



V I P'S

**ABOLITION MOVEMENT
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD**

William Lloyd Garrison

William Lloyd Garrison was a pacifist, believing that only through moral persuasion could slavery end. He attempted through his writings to educate slaveholders about the evils of the system they supported. He was opposed to slave uprisings and other violent resistance, but he was firm in his belief that slavery must be totally abolished and used his newspaper “**The Liberator**” to advocate his views.



The Liberator, Vol. 1, No.1 (Boston, January 1, 1831) William Lloyd Garrison



TO THE PUBLIC

...Assenting to the "self evident truth" maintained in the American Declaration of Independence, "that all men are created equal, and Endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights-among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population. In Park-Street Church, on the Fourth of July, 1829, in an address on slavery, I unreflectingly assented to the popular but pernicious doctrine of gradual abolition.

I seize this opportunity to make a full and unequivocal recantation, and thus publicly to ask pardon of my God, of my country, and of my brethren the poor slaves, for having uttered a sentiment so full of timidity, injustice and absurdity. ...

I am aware, that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen; -but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest-I will not equivocate-I will not excuse-I will not retreat a single inch-AND I WILL BE HEARD. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead. ...



Garrison was a founding member of the National Anti-Slavery Society, and drafted the constitution and declaration of the society, which pledged its members to work for emancipation through non-violent actions of "MORAL SUASION" or "THE OVERTHROW OF PREJUDICE BY THE POWER OF LOVE."

On hearing Frederick Douglass speak at an annual meeting of the Massachusetts branch of the American Anti Slavery Society, Garrison recognized Douglass's potential as a speaker and hired him to be an agent for the Society. For more than three decades, from the first issue of his weekly paper in 1831, until after the end of the Civil War in 1865 when the last issue was published, Garrison spoke out eloquently and passionately against slavery and for the rights of America's black inhabitants.

Samuel Joseph May

Born in Boston Massachusetts in the year 1797, Samuel Joseph May attended Harvard College and Cambridge Divinity School. He then served several Unitarian congregations and was the principal of Lexington Massachusetts Normal School. Upon hearing William Lloyd Garrison lecture in Boston in 1830, May experienced an alteration in his feelings toward the institution of slavery. For two years he worked tirelessly with Garrison attempting to form the New England Anti- Slavery Society.

In 1834, he began to assist in the Underground Railroad. In 1835, May became a full-time agent for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. During his fourteen months as an agent he encountered threats of violence, yet still remained true to the cause and would not allow the intimidation to deter him.



In the year 1851, May took part in the “*Jerry Rescue*” . The rescue involved May, Jermain W. Loguen and other abolitionists planning the escape of the fugitive slave William “Jerry” McHenry from a Syracuse police station. Throughout the years May continuously preached, “*It is our own prejudice against the colour of these poor people that makes us consent to the tremendous wrongs they are suffering.*” Samuel Joseph May died in the year 1871, six years after the emancipation of the people for whom he had so vigorously fought for.

Thomas Garrett

In August 1789, four months after the inauguration of George Washington, Thomas Garrett was born in Pennsylvania. The Garrett's were Quakers, members of a faith that openly opposed slavery. Soon Thomas would become a fine example of faith in action.



Little is known of his early life but its defining moment came in 1813 when he returned home to terrifying news. A free black woman who worked as a household servant in the Garrett home had been kidnapped to be sold into slavery. Thomas Garrett immediately went after the kidnappers. He found them and returned home with the woman. This terrible episode led him to dedicate himself to the struggle for freedom for all men and women.

Garrett married Mary Sharpless in 1813, and they moved to Wilmington Delaware in 1822. He ran an iron and blacksmithing business. He became friends with many of the world's great abolitionists, including Harriet Tubman.

From his home, Garrett provided refuge, food, clothing, and hope to a steady stream of runaway slaves. Helping runaway slaves was dangerous in the decades before the Civil War – especially in a slave state such as Delaware. The slaves were in great jeopardy, but those giving them aid were breaking the law by stealing property.



In 1848 Garrett and John Hunn, a fellow abolitionist, were brought to trial in the U.S. Circuit Court at New Castle for aiding runaway slaves. The trial took three days, and both men were found guilty. Hunn was fined \$2,500 and Garrett \$5,400. Although he was not required to pay the entire amount, Garrett almost lost everything he had worked for. At the age of 60 he would be forced to begin again. The judge said: *“Thomas, I hope you will never be caught at this business again.”* But Garrett replied, *“Friend, I haven't a dollar in the world, but if thee knows a fugitive who needs a breakfast, send him to me.”* Afterwards he again affirmed his conviction: *“I should have done violence to my convictions, had I not made use of all the lawful means in my power to liberate those people, and assist them to become men and women rather than leave them in the condition of chattels personal.”*

LETTER FROM THOMAS GARRETT (U. G. R. R. DEPOT).

WILMINGTON, 3mo. 23d, 1856.

DEAR FRIEND, WILLIAM STILL:—Since I wrote thee this morning informing thee of the safe arrival of the Eight from Norfolk, Harry Craige has informed me, that he has a man from Delaware that he proposes to take along, who arrived since noon. He will take the man, woman and two children from here with him, and the four men will get in at Marcus Hook. Thee may take Harry Craige by the hand as a brother, true to the cause; he is one of our most efficient aids on the Rail Road, and worthy of full confidence. May they all be favored to get on safe. The woman and three children are no common stock. I assure thee finer specimens of humanity are seldom met with. I hope herself and children may be enable to find her husband, who has been absent some years, and the rest of their days to happy together. I am, as ever, thy friend, THOS. GARRETT.

Like many abolitionists, Garrett was openly persecuted and hated. In 1860, his outspoken manner prompted a resolution from the Maryland state legislature calling for a \$10,000 reward for anyone able to arrest Garrett on the grounds of slave stealing.

On March 30, 1870, the 15th Amendment to the United States Constitution became law. Blacks in Wilmington celebrated by carrying the elderly Garrett on their shoulders through the streets, calling him '*Our Moses*'. Garrett had personally helped more than 2,700 slaves on their way to freedom. Garrett responded: "*I rejoice that I have lived to see this day, when the colored people of this favored land, by law, have equal, privileges with the most favored.*"

At his funeral as many as 1,500 people paid their respects to this great humanitarian. William Lloyd Garrison, a powerful force for abolition, described Thomas Garrett in this way: "*What he promised, he fulfilled; what he attempted, he seldom or never failed to accomplish; what he believed, he dared to proclaim upon the housetop; what he ardently desired and incessantly longed for was the reign of universal peace and righteousness.*"

Garrett left few personal records to history, but some of his letters to friends, to Harriet Beecher Stowe (author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*), William Still (author of *The Underground Railroad*), and newspapers survive to give us personal glimpses into the his life and the secret workings of the Underground Railroad.



