

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

THE UNTOLD STORIES

Y V E T T E L O N G

7th grade

CHAPTER 6

MATH AND SCIENCE

The colonial period in the United States was a time of relative isolation, but a great opportunity, for scientists and inventors. There are many famous examples of founding fathers who also worked as scientists, such as Benjamin Franklin, who conducted experiments that led to greater understandings of electricity, and Thomas Jefferson, who led discoveries in agriculture and geography for the British colonists. Many scientists became attracted to the colonies as a place where they could test their ideas in a freer environment.

Although during this time, there were fewer opportunities for African Americans to become scientists and mathematicians, there are still several notable figures during this period. African Americans were mathematicians, agrarians, scientists, and naturalists, beginning from before the start of the country. Many were self-taught or learned from their parents or took classes in local Quaker schools. The Quakers were a religious community that actively fought slavery and believed in the equality of all human beings. Benjamin Lay (1682 – February 8, 1759) was an Anglo-American Quaker humanitarian and abolitionist. He is best known for his early and strident anti-slavery activities which would culminate in dramatic protests.



One such example of an outstanding African American scientist is Benjamin Banneker, a free African-American almanac author, surveyor, naturalist, and farmer. Born to a former slave father and a free African American mother, Banneker largely taught himself in the fields of astronomy and biology. His grandmother and a Quaker schoolmaster taught him the basics, such as arithmetic, reading, and writing as a child.

As he grew older, he began writing almanacs and became extremely successful as an author. His almanacs were so useful because he had an extraordinary understanding of astronomy. Yet, he wrote on many other topics while cultivating his own land, practicing his recommendations. During his lifetime, some of his accomplishments included surveying the original boundaries of the District of Columbia, corresponding with Thomas Jefferson about the Declaration of Independence, and his writings on solar eclipses. Although many of his writings caught fire during his funeral, several of his almanacs remain in use, solidifying his place as one of the most notable early African American scientists. Banneker is an example of one of the most important early African American scientists.

Additionally, Thomas Fuller was also a renowned mathematician during the eighteenth century. Commonly referred to as the "Virginia Calculator," Fuller was taken from the present-day region of Liberia and Benin at the age of fourteen and lived in Virginia. He was never formally taught how to read or write, yet possessed incredible mathematical ability. His skills were used as proof that African Americans were equal to their white counterparts in intelligence. His natural talent and mathematical knowledge astonished everyone who came into contact with him.

These men are examples of the exceptional skills and talent that African Americans held and used during this early period of American history. As agriculture, astronomy, chemistry, and many other fields

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

were just being established, this was a time when many were able to contribute. Some, like Banneker, even used his prominence to advocate for abolition and put pressure on prominent politicians, such as Thomas Jefferson.

By the end of 1774, conditions in the colonies were turbulent, and the discussion of and concerns about revolution were on everyone's mind. Within two years, Thomas Jefferson would make a first stab at declaring the colonies as the United States of America and ending slavery at the same time. His success in declaring independence, and his failure in ending slavery, would set the stage for much of what happened in the United States of America in the 100 years that would follow.

CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Early colonial America was a fruitful place for:
 - a. Scientists
 - b. Naturalists
 - c. Astronomers
 - d. All of the above
2. What answer best describes the Quakers?
 - a. They were a religious community known to teach blacks to read and write
 - b. They were Anglo-Americans who believed in the equality of human beings
 - c. They were abolitionists involved in the protest against slavery
 - d. All of the above
3. TRUE OR FALSE: Quakers were abolitionists who actively fought for the end of slavery.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. Why is Benjamin Banneker remembered?
 - a. He could read and write
 - b. His writings on abolition (the end of slavery)
 - c. His astronomical discoveries and almanacs
 - d. His extensive agricultural production and his biological writing
5. With whom did Benjamin Banneker have an infamous correspondence?
 - a. Benjamin Franklin
 - b. Thomas Jefferson
 - c. John Adams
 - d. Alexander Hamilton

THE "PRE-UNITED STATES" DAYS, 1513-1774

6. Thomas Fuller was a naturally gifted:
- a. Agrarian
 - b. Naturalist
 - c. Mathematician
 - d. Astronomer
7. Why were Thomas Fuller's skills noteworthy during his time?
- a. It was proof of African American's intelligence
 - b. He was never formally taught to read or write
 - c. He was like a "Human Calculator" with astounding natural mathematical talent
 - d. All of the above

