefs--for not paying church tithes, for refusing to swear oaths, for refusing to bear arms. In the seventeenth century in England, thousands of Quakers spent time in prison--in some cases for years when they could easily have won their freedom by paying fines or swearing oaths. Non-violent civil disobedience did not begin with Martin Luther King in the 1960s or even Henry David Thoreau in the 1840s, but had been a part of Quaker practice since the 17th century. In the United States, slavery was ultimately extinguished by blood--the Civil War. There does seem to be an attitude that anyone really serious about abolishing slavery would eventually have to do as John Brown and pick up the carnal sword. This also became a problem for Quakers, whose peace testimony predated its anti-slavery testimony. Quakers were divided on some of the tactics of the Garrisonian anti-slavery movement in the 1840s and 1850s. Some Quakers, like Lucretia Mott , embraced the American Anti-Slavery Society , others thought that the rhetoric of the Garrisonians was divisive and would lead to conflict rather than resolution. The abolitionists themselves often disagreed over tactics. Some Quakers stood apart from the organized anti-slavery movement. Gardner, a Hicksite Friends from Farmington, New York, clearly understood that slavery was evil and Friends needed to bear a full and efficient testimony against all evil. Yet Gardner cautioned in that "wrong may be wrongfully opposed, and war opposed in a warlike spirit. Some people seem to think that any house once owned by a Quaker must have been a stop on the Underground Railroad. But mythologies often contain truths. Ward, a one-time resident of Poughkeepsie, describes in his autobiography the escape of his parents from the Eastern Shore of Maryland to southern New

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Jersey in They left with the intention, Ward wrote, "to reach a Free State, and live among Quakers. There were no slave-holders there, despite New Jersey being at that time a slave state, and, quoting Ward, "when the slave-catchers came prowling about the Quakers placed all manner of peaceful obstacles in their way, while the Negroes made it a little too hot for their comfort. No fugitive, Brown wrote, was ever betrayed by a Quaker. In the days of the abolitionist movement, the story of the Underground Railroad was largely about the freedom seekers themselves. Speakers and writers like Frederick Douglass or William Wells Brown could testify to the evils of slavery from their own experience. They stood as examples that the enslaved were not happy with their lot and were willing risk great dangers to become free. After the Civil War, when having been an abolitionist before the Civil War became respectable, there were a number of recollections and memoirs written by white abolitionists about their activities. Somehow the emphasis shifted from the story of the enslaved seeking their own freedom, largely and often exclusively without assistance from an Underground Railroad, to stories of how white people, often Quakers, aided fugitive slaves. By the mid twentieth century, the Underground Railroad story was often told as if the only actors were white, and the freedom seekers themselves were passed from safe house to safe house like so much cargo. I suspect that much of that twentieth century mythology was, perhaps unconsciously, a matter of white Americans trying to convince themselves that in the times of slavery, they had been on the side of freedom. One must be suspicious of "feel good history. The Legend of the Underground Railroad Gara claimed that the story of the Underground Railroad, as told in the mid 20th century, focused almost exclusively on the assistance given freedom seekers by whites, particularly Quakers, and ignored the larger story of African-Americans liberating themselves and the role of African-American institutions and communities in assisting the fugitive. He called for refocusing the story on the freedom seekers and the role of African-American communities and institutions, north and south. Incidentally, Gara is a Quaker. Clearly, many of the self-emancipated not only freed themselves but made their way to the north and even to Canada with little or no aid. Others came though largely or exclusively African-American, and likely African-Canadian, networks, sometimes outside the knowledge of white abolitionists and white Underground Railroad workers. My reading of the writings of the people who were actively engaged in the Underground Railroad--as self-emancipators or as helpers--is that they clearly understood that it was the fugitives themselves who were the center of the story. It was the fugitive who took the initiative and the major part of the risk. But in re-centering the story on the freedom seeker, and on African-American communities of support, at times we seem to have forgotten the multi-racial aspects of the Underground Railroad. Do we remember the great achievements of the African-American heroes of our story--Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, William Still--only to forget, or at least marginalize the contributions of their white co-workers-- Isaac T. Hopper , Levi Coffin, Thomas Garrett? TOP Networks of Support: Crossing Racial Boundaries Fugitives from slavery were not headed to Canada. They were headed to places of safety. My current area of interest is in south-eastern Pennsylvania, specifically Chester and Lancaster Counties. These counties border Maryland, a slave state. There is ample evidence of a Quaker and African-American Underground Railroad network that assisted freedom seekers on their way north, often by way of Philadelphia. The areas of greatest African-American population in south-eastern Pennsylvania are also the areas of greatest Quaker populations. Where there were no Quaker settlements, there were rarely any significant numbers of African-Americans. In one case a man named Thomas Mitchell was recaptured in Chester County where he had been living since escaping from slavery twelve years earlier. At the time of his capture, he was eight miles north of the Mason-Dixon Line and within eighteen miles of the place where he had been enslaved. The goal of the Underground Railroad was not necessarily Canada, but a place of safety. When Thomas Mitchell crossed into Pennsylvania, he was immediately in a region that had both Quakers and free people of color. Mitchell was taken by his captors to the slave market in Baltimore. Ultimately his Chester County neighbors purchased his freedom. It is impossible to know how many of the African-Americans in this region were "fugitives from labor" but I do know that Mitchell was far from the only one in this category remaining in Chester and Lancaster Counties. Did Mitchell feel safe because he was living among free people