Levi Coffin



- Levi and Catharine Coffin were legendary in helping many former slaves escape to freedom in the North.
- Levi Coffin is often referred to as the President of the Underground Railroad.

To the thousand of escaped slaves, this brick home in Newport Indiana, became a safe haven on their journey to Canada. This was the home of Levi and Catharine Coffin, North Carolina Quakers who opposed slavery. Once in the house, the presence of the runaway slaves could be concealed for up to several weeks, until they gained enough strength to continue their journey. So successful was the Coffin sanctuary that, while in Newport, not a single slave failed to reach freedom.



During the twenty years they lived in Newport, the Coffins helped more than 2,000 slaves reach safety.



One of the many slaves who hid in the Coffin home was 'Eliza', whose story is told in "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*". In 1847, the Coffins moved to Cincinnati where Levi operated a wholesale warehouse which supplied goods to free labor stores. The Coffins continued to assist the cause, helping another 1,300 slaves escape.

“...Soon after we located at Newport, I found that we were on a line of the U.G.R.R. [Underground Railroad]. Fugitives often passed through that place, and generally stopped among the colored people.... I learned that the fugitive slaves who took refuge with these people were often pursued and captured, the colored people not being very skillful in concealing them, or shrewd in making arrangements to forward them to Canada... I was willing to receive and aid as many fugitives as were disposed to come to my house. I knew that my wife's feelings and sympathies regarding this matter were the same as mine, and that she was willing to do her part....

In the winter of 1826-27, fugitives began to come to our house, and as it became more widely known on different routes that the slaves fleeing from bondage would find a welcome and shelter at our house, and be forwarded safely on their journey, the number increased. Friends in the neighborhood, who had formerly stood aloof from the work, fearful of the penalty of the law, were encouraged to engage in it when they saw the fearless manner in which I acted, and the success that attended my efforts....

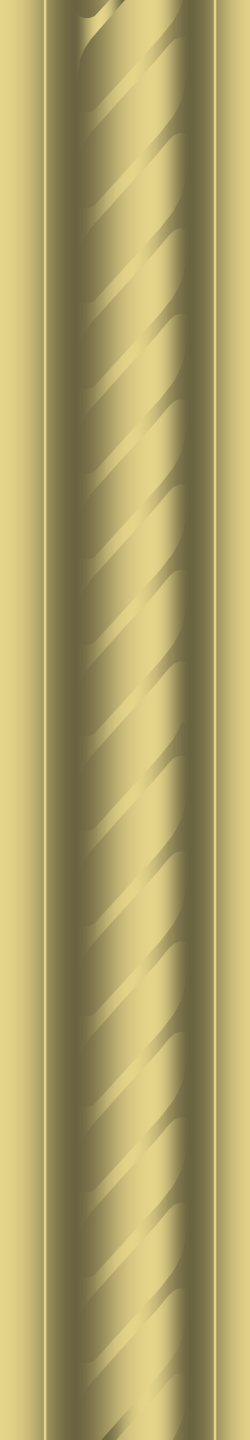
...the Underground Railroad business increased as time advanced, and it was attended with heavy expenses, which I count not have borne had not my affairs been prosperous. I found it necessary to keep a team and a wagon always at command, to convey the fugitive slaves on their journey. Sometimes, when we had large companies, one or two other teams and wagons were required. These journeys had to be made at night, often through deep mud and bad roads, and along by ways that were seldom traveled. Every precaution to evade pursuit had to be used, as the hunters were often on the track, and sometimes ahead of the slaves....

I soon became extensively known to the friends of the slaves, at different points on the Ohio River, where fugitives generally crossed, and to those northward of us on the various routes leading to Canada.... Three principal lines from the South converged at my house: one from Cincinnati, one from Madison, and one from Jeffersonville, Indiana. The roads were always in running order, the connections were good, the conductors active and zealous, and there was no lack of passengers. Seldom a week passed without our receiving passengers by the mysterious road....”

-Levi Coffin, *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin* (Cincinnati, 1876)

Hiram Wilson

Born in 1803, in the town of Acworth, New Hampshire. Wilson attended the Lane Theological Seminary, where he became active in the Abolitionist Lane Rebel Association. He later left lane and finished his education at Oberlin College. After the completion of his education, Wilson was chosen by the American Anti-Slavery Society to become an agent in Upper Canada. Settling in Toronto in 1836, he began to travel all over Upper Canada establishing schools for fugitive slaves.



In the year 1842, Wilson helped to establish the British American Institute, a manual labour school around which the Dawn settlement developed. Wilson's first wife Hannah Maria Hubbard, a Presbyterian abolitionist also organized and taught at a school for women in the settlement during the 1840's. Wilson later relocated to St. Catharines where he operated fugitive slave relief camps.

In a letter published in the May 6th, 1852 edition of the *Voice of the Fugitive* Wilson wrote about his work in St. Catharines:

“ I am happy to announce the formation of a Refugee Slaves Friends Society in St. Catharines which already numbers over seventy members and includes some of the most influential men in the place. Of these I would notice particularly the Honourable William Hamilton Merritt, M.P., Elias Adams, Esq., Mayor of St. Catharines, Colonel John Clark, Collector of Customs and James Lamb, Esq., Customs House officer and editor of the St. Catharines Journal.”

“Coloured people here are heart in hand in the cause. Three of them are on the executive committee of five, of which Mr. Lamb is chairman.”

“The object of the society is to bear testimony against slavery by extending sympathy and friendly aid to refugees from slavery who from time to time are taking shelter in this section of Canada and by promoting the education of their children.”