CHAPTER 7

MATH AND SCIENCE

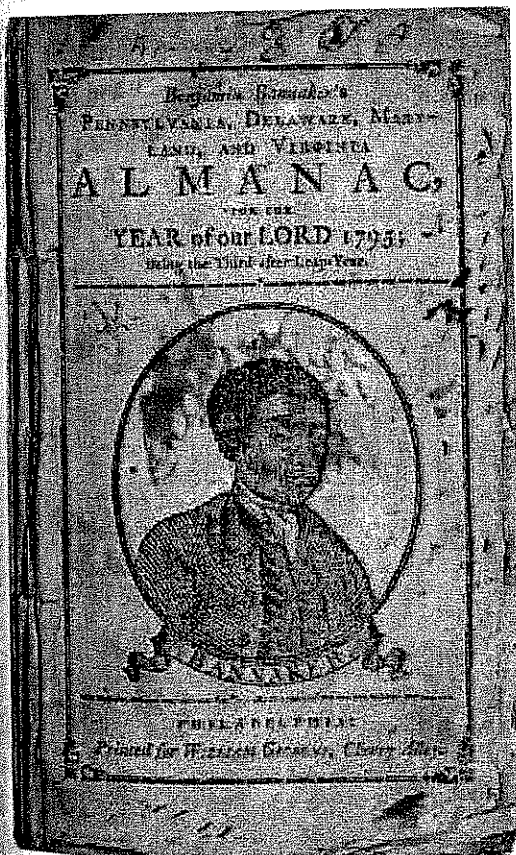
There were many African Americans who possessed the same acumen and skill as their white counterparts in the United States during this time.

As mentioned previously, Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806) was one of the most important

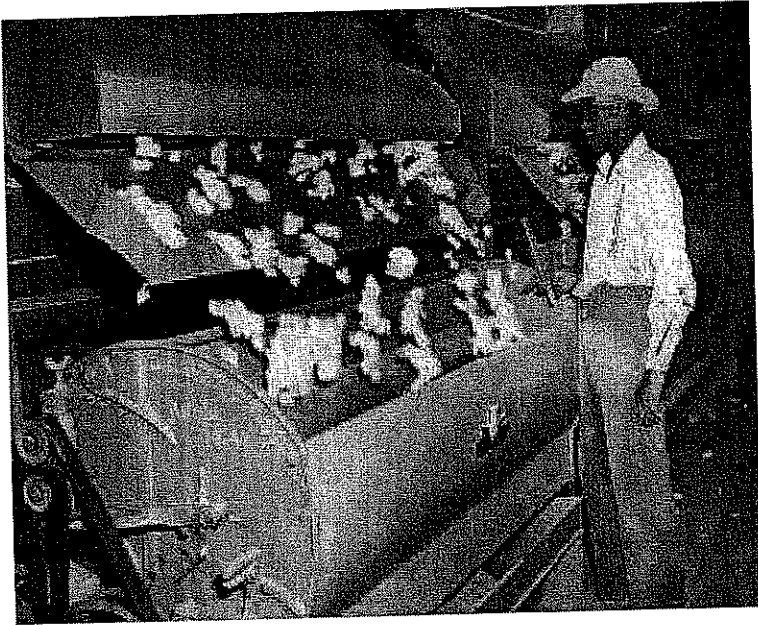
contributors to the early scientific history of the United States.

This is because Banneker possessed remarkable intelligence and managed to make himself available during times of need.

One interesting anecdote tells of a time during the nation's founding when the Frenchman hired by George Washington to design the capital angrily quit, taking all of the designs and plans. Thomas Jefferson requested Banneker be placed on the committee and, Banneker was able to reproduce, from memory alone, all of the architect's plans of streets, parks, and major buildings. He then used his importance to the newly founded capital, and Thomas Jefferson, to challenge Jefferson as the drafter of the Constitution on his hypocrisy with