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of his own color or because he was living among Quakers? We need more research here but there seem to be numerous examples of related pre-Civil War African-American and Quaker communities--I know of examples in Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Canada. This is not to say that these communities were racially egalitarian. Mitchell worked for a white farmer, a Quaker, and lived in a tenant house. On Sunday, he likely went to one of the nearby African Methodist churches while his employer and family went off to Quaker meeting. Let me be clear on this--there is virtually no evidence for any of these elements in the historical record. We have numerous narratives of the self emancipated and their helpers, and no one actually connected with the Underground Railroad ever mentioned tunnels, quilts as signals or cast iron statues. Specially built secret hiding places were so rare as to be almost non-existent. It was much easier to hide people, if secrecy was necessary, in the attic, the spring house, the barn or the field than build a hidey-hole. However, my major concern is that this fascination with the mechanisms of the Underground Railroad distracts from understanding the networks that made escape possible. One group went to Wilmington, Delaware to alert Thomas Garrett, who telegraphed John Needles in Baltimore to go to the train station to wait for the kidnappers. Points to Remember We have to guard against the attractions of "feel good history. That the United States, the country that declared in that "all men are created equal" also embraced human slavery is a cause for unease and perhaps a little guilt. In some of the older popular history, one gets the impression that everyone north of the Mason-Dixon Line was anti-slavery and that aiding fugitives was a popular activity. Just look at all the tunnels. Increasingly, the story of the Underground Railroad is being placed back into its primary context of African-American history. Where Levi Coffin, a white Quaker, was at one time seen as the great figure in the story, we are now more likely to begin by talking about Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass. Perhaps, but we need proof, not just assumptions and wishful thinking. We very much need more research into African-American involvement as agents and station masters on the Underground Railroad. Did all Quakers participate in the Underground Railroad? There is no official statement from a Quaker body that this was expected. But Quakers rejected the legitimacy of slavery--it was not simply wrong, it was illegitimate and no Federal law could make it right. My judgment on the matter is that any fugitive who had crossed the Mason-Dixon Line and appealed to a Quaker for assistance was either aided or directed to someone who could supply that assistance. We often treat the story of the Underground Railroad as a story for children--particularly popular in our grade schools during Black History Month. We tend to focus on the heroism of those who broke the law to do the right thing.

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Chapter 5 : Slavery in America - HISTORY

Although the Folklore and Folklife reading room does not contain a great deal of material directly related to the Underground Railroad, it houses collections of s WPA Federal Writers' Project interviews with ex-slaves and numerous books of African American folklore and folksong.