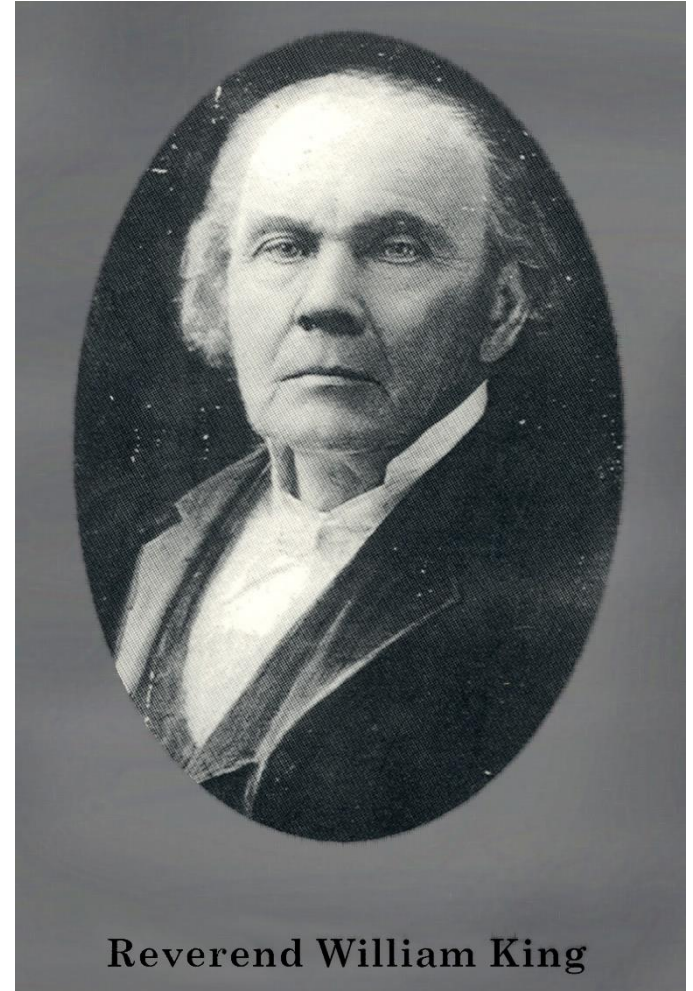
“The organization took place in our spacious town hall on the evening of the 16th. Among the resolutions that were presented and passed by acclamation are the following. The enslavement of man is a flagrant sin against God and an outrage upon humanity, not to be countenanced by civilized people who revered the name of God or bear the Christian name.”

*Faithfully and truly yours
For Christ and Humanity
Hiram Wilson*

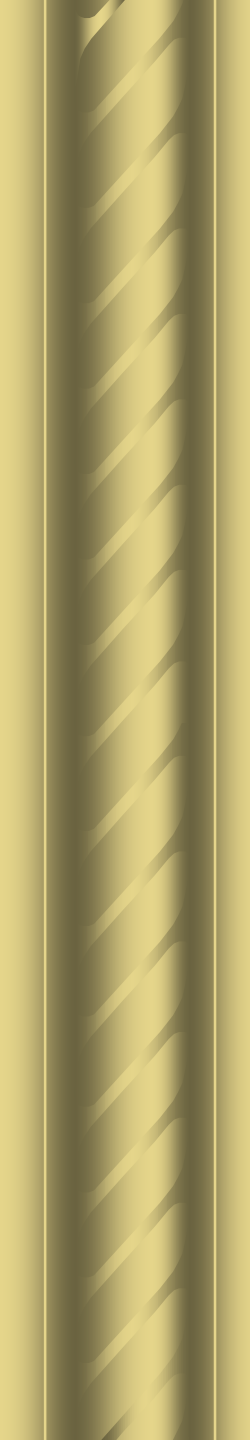
Hiram Wilson left his missionary and relief efforts in 1861 and in 1864 died, just one year short of seeing the people he untiringly fought for set free.

Rev. William King

Born in Londonderry, Ireland, William King attended Scotland's Glasgow University. He moved with his family to the United States, then moved alone to Louisiana where he accepted a teaching position. While in Louisiana, he married a planter's daughter, and became a slave owners. From this position as a slave owner, King began to see slavery as an institution that had to come to an end.



Reverend William King

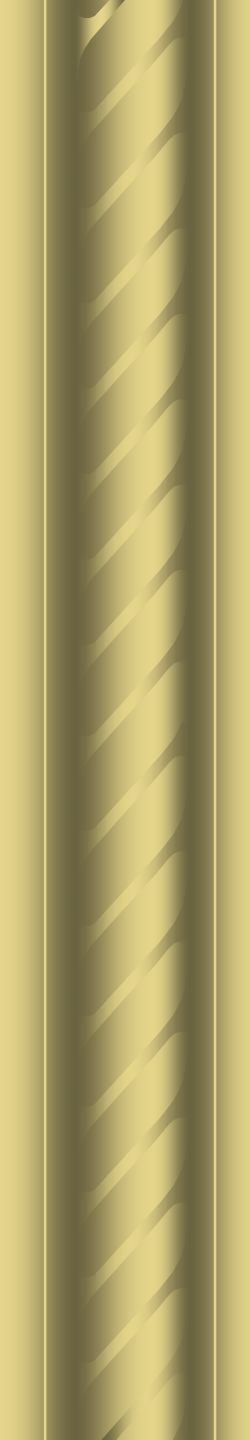


He returned to Scotland in 1843 to continue his theological studies, and became a licensed minister in 1846. During this period, William King lost his wife, son, daughter, and father-in-law, and found himself a known abolitionist, now a slave owner through inheritance.

On returning to the United States, King knew that he could not be the owner of people. Yet, if he were to simply free them, he knew they could eventually be sold back into slavery. King proposed to the Toronto Synod of the Presbyterian Church a plan for the improvement of blacks in Canada:

“I believe that these people who had escaped slavery, when placed in favourable circumstances, were able and willing to support themselves and become respectable members of society; and to accomplish that I believe it was necessary to provide homes where parents could support themselves by their own industry and their children with the blessings of a Christian education.”

(Rev. William King)



With the help of the Synod and the Governor General of the Canada's Lord Elgin, King purchased 9000 acres in Canada West and the Elgin Settlement was established in 1849. The Elgin Settlement was one of the most successful settlements settled for fugitive slave. This success was due to King's beliefs that if the Blacks were only given a chance they could flourish, and that education along with religion were the key aspects to the settlements triumph.