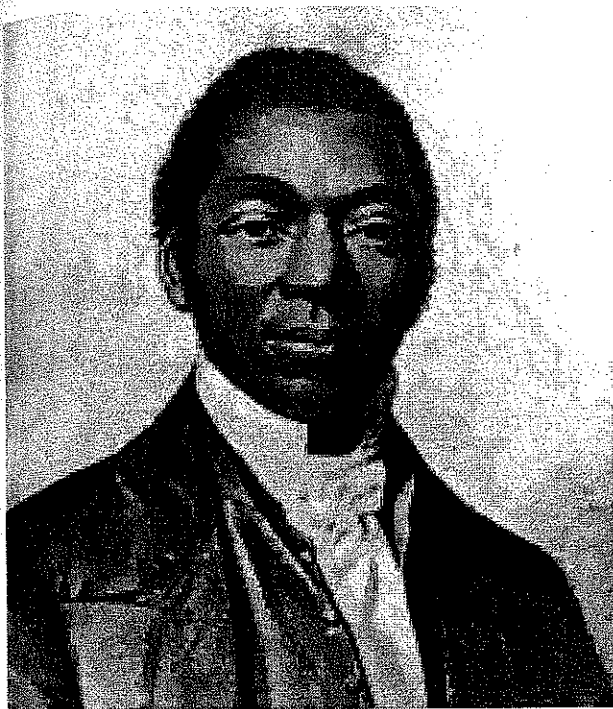
declaring all men as created equal but continuing to allow slavery. He also included in his letters that it was wrong for Jefferson to own slaves. Among his many achievements as a mathematician, astronomer, agronomist, and surveyor, Banneker is also recognized as making the first functional clock in America.



In 1793, a technological advancement greatly held back the African American fight for freedom: the cotton gin, patented by Eli Whitney, an idea found to be stolen from slaves, thus Eli's patent wasn't renewed, and he did not receive profits. African slaves, because they were not citizens, could not register any invention with the patent office, nor could their slave

master or anyone jointly. This made it easy for others to steal their ideas. Referenced by Dorothy Yancy, "Whitney has been charged with borrowing the idea for the cotton gin from a simple comb-like device that slaves used to clean the cotton. Whitney is said to have merely enlarged upon the idea of the comb to create the cotton gin, which works very much like an oversized comb culling the seeds and debris from the cotton."

The cotton gin is a machine that more easily and quickly separated cotton from the seeds of the cotton plant. This allowed for faster and easier processing of cotton into linens and fabrics, while the seeds could be turned into cottonseed oil.



There were also many other important inventions produced by African Americans during and after this important early period. For example, Thomas L. Jennings was the first African American to be granted a patent. He was able to procure this patent for a dry cleaning process he called "dry scouring". Yet Jennings did much more than invent new processes and become the first African American patent holder. He was also a strong abolitionist and worked to support abolition through legal and political organization. He advocated against bans on segregation and fought for African American suffrage, meaning the ability to vote. As such, he was both an important inventor and a contributor to the long fight against slavery.

Jennings was far from being the only abolitionist. As the late 1700s turned forward to the 1800s, slaves began flooding into the United States of America, arriving packed side to side in wooden ships, in voyages that took 3-6 months. According to one source, "Research published in 1794 and referring to how tightly African were packed on shipped, calculated that a man was given a space of 6 feet (length) by 1 foot, 4 inches (width); a woman 5 feet (length) by 1 foot, 4 inches (width); and girls 4 feet, 6 inches (length) by 1 foot (width)."

Dealing with what Lincoln called "the peculiar institution" of slavery, it would grow by the mid-1800s into the dominant issue dividing the new country. The ongoing "question of slavery" needed to be answered - and in the 1800s, it was.

CHAPTER REVIEW

1. What city did Banneker design?
 - a. New York City
 - b. Boston
 - c. Richmond
 - d. Washington, DC

2. Who did Banneker challenge on issues of race?
 - a. Thomas Jefferson
 - b. George Washington
 - c. None of the above
 - d. All of the above

3. What is a cotton gin?
 - a. A machine that collects cotton
 - b. A machine that weaves cotton into fabric
 - c. A machine that separates the cotton boll from the fibers
 - d. None of the above

4. Why was it not clear whether Eli Whitney was the original inventor of the cotton gin?
 - a. It was easy to steal ideas from slaves
 - b. Slaves couldn't patent their ideas because they weren't considered citizens
 - c. Eli Whitney admitted to expanding on an existing idea used by slaves
 - d. All of the above

5. Why was the invention of the cotton gin impactful?
 - a. It decreased the demand for slave labor
 - b. It decreased the demand for fabrics
 - c. It increased the demand for cotton made fabrics
 - d. It decreased the demand for cotton