According to Professor Eric Foner of Columbia University, the Underground Railroad, which consisted of groups of black and white anti-slavery activists, was instrumental in helping many American slaves escape to freedom. Local groups assisted fugitive slaves. The groups were in communication with each other so that fugitives could be sent from one group to the other. Burkle Estate in Memphis was reportedly a haven used to help slaves escape to freedom via the underground railroad network. According to the marker, the Burkle Estate was the site where "folklore persists" was also a haven for slaves escaping to freedom on the underground railroad. Slavery in America was a factor that led to the formation of the Underground Railroad and a civil war that split the young nation apart. The Burkle Estate was near the banks of the Mississippi River and was an excellent stop for escapees as they fled to the freedom of the North. The Africans became a cheap labor source for work in tobacco, rice and cotton fields. As the economy began to improve and prosper, colonist became unwilling to let their free labor source go. As a result, slavery took root and flourished. According to official historical records, slavery was first introduced to America in when "The White Lion," a badly damaged Dutch slave ship, arrived on the shore of the Virginia Colony on the Chesapeake Bay. Source Black Gold Slavery was legalized by the colonies in Africans became chattel; personal property that could be owned for life. Cheap slave labor became so prosperous that captured Africans were referred to as "black gold. Source Click thumbnail to view full-size By one-million humans were moved from East to the South and sold as slaves. Slaves were treated like chattel and herded along like animals. Source On transport to the deep South, slaves were packed into pens, yards and slave houses. Slave owners were fined if they did not punish recaptured slaves that had tried to escape. However; slavery in the deep South remained firmly intact. That compromise established the Mason and Dixon Line. North of that line there was to be no slavery. Also; by , there were over 1. There was no slavery in the states North of the Mason Dixon Line. Harboring an unquenchable thirst for rock-bottom labor; America no longer needed transports from England. The new nation had mastered the process of generating its own internal slave trade. By one-million humans were moved, across the United States, from the East to the South and sold as slaves. Packed into pens, yards and slave houses, the captives were often feed in troughs like common livestock. Feelings of Anxiety Southern whites grew anxious of the increasing slave population. As the slave population increased so did the harshness and rigor of their bondage. It is because of this that many slaves had anxious desires for freedom. Young Harriet Tubman, eleven years old at the time, may have listened intently to others as they talked about what happened. Having escaped slavery herself; Harriet was inspired to daringly return to her former place of bondage, time after time, to lead hundreds of slaves to freedom. Harriet Tubman, who stood about five feet tall, escaped form slavery to become a leading abolitionist. She returned to the South several times and helped more than slaves escape. Conrad begins by introducing the reader to some of the pitfalls of slavery. He sprinkles each chapter of the biography with historical events without sounding trite or boring. As Harriet Tubman is introduced by Conrad he produces a mental image of her. An example of this is when Harriet is described while she is a teenager, " Her eyes were heavy-lidded and appraising. A round, receding chin was set, rock-like; and her hair was short and crinkly. By now too she was almost as tall as she ever would be, which was about five feet; and her limbs had become strong" Conrad, p. Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery in the South to become a leading abolitionist. She was highly revered by John Brown, a white abolitionist whose actions helped to hasten the war that later brought emancipation. Tubman was dubbed as a heroine because of her heroics in Troy, New York and service during the Civil War. The Underground Railroad Operated in Secret The Underground Railroad consisted of groups of black and white anti-slavery activists in

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the United States that helped escaped slaves to reach places of safety in the North or Canada. The groups operated in secret. Railway terms were used to describe the way the groups in the Underground Railroad operated. The routes were called lines. The stopping places were called stations. Conductors were those who helped along the way. The people being helped to escape were known as packages or freight. The Underground Railroad consisted of groups of black and white anti-slavery activists in the United States that helped escaped slaves to reach places of safety in the North or Canada. The Underground Railroad consisted of groups of black and white anti-slavery activists that helped escaped slaves to reach places of safety in the North or Canada. Source Underground Railroad Terms.

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Chapter 6 : The Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman, and Burkle Estate | Owlcation

Wilmington, Abolition and the Underground Railroad. Overview: Most Americans are familiar with the term "underground railroad" and understand it to be the extensive network of planned escape routes with secret stations and coded messages along the way that assisted black slaves in the American South in escaping to freedom and a better life in the North and in Canada.