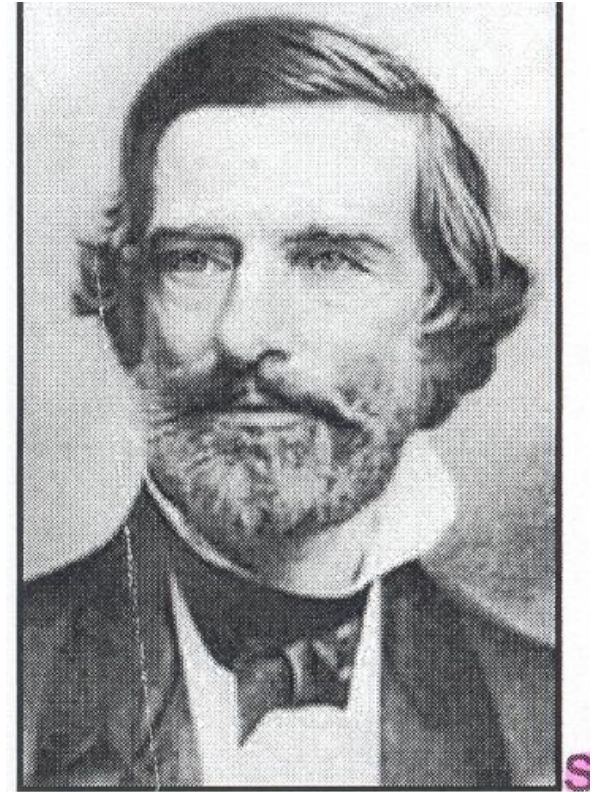
While in the settlement King was also actively involved in the Underground Railroad. King also sheltered runaways once they got to freedom. William King passed away on July 5th, 1895, leaving behind a legacy that would last forever.



Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe

Born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1808, Samuel Howe was educated at Brown University in Rhode Island. He proceeded to study medicine at Harvard University. In 1843, Howe married Julia Ward, a fellow abolitionist, writer and lecturer. Mrs. Howe was famous for writing the semi-official Civil War song of the Union army:

“The Battle Hymn of the Republic” in 1862, and for being the first to proclaim Mother’s Day in 1870.



In the 1840's - 1850's, Howe was a strong abolitionist, and the founder and the editor of an abolitionist daily newspaper, *The Commonwealth*. Howe used the newspaper to crusade against the harsher Fugitive Slave Law incorporated in the Compromise of 1850. Howe organized lectures against slavery and served on the Boston Vigilance Committee, which rescued and protected runaway slaves.



Howe was depicted as a “ *...not so peaceful abolitionist...*,” certainly favouring violence if it was necessary to end the institution of slavery. As a supporter of John Brown’s actions in Kansas between 1854 to 1857, it is believed Howe made a financial contribution to Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry in 1859. Although a Congressional committee questioned Howe about his alleged scheme with Brown, he was never prosecuted. In 1863, Howe visited Refugee Settlements as a part of his work with the delegation to inquire into the condition of freed slaves referred to as “freedmen.” He wrote a report of his findings to the United States Senate.

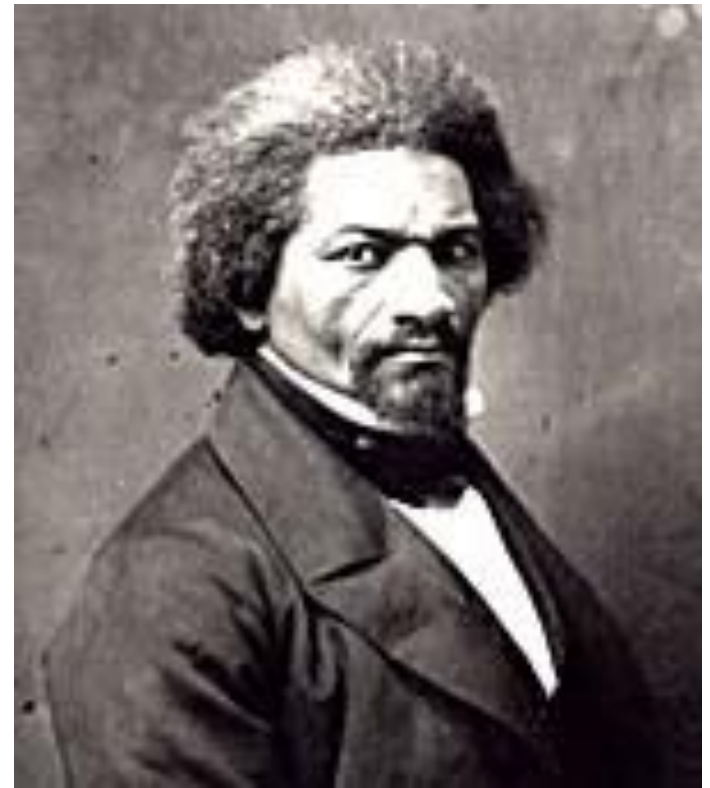
Frederick Douglass

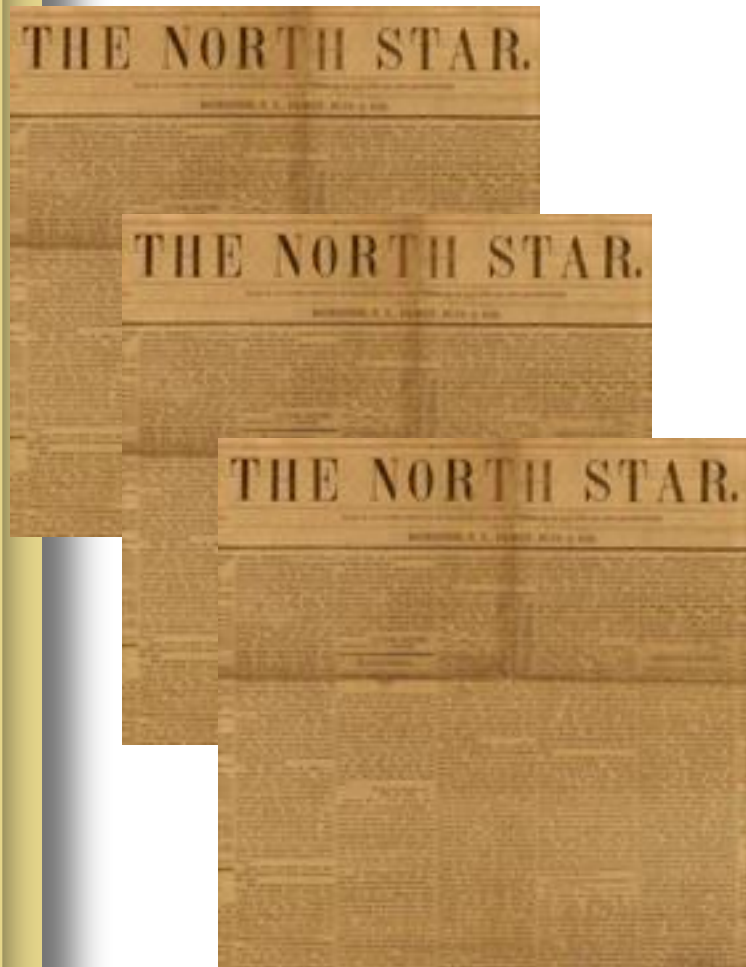


He was born in slavery, in 1817, in Maryland. Douglass, at the age of 8 was sent to Baltimore, where he was employed as a house servant and later as a ship's caulker. During his years in Baltimore, Douglass acquired the rudiments of an education. In 1838, on his second attempt, he escaped slavery, traveled to New York City, married a free Baltimore black woman, and settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

In 1841, Douglass was appointed as a lecture agent for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and he began a long and sometimes controversial career in antislavery reform.