Unfortunately, over the years, the idea of the Underground Railroad has become romantic and surrounded by myths. It makes it next to impossible for historians to weed through everything, let alone the the average American citizen. Leading up to our annual Underground Railroad Experience, we are putting some of those myths to rest. Check in each week to read about a widely spread myth and the truth behind it. However, many people believe that there were lots of abolitionists in the south, opening their homes on the Underground Railroad. This is not to say that there were no abolitionists living in the South. However, there is a reason the North is called the Free States. Most runaways would be on their own until they reached a free state. This is especially true for many runaways who might have been well-known to others in their community. Until they passed the Mason-Dixon line, many would primarily be relying on their own wits, intelligence, and bravery. Closer to the Mason-Dixon line and the Ohio River, there were more abolitionists and conductors available for runaways brave enough to approach and trust them. Men like Samuel Burris would cross from free states over to help freedom seekers make that dangerous leap of faith. It is harder to prove Southern sites because of the lack of documentation. In slave holding states, it was even more dangerous for Station Masters and Conductors to do their work, with many conductors being caught and punished with jail time, fines, being sold into slavery, or even being killed by angry mobs the later, obviously, outside of the judicial system. However, there are some sites in the South that were involved with the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad. In the mid s, Louisiana becomes synonymous with the slave trade, but before that, with France abolishing slavery in , Louisiana could be a safe haven for slaves. This is reversed, only 9 years later, when Louisiana became part of the young United States in Florida also became a place of safety for runaway slaves. The everglades in southern Florida welcomed slaves who were brave enough to face the dangers. That included the Seminole Indians, who lived there and were happy to welcome the men and women searching for freedom into their communities. The Seminoles were not the only tribe to do this, with many other tribes opening their arms widely to freedom seekers moving south or west instead of north. Overall, the amount of work being done in the south is greatly outnumbered by change taking place in the north. Progressives living in the north, especially those in anti-slavery communities, had a support system around them that they could rely on that many in the south would not have seen. This includes laws protecting them, and members of the judicial system and law enforcement with similar ideals, willing to look the other way. So do not believe the stories of slaves in Georgia, or Mississippi being aided by kind souls in the southern states. The reality is, the runaways who made it to that first station had often traveled on their own, using all of their courage and ingenuity to make it even that far.

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Chapter 7 : The Underground railroad, abolition, slavery and slave cultu by Stella Heflin on Prezi

Many of the people partaking in the Underground Railroad were not aware of the nationwide system that was taking place, merely their own local efforts. Through their commitment to their families, religion, folklore, and music, African-Americans resisted the debilitating effects of slavery and created a vital culture.