Eventually, he was regarded by many as the leading black abolitionist spokesman in the United States. Douglass's rapid development as a gifted orator and his growth as an antislavery thinker during the first four years of his career led many to doubt his slave origins.

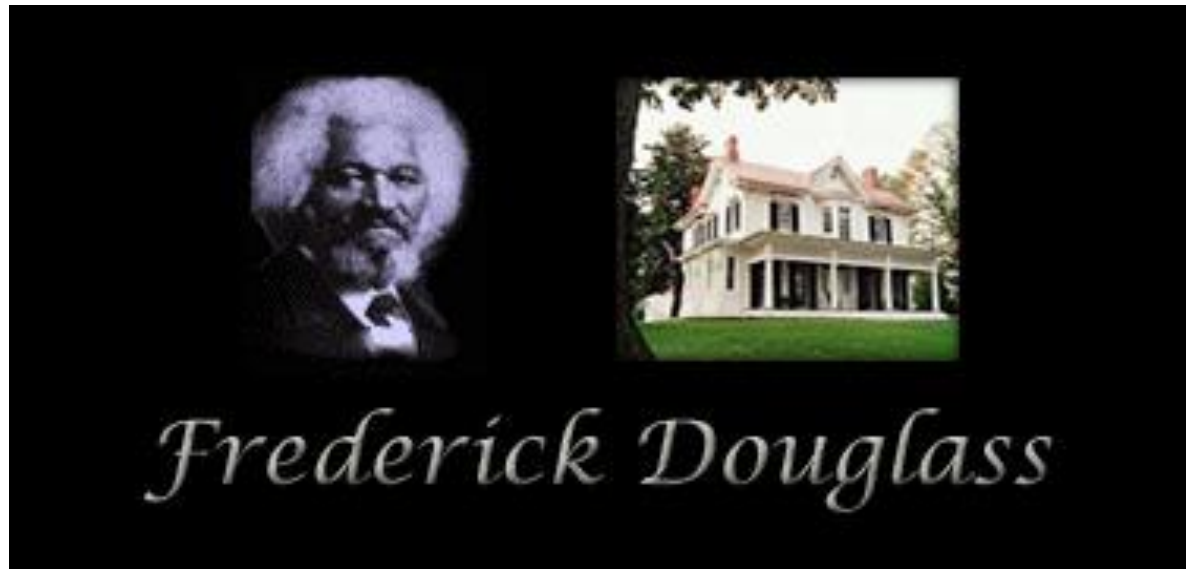




To allay their doubts Douglass wrote *“The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass”* in 1845, the first of three autobiographies and the most widely read and highly acclaimed piece of slave literature in the nineteenth century. After publishing it, Douglass made a well-received tour of Great Britain and, during the tour acquired funds to purchase his freedom and to begin an antislavery newspaper – the *“North Star”*.

Between 1848-1853,
Douglass became
political and began
interpreting the U.S.
Constitution as an
antislavery document.





He called for resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law, criticized Blacks who advocated emigration to Canada, (although he briefly embraced emigration in the 1860's) and supported the insurrection of John Brown at Harper's Ferry, though he did not participate in it.

“A general sentiment of mankind is that a man who will not fight for himself when he has the means of doing so, is not worth being fought for by others, and this sentiment is just. For a man who does not value freedom for himself, will never value it for others, or put himself to any inconvenience to gain it for others. Such a man the world says, may lie down until he has sense to stand up. It is useless and cruel to put a man on his legs if the next moment his head is to be brought against a curb stone. A man of that type will never lay the world under any obligation to him, but will be a moral pauper, a drag on the wheels of society. And if he too be identified with the peculiar variety of the race, he will entail disgrace upon his race, as well as upon himself. The world in which we live is very accommodating to all sorts of people. It will cooperate with them in any measure which they propose. It will help those who earnestly help themselves, and will hinder those who hinder themselves. It is very polite and never offers its services unasked. It’s favours to individuals are measured by an unerring principle in this to wit; respect those who respect themselves, and despise those who despise themselves. It is not within the power of unaided human nature to persevere in pitying a people who are insensitive to their own wrongs, and indifferent to the attainment of their own rights.”

The poet was as true to common sense as to poetry when he said “who would be free, themselves must himself strike the blow.” When O’Connell with all Ireland at his back was supposed to be contending for the just liberties and rights of Ireland, the sympathies of mankind were with him, and even his enemies were compelled to respect his patriotism. Cossuth, fighting for Hungary with his pen long after she had fallen by the sword, commanded the sympathy and support of the liberal world, till his own hopes died out.... These are not the maxims and teachings of a cold-hearted world. Christianity itself teaches that a man shall provide for his own house. This covers the whole ground of nations as well as individuals. Nations no more than individuals can innocently be improvident. They should provide for all wants – mental, moral and religious and against all evils to which they are liable as nations. In the great struggle now progressing, for the freedom and elevation of our people, we should be found at work with all our might, resolved that no man or set of men shall be more abundant in labours according to the measure of our ability than ourselves.”

Frederick Douglass



Jermain W. Loguen



(1813-1872), underground railroad agent, and African Methodist Episcopal Zion clergyman, was born in Davidson County, Tennessee. His slave name was Jarm Logue.

He was the son of a slave mother and a white slaveholder, David Logue. When Logue sold mother and son to a brutal master, the slave determined to obtain his freedom.



About 1835, Quakers in Kentucky and southern Indiana helped him escape to Hamilton, Upper Canada. There, he learned to read and worked for a time, before settling in western New York State. After studying at the Oneida Institute for three years, he opened schools for black children in Utica and Syracuse.