Wilmington, Abolition and the Underground Railroad Overview: A port city like Wilmington might seem to offer an easier way for a slave to find passage elsewhere—“as slaves who lived along the coast were given much freedom to move freely and pilot boats on the rivers and sounds. It was very possible that slaves could have been attracted to a passing ship and thoughts of a better life, but this was also dangerous since the runaway slave could be easily impressed into slavery as a deck hand, or sold and re-enslaved in Cuba or the West Indies by the crew eager for profit. More often, slaves would leave a plantation and live among others in the many swamp communities of Negroes and Maroons along the coast and in impenetrable forests. It should be remembered that the plantation was not a walled prison and slaves could easily walk away, though unsure of a better life awaiting them elsewhere. If they ventured northward, they could easily find a living environment less hospitable than the one they left as Northerners were commonly unfriendly toward free blacks and ostracized them. No he did not run away. Riley met a gentleman from Niagara and walked across the Niagara Gorge to what he envisioned as freedom, but what were usually poverty and a bleak future. More on the reality of Canada below. While slaves running away from their owners is not known to be widespread in the Cape Fear region preceding the War Between the States, one of the few mentioned is Abraham Galloway from Brunswick County. Galloway is claimed to have left his owner in and traveled to Philadelphia, then to Canada and finally settling in Ohio and becoming an abolitionist, Strength Through Struggle, Bill Reaves. At that time, Ohio was a dangerous place to proclaim oneself an abolitionist after Elijah Lovejoy was murdered there in for simply printing abolitionist literature. During the War Between the States, 2 Wilmington-area slaves did turn themselves over to Northern officers on a blockading ship on June 14, The form of abolition advocated then was not violent as the Northern abolitionists promoted, it was emancipation and repatriation to the African homeland in order to right the wrongs of British and New England slave-traders who brought them as slaves to these shores. From that point on, Southerners lived in constant fear as abolitionists intensified their attacks on the slaveholding South and advanced no practical solution to slavery other than racial warfare. An irony exists here with the New Englanders who might have been sympathetic to the plight of the black slaves, being descended from the slave traders of Massachusetts and Rhode Island who grew wealthy selling slaves for labor on plantations. Emancipation Societies in the South: The earliest American journals advocating emancipation and abolition were published, one by a Southern man and one on Tennessee soil. By , the Tennessee Manumission Society had twenty branches and members, and in , William Swaim was publishing the Patriot in Greensborough, North Carolina, which contained much anti-slavery matter. By , there were Abolition Societies in the United States, of which were in the then slave-holding States. Virginia had 8 of these societies, Tennessee had 25 with a membership of , and North Carolina had 50 with a membership of The voluntary emancipation of slaves was well in underway in antebellum North Carolina as the State counted 30, free blacks out of a total black population of , in , and this was the result of manumission emancipation by slaveholders through deed and will, as well as slaves who purchased freedom from their owners. The Federal census of showed , free blacks in the U. In both cases, the Royal Governor refused to consider the ban on importing slaves and were simply following the dictates of the Crown. While not all blacks fought for the British, it is known that free blacks were more likely to join with the patriots, and freed slaves would fight against American independence. The end of the Revolution witnessed very strong anti-slavery sentiment and emancipation societies were becoming frequent in the South by , with one-half the delegates to the American Abolition Conventions coming from the South between and , after that date none came from beyond Tennessee and North Carolina. The Quakers of North Carolina were involved in this

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project as well, thinking repatriation of black people as the best solution to the problem of slavery here. There are two well-researched books on the subject of the underground railroad legend and slavery in the North, which were published in , both and serve as objective and scholarly investigations into the subjects. Both books ably demonstrate that the facts do not support the legend or a widespread escape network we have come to believe existed. The abolitionists are idealists of fortitude and courage possessing the traits of character which ennobled and dignified human nature. He is a mean Southerner, a term synonymous in the popular legend with the slaveholder or defender of the slave system. He too, is something other than human, in this case something less. The whole antebellum South was a dismal swamp of slavery a cesspool of vice and the inhabitants lacked ethical principles or the rudiments of human decency God-fearing and righteous New Englanders on the one side and the wicked Southerners on the other. To underscore this reasoning, Gara states that in an archeology graduate student at the University of Akron conducted an archeological search of 17 historic Ohio houses said to have been connected with the underground railroad. Few people can provide details when asked about the institution and specific information is usually crowded out by vague generalizations. By , some 36, northern blacks still remained in bondage, most of them in New York and New Jersey. Antebellum free-blacks in New York could not vote without minimum property ownership, and black New York minister Samuel E. It is important to note that freedom did not necessarily confer citizenship on free blacks in the North until the post-civil war era, and most Northern whites would maintain a careful distinction between granting blacks legal protection which slaves also enjoyed in the South and political and social equality. The State of Massachusetts wanted no blacks, free or otherwise within their borders after the elimination of bondage. This was the State which formed the famous 54th Massachusetts Regiment, though the reason was to allow white citizens to avoid service while counting black soldiers against the general State quota of troops. An estimated to Negroes then departed from the city to settle in Canada. Three States Illinois, Indiana and Oregon incorporated anti-immigration provisions into their constitutions. Only in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine where most Negroes were deported could blacks vote on an equal basis with whites. After visiting New York in , an English traveler assessed the Negroes position and concluded: They are in fact little better than slaves, although called free. Arfwedson, The United States and Canada in , and Slaves and Free Blacks: The legend of the underground railroad tells us that the terminus was in Canada where freedom could be realized for the escaped slave. This was the case since the Northern States, especially New York was not a hospitable environment for the black man, and the threat of capture and return to slavery would always hover over him. Also, life for the free black in Canada was little different than the free black in the North or South, and freed-black Nelson Moss said that he had suffered more from prejudice during three years in Pennsylvania than as a free-black in Virginia. By , it is estimated that black slaves lived in New France, mostly around Montreal and working as house servants or farm labor. In the treaties between France and England that ended warfare in and , the victorious English guaranteed that African servitude would be protected in British North America. By there were over blacks in Canada with at least of them held in bondage. Additionally, many slaves were Indians, and many Indians held black slaves. The British carried on an unofficial slave trade during the American Revolution as they captured black slaves from in New England and New York, and sold them on the Montreal slave market. Some Canadian military officers captured slaves in New York and continued to hold them in bondage on their own estates. The irony of this is demonstrated with the British policy of offering freedom to black slaves who would rise up against their owners in the American South in and flee to British lines. The Slave Bill of in Canada did not free one slave, though it forbade the importation of slaves into the province. The children of slaves born after the date of the act would be free on their twenty-fifth birthday, and the children of these children would be born free. This was somewhat humanitarian, but the act made it difficult if not impossible to voluntarily free slaves. An unforeseen result of the act occurred in after the Michigan Territory was incorporated into the United States. After , local laws against slavery were strictly enforced in Michigan and the territory immediately became a haven for enslaved Canadian blacks escaping across the border. So many slaves fled Canadian slave owners

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that they demanded that Lt. Governor Francis Gore intervene to stop the exodus. Faced with a swelling black population of runaway slaves in the Northern States, which threatened the white electorate, State legislatures began passing laws restricting the franchise of free blacks. With the very small number of free blacks in white-dominated Canadian communities, the electorate was not threatened as the blacks seemed to avoid voting in blocs and thus avoided any residency or financial worth requirements that disenfranchised Northern US free-blacks who would bloc-vote and swing elections. Canadian schools were rigidly segregated with the Common School Act of setting this into law, and like churches in the American South, Canadian congregations had blacks among them, but in according to Mary Ann Guillian, black Baptists took over the chapel and created a segregated congregation. There was occasion when runaway slaves were returned to the US, which was the case if they were wanted for criminal prosecution. Blacks in Canada performed menial labor and many joined the Colored Corps simply for a regular income. Most of the black men in the Corps in were illiterate with 40 out of 48 men making marks for their signatures. The legend of the underground railroad has become an American institution, and believed despite facts to the contrary. As has been stated, black slaves left their plantations for many reasons that include a desire to be free, whatever that meant to them, though the North offered little better than the life they led as slaves. Being a free black in the North seemed better than an enslaved black in the Southâ€”but to understand the legend that might have connected the two, it was necessary to review the context of the early 19th century as it related to the black man in both sections. The question remains; if antebellum emancipation was an ongoing occurrence in the South, as it had been in the North, why was a fraternal war fought to end the institution? Was there not a better way to finally end African slavery in the United States? The solution to African slavery in the United States could have been found in a peaceful and continuing emancipation process, and the steadily increasing number of free blacks in the South were a testament to this preferable process. Had the extreme abolitionists of the North not agitated and politicized what remained of this unfortunate institution in the South, one million American lives lost in war could have been saved. As was clearly demonstrated later in Brazil as that country accelerated the emancipation of slaves, the growing numbers of free blacks would eventually speed the demise of slavery in their midst.

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Chapter 8 : Underground Railroad - Infogalactic: the planetary knowledge core

The local Underground Railroad story includes many other people and places throughout the Lake Erie Region, research and the documentation is far from being finished. [The photo shown is The old Wesleyville Methodist Church at Buffalo Road.]