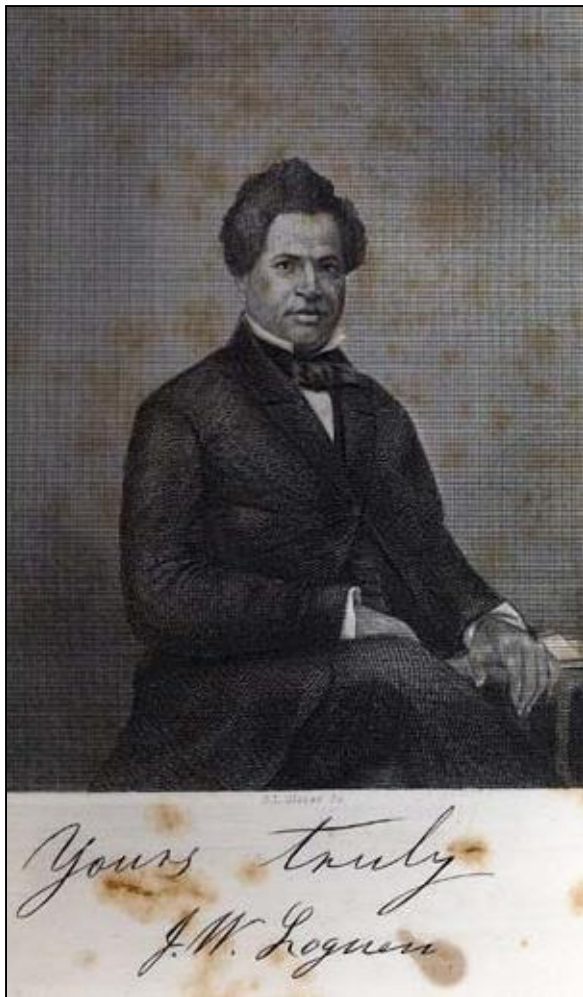
Jermain Loguen's daughter Amelia married the son of Frederick Douglass.

During the 1840's, Loguen began to work closely with Frederick Douglass. He managed activities in the underground railroad, in Syracuse and stepped up this work after passage of the Fugitive Slave Law. After assisting in the rescue of a fugitive slave, at Syracuse, Loguen fled to St. Catharines, Canada West.

He did missionary work and temperance lecturing among the fugitive slaves. The Anti-slavery Society of Canada also engaged him to give several antislavery speeches in Toronto. Loguen returned to Syracuse in late 1852 and resumed his underground railroad activities. He claimed to have assisted nearly 1,500 fugitive slaves in the decade before the Civil War.

Loguen was an outstanding antislavery orator and a leading black activist. After passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, 1850, he became more militant, urging local abolitionists to resist that law at any cost.

By 1854, he openly supported use of violent means to end slavery, and he recruited men for John Brown's Harper's Ferry raid, although no evidence exists to indicate that he was involved in the planning of the raid.



(From the book,
"Jermain Wesley Loguen as a Slave and a Freeman")

"What is life to me if I am to be a slave in Tennessee? My neighbors! I have lived with you many years, and you know me. My home is here, and my children were born here. I am bound to Syracuse by pecuniary interests, and social and family bonds. And do you think I can be taken away from you and from my wife and children, and be a slave in Tennessee? Has the President and his Secretary sent this enactment up here, to you, Mr. Chairman, to enforce on me in Syracuse and will you obey him?"

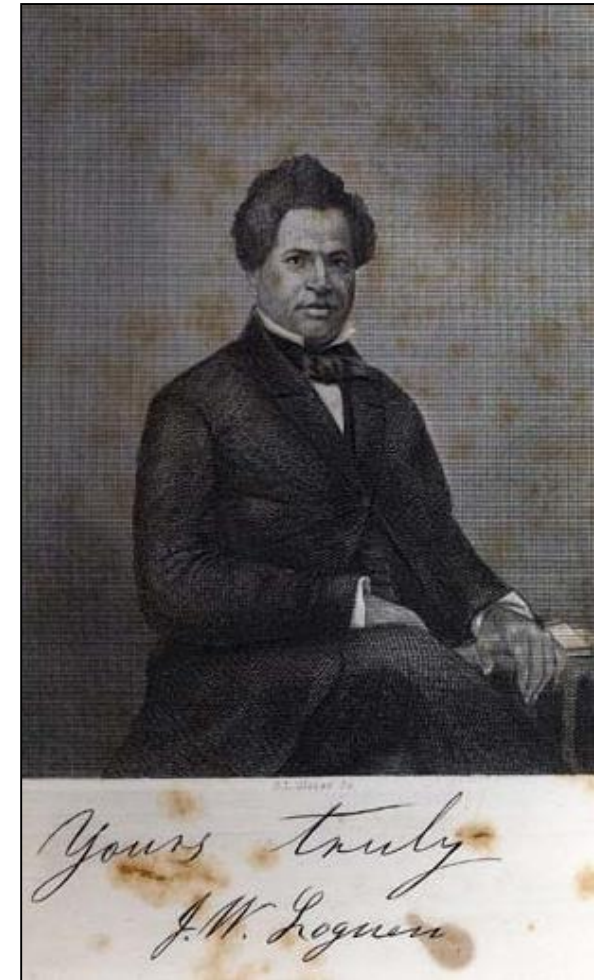
"Some kind and good friends advise me to quit my country, and stay in Canada, until this tempest is passed. I doubt not the sincerity of such counselors.Those friends have not canvassed this subject. I have. They are called suddenly to look at it. I have looked at it steadily, calmly, resolutely, and at length defiantly, for a long time."

“I tell you the people of Syracuse and of the whole North must meet this tyranny and crush it by force, or be crushed by it. This hellish enactment has precipitated the conclusion that white men must live in dishonorable submission, and colored men as slaves, or they must give their physical as well as intellectual powers to the defence of human rights. The time has come to change the tones of submission into tones of defiance, - and to tell Mr. Fillmore and Mr. Webster, if they propose to execute this measure upon us, to send on their bloodhounds.”

“I owe my freedom to the God who made me, and who stirred me to claim it against all other beings in God’s universe.....I received my freedom from Heaven, and with it came the command to defend my title to it. I have long since resolved to do nothing and suffer nothing that can, in any way, imply that I am indebted to any power but the Almighty for my manhood and personality.”

“Now you are assembled here, the strength of this city is here to express their sense of this fugitive act, and to proclaim to the despots at Washington whether it shall be enforced here – whether you will permit the government to return me and other fugitive who have sought an asylum among you, to the Hell of slavery. The question is with you. If you will give us up, say so, and we will shake the dust from our feet and leave you. But we believe better things.”