By the time he was 4 years old, his mother, father, and baby sister had all died from tuberculosis, so he went to live with his maternal grandparents in a part of Scituate that later became Norwell. His maternal grandfather, once a member of the U. House of Representatives, remained active in local affairs, and introduced his grandson to political issues. While at Yale, Torrey attended a revival meeting, pledged his life to Jesus Christ, and thereafter took his vow very seriously. Following graduation in , Torrey tried teaching secondary school for a year, but after a year decided to become a Congregational minister instead. Torrey adopted the cause as his own and although tuberculosis caused him to suspend his studies for a year, he became an active worker for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society , which was headed by William Lloyd Garrison. Garrison believed that slavery could best be abolished by "moral suasion," i. However, he relinquished his professional duties to devote himself to anti-slavery activism in Maryland, having come to believe in a much more activist approach than his mentor. Torrey and Garrison disagreed on other issues as well. Garrison had packed the meeting with his followers, and easily beat back the challenge in a dramatic confrontation. This split became known as the great schism in the abolitionist movement. The New Organization immediately adopted a more activist, and overtly political, approach to the abolition of slavery. In July , almost delegates met in Albany to discuss the formation of a political party devoted exclusively to abolitionism. Finally, on April 1, , at another meeting in Albany, the Liberty Party was formed. Torrey was one of the vice-presidents of the organizing meeting. Following the meeting, he became the Liberty Party organizer for Massachusetts. It seems likely that he had already formulated a plan to free slaves. He immediately began attending black churches and befriending abolitionist members of Congress, especially Joshua Giddings of Ohio. In January , Torrey, as a reporter, attended a convention of Maryland slaveholders in Annapolis, where he was arrested, charged with writing "incendiary" material, and jailed for four days. He worked closely with Thomas Smallwood , a free black. There, they were conducted through a series of safe houses, mostly owned by Quakers , to Philadelphia, Albany, and ultimately, for many, Canada. Torrey and his colleagues rented horses and wagons and often transported as many as 15 or 20 slaves at a time. Torrey and Smallwood specifically targeted slaves owned by Southern members of Congress and important political figures so as to cause as much public disruption as possible. Smallwood continued to recruit slaves to run away until the spring of , by which time they had freed approximately slaves. Smallwood then also moved north because of the danger of arrest. In November , Torrey and Smallwood returned to Washington, despite both being wanted by the police, and narrowly escaped arrest. Smallwood thereafter settled in Toronto, but Torrey went to Baltimore, where he continued the freeing of slaves. Finally, in June , Torrey was arrested and put in jail. He was said to have been armed with two pistols at the time of his arrest. He initially regarded his arrest as an opportunity to challenge the constitutional legitimacy of slaveholding in general; if it was not legitimate, then freeing slaves would not be a crime. By September , it was clear that this strategy was not going to work, so he attempted to break out of jail and almost succeeded. In December, Torrey was tried, convicted, and sentenced to six years in the state penitentiary. Clemency requests were denied; he died in prison on May 9, His corpse was taken to Boston, and many people attended his funeral at Tremont Temple. Assessment[edit] Following the end of the Civil War, Charles Torrey was essentially lost to history. The main reason for this was that the history of the abolitionist movement was mostly written by Garrison and his supporters, most of whom were still alive. Despite his relatively brief abolitionist career, Torrey made major contributions to the freeing of slaves. The new group was much more aggressive in their tactics. Garrison and Torrey were hated rivals. He cofounded the Liberty Party, whose sole platform was the abolition of slavery. He was referred to by some at that time as

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the "father" of the Underground Railroad. He personally freed about 150 slaves, more than any other abolitionist. By contrast, Harriet Tubman freed about 70 slaves. Torrey took the slaves from the Washington and Baltimore region and specifically recruited slaves owned by Southern members of Congress and other high government officials. He was one of the first white abolitionists to work closely with black counterparts, staying at their homes and sharing the dangers of their task. He strongly influenced the aggressive abolitionists who followed him. John Brown, for example, cited Torrey as one of the three abolitionists he looked to as models for his own efforts.

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Chapter 9 : Underground Railroad | Hoosier State Chronicles: Indiana's Digital Newspaper Program

Black abolitionist who called for the immediate emancipation of slaves; wrote the "Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World" in called for a bloody end to white supremacy; believed that the only way to end slavery was for slaves to physically revolt.

The Underground Railroad was a secret system that was developed to help African-American slaves escape to freedom. Comprised of safe houses and passageways along an undisclosed route, it was active in the United States in the early s. It is estimated that by , about , slaves fled to the free states or to Canada using the Railroad. The Underground Railroad comprised several notable participants, including conductors free individuals who guided the slaves , stationmasters who owned the safe houses and stockholders who donated money and other necessities. She escaped from slavery in and traveled to Pennsylvania by foot, guided by the North Star. After her successful escape, Tubman returned to Maryland several times to free her siblings, relatives and other slaves. Eventually, she went on to free about 70 slaves in 13 expeditions, earning the nickname Moses. One of the most famous conductors of the Underground Railroad, she was a master of ingenious tactics, such as working mostly during the winters, traveling at night, leaving on Saturdays and always carrying a weapon. She continued her anti-slavery work during the Civil War, when she served as a scout and a spy for the Union Army. At 12 years of age, he was sent to stay with the Auld family in Baltimore, where he was taught the alphabet. After changing hands several times and making several unsuccessful attempts, he was finally able to escape in on a train to New York City with encouragement from a free black woman named Anna Murray. The duo later married and adopted the surname Douglass. Douglass was associated with the Underground Railroad as a conductor on one of its last stops on the Canada line. A believer in the equality of all people, he came to be regarded as one of the most prominent African-American abolitionists, orators, statesmen and social reformers. His abolitionist newspaper was called The North Star. Douglass continued to work for African-Americans and women throughout his life. After he moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in , he joined the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery as a clerk in Often regarded as "The Father of the Underground Railroad," Still aided about slaves in their escape. He kept a record of all the fugitives he helped, including their biography, adopted aliases, and their destination. After the Civil War, he continued to work as a businessman, philanthropist and social activist, with a special interest in the welfare of African-American youth. He later moved to Philadelphia with his family and continued making trips to the South in an effort to free other slaves. Burris, together with his partner John Hun, began working with the Underground Railroad in , working to free slaves from Delaware and Maryland. In , he was caught during the act, which was a punishable offense in Delaware. After spending some months in prison, he was convicted and sentenced to be sold off as a slave. But members of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society collected money and sent an abolitionist by the name of Isaac Flint, who posed as a slave buyer and bought him at the auction. Both Burris and Flint fled Delaware, never to return. Ocea Thomas poses with a picture of her ancestor Samuel Burris. A staunch opponent of the slavery system, he played a leading role during the American Civil War. He was also one of the foremost members who supported the impeachment of president Andrew Johnson. While he was known for his abolitionist inclination, his association with the Underground Railroad came to light only in , when a concealed tunnel was unearthed during renovations to his Lancaster home was being renovated. Since then, evidence has been found that he regularly helped slaves get to freedom. After the Civil War, Stevens fought for equal rights of the freed people, including their right to vote. He was also in favor of radical reconstruction of the South, proposing redistribution of the land. By the age of 15, he started assisting his family in their efforts to help slaves escape. After learning that the state of Indiana had issued a territorial ban on slavery, he and his wife moved to Newport in Wayne County, Indiana, in Coffin was unofficially known as the president of the Underground Railroad, having helped about 3, people escape bondage. His Indiana home is often cited as the Grand Central Station of the network. After his move

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to Cincinnati in , Coffin continued his efforts against slavery. He defied the law and openly held anti-slavery lectures while his wife ran abolitionist sewing society meetings. After the Civil War, he worked to raise funds to provide relief material for the newly freed slaves. Later, all the Garrett boys, and most particularly Thomas, became involved in abolitionism. One of the leaders in the Underground Railroad, Garrett worked as a stationmaster on the last stop in Delaware. Since he openly challenged the slave system, he did not need secret rooms at his house. He was never arrested though the authorities were aware of his activities. Garrett was a friend and patron of Harriet Tubman, who made multiple stops at his station. It is said that he helped about 2, slaves to escape bondage before the Civil War. From there, he moved to Florida in where helped a group of slaves escape to the Bahamas on a boat he had built. Unfortunately, he was arrested in Key West and transferred to a prison in Pensacola where he stood trial. Pictured Illustration shows a U. Marshall branding the hand of Jonathan Walker with the initials SS for "slave stealer. Prior to his famous attack, he lived in Springfield, Massachusetts. At the time, it was a progressive city with a population that was very anti-slavery. Brown was instrumental in taking that anti-slavery attitude and helping transform the city into one of the more important stations in the Underground Railroad.