“Whatever be your decision, my ground is taken. I have declared it everywhere. It is known over the State and out of the State - over the line in the North, and over the line in the South. I don’t respect this law – I don’t fear it – I won’t obey it ! It outlaws me, and I outlaw it, and the men who attempt to enforce it on me. I place the governmental officials on the ground that they place me. I will not live a slave, and if force is employed to re-enslave me I shall make preparations to meet the crisis as becomes a man. If you will stand by me – and I believe you will do it, for your freedom and honor are involved as well as mine – it requires no microscope to see that - I say if you will stand with us in resistance to this measure , you will be the saviours of your country.”



(From the book, Jermain Wesley Loguen as a Slave and a Freeman)

Harriet Tubman

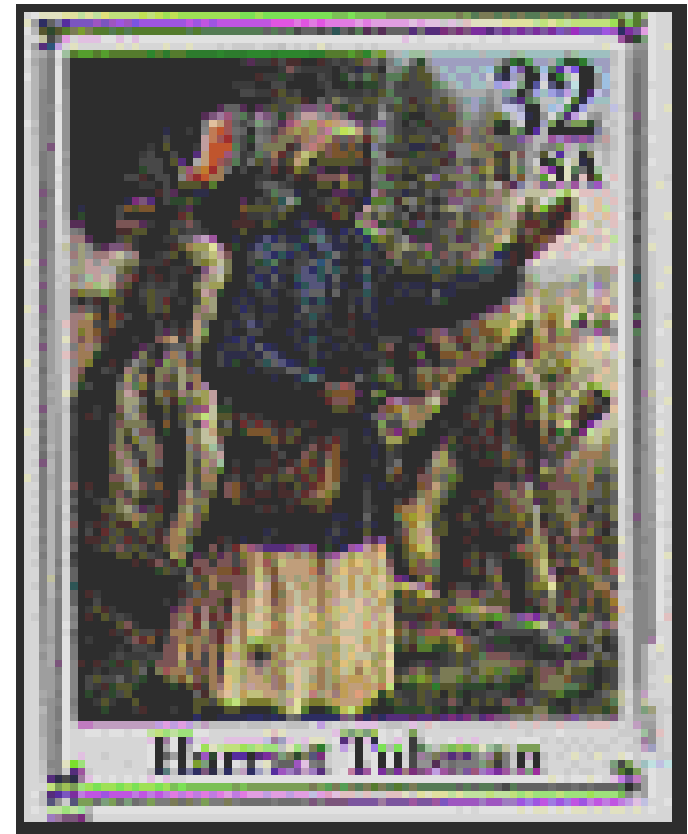


Harriet Tubman is perhaps the most well-known of all the Underground Railroad's 'conductors'. During a ten-year span she made 19 trips into the South and escorted over 300 slaves to freedom, and in all of her journeys she *“never lost a single passenger”*.

Tubman was born a slave in Maryland's Dorchester County around 1820. At age five or six, she began to work as a house servant. Seven years later she was sent to work in the fields. While she was still in her early teens, she suffered an injury that would follow her for the rest of her life.

Around 1844 she married a free black named John Tubman and took his last name. (She was born Araminta Ross; she later changed her first name to Harriet, after her mother.)

In 1849, in fear that she, along with the other slaves on the plantation, was to be sold, Tubman resolved to run away. She returned to the South again and again to assist family and other slaves in their escapes.



SHE WAS WANTED THROUGHOUT THE SOUTH.

*By 1856,
Tubman's
capture would
have brought a
\$40,000
reward from
the South.*

\$200 Reward.

RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of Thursday, the 20th of September

FIVE NEGRO SLAVES,

Two of whom Negro women his wife, and three children.

The man is a black negro, full height, very stout, he has a Bible with him. He is about forty years of age, and calls himself Washington Hall, and is known by the name of Washington. He is probably married, possibly being well built as every-headed man, and is of good address. Young of his own age.

She is his wife, is about thirty years of age, a bright healthy woman, and speaks stout and strong.

The eldest of the children is a boy, of the name of WILLIAM, seven years of age, a dark complexion, very active. It probably has a new dress on.

SIXTEEN, the second child, is a girl, six years of age, rather a dark complexion, but a bright and intelligent child.

WALTER, the youngest, is a boy, two years old, a light complexion. Very fat, and speaks highly. He probably also wears a dark cap. It is supposed, he will be found to have a smattering of the word Washington and they have heard of no more Mr. Lewis, with the subscriber, he about 12 years.

It is supposed that they are making their way to Chicago, and that a white man, accompanied them, if he will stand ready to catch and have custody in a reasonable manner.

A reward of \$200 will be paid for their apprehension, so that I can get them, if taken within one month of the date of this notice, and \$100 if taken beyond that, and another one hundred dollars, and other reasonable charges, if delivered to the subscriber, or to EDWARD ALLEN, Esq., of St. Louis. This notice is published, for the first time, in the issue of Thursday, 20th of September, 1856.

WM. RUSSELL.

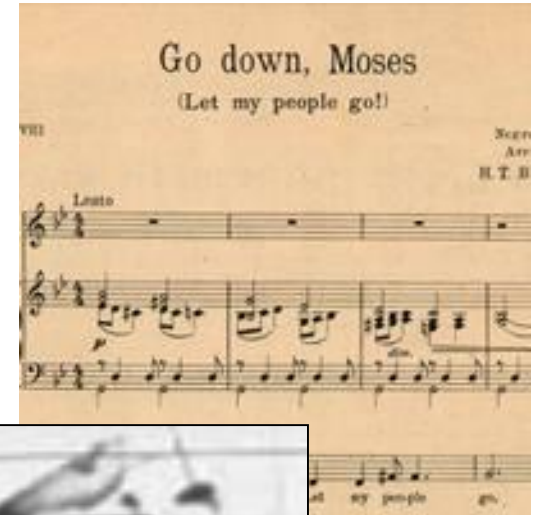
ST. LOUIS, MO., 5, 1856.

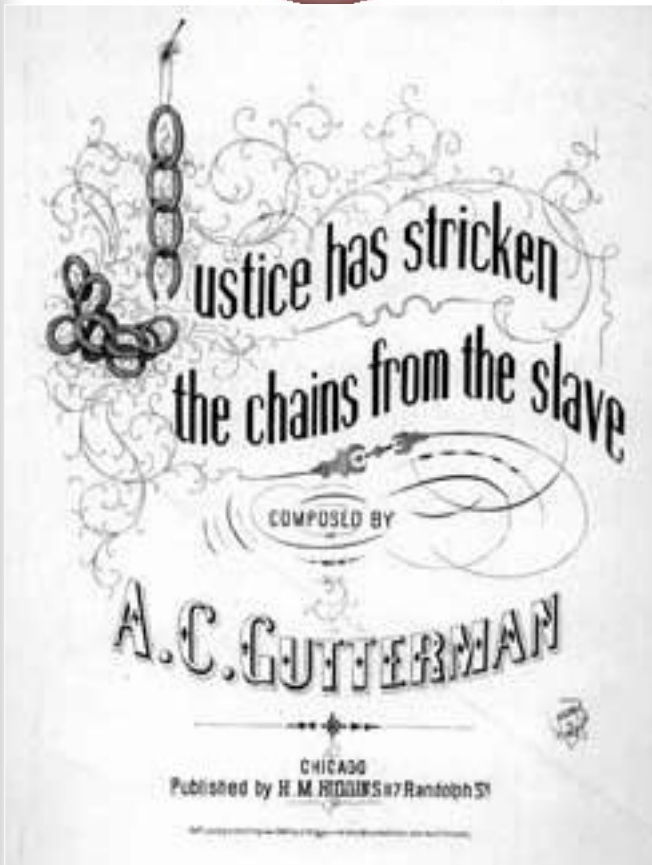


Tubman had made the perilous trip to slave country 19 times by 1860, including one especially challenging journey in which she rescued her 70 year old parents.

The Moses of her people!

Becoming friends with the leading abolitionists of the day, Tubman took part in antislavery meetings. Her home base and the home she made for her aging parents was in St. Catharines.





“I grew up like a neglected weed. Ignorant of liberty, having no experience of it. I was not happy or contented. Every time I seen a white man I was afraid of being carried away. I think slavery is the next thing to hell. If a person would send another into bondage I think he would be bad enough to send him to hell if he could. I had reasoned this out in my mind. There was one of two things I had a right to; liberty or death. If I could not have one I would have the other, for no man should take me alive. I would fight for my liberty as long as my strength lasted. And when the time came for me to go, the Lord would let them take me.”

Harriet Tubman

William Still

William Still was born in 1821, in New Jersey, the youngest of the eighteen children of Levin Still, a farmer, and his wife Charity. Still's father, a Maryland slave, purchased his own freedom and changed his name from Steel to Still. His mother escaped from slavery. With a minimum of formal schooling, William studied on his own, reading whatever was available to him. He left home at age twenty to work as a farmhand and odd jobs. In 1844, he moved to Philadelphia where he found employment as a handyman, married, and had four children.

In 1847 the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery hired Still as clerk, and he soon began assisting fugitives from slavery who passed through the city. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the society revived its Vigilance Committee to aid and support fugitive slaves and made Still chairman. Still's continued efforts for self education, his commitment to anti-slavery, and his concern for fugitive slaves led to his increasing responsibilities in the society and to his appointment in 1852 as chairman of the General Vigilance Committee of Philadelphia. Still reorganized and reinvigorated the committee by building a network of safe hiding places for fugitives in the city's black community, raising funds for fugitives and carefully monitoring the activity of slave catchers in Pennsylvania. Under Still's guidance, the committee aided almost 800 fugitives by the time of the Civil War.

LETTER FROM J. BIGELOW, ESQ.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 22d, 1854.

Mr. William Still:—Sir—I have just received a letter from my friend, Wm. Wright, of York Sulphur Springs, Pa., in which he says, that by writing to you, I may get some information about the transportation of some property from this neighborhood to your city or vicinity.

A person who signs himself Wm. Penn, lately wrote to Mr. Wright, saying he would pay \$300 to have this service performed. It is for the conveyance of *only* one SMALL package; but it has been discovered since, that the removal cannot be so safely effected without taking *two larger* packages with it. I understand that the three are to be brought to this city and stored in safety, as soon as the forwarding merchant in Philadelphia shall say he is ready to send on. The storage, etc., here, will cost a trifle, but the \$300 will be promptly paid for the whole service. I think Mr. Wright's daughter, Hannah, has also seen you. I am also known to Prof. C. D. Cleveland, of your city. If you answer this promptly, you will soon hear from Wm. Penn himself.

Very truly yours,

J. BIGELOW.

Brothers Reunited !

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY OF CANADA.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, held March 19th, the following Resolution was unanimously passed :—

“ That this Committee heard of the formation of the ‘ Anti-Slavery Society of Canada,’ at Toronto, with much satisfaction, that they will be pleased to maintain correspondence with the Society, and unite their efforts for the promotion of the great cause of human freedom on this Continent and throughout the world ; and that copies of Anti-Slavery publications be forwarded to them.”

LEWIS TUPPAN,

Sec. pro tem.

He maintained close contact with Canadian black leaders and traveled to Canada to examine black communities. As chairman of the Vigilance Committee, he recorded the personal history of each fugitive slave he assisted. One of the fugitives he helped was Peter Still, his own brother who had been left in slavery when his mother escaped. Finding Peter after a forty year separation inspired Still to keep careful records of the former slaves, and those records later provided source material for his book on the Underground Railroad.

While with the Vigilance Committee, Still helped hundreds of fugitive slaves, and several times he nearly went to prison for his efforts. In 1855, when former slaves in Canada were being maligned in the press, he and his brother traveled there to investigate for themselves. His reports were much more positive and optimistic than the others and helped counteract rumors that former slaves were lazy and lawless. Five years later he cited cases of successful former slaves in Canada in a newspaper article that argued for freeing all the slaves.

Although, Still had not approved of John Brown's (1800-1859) raid on Harpers Ferry, afterward Brown's wife stayed with the Still's for a time, as did several of Brown's accomplices. Still's work in the antislavery office ended in 1861, but he remained active in the society, which turned to working for African-American civil rights. He served as the society's vice president for eight years and as president from 1896 to 1901.

William Still's book, "*The Underground Railroad*" (1872), is unique. It is the only work on that subject written by an African American and also, the only day to day record of the workings of a vigilance committee. While he gave credit to "*the grand little army of abolitionists*", he put the spotlight on the fugitives themselves, saying "*the race had no more eloquent advocates than its own self-emancipated champions*".



Besides recording their courageous deeds, Still hoped that the book would demonstrate the intellectual ability of his race. Along with the records of slave escapes he included excerpts from newspapers, legal documents, correspondence of abolitionists and former slaves, and some biographical sketches. He published the book himself and sent out agents to sell it.



William Still died in 1902. The next day's New York Times describe him as the "Father of the Underground Railroad"

William Still died in 1902. He is sometimes called the "Father" of the Underground Railroad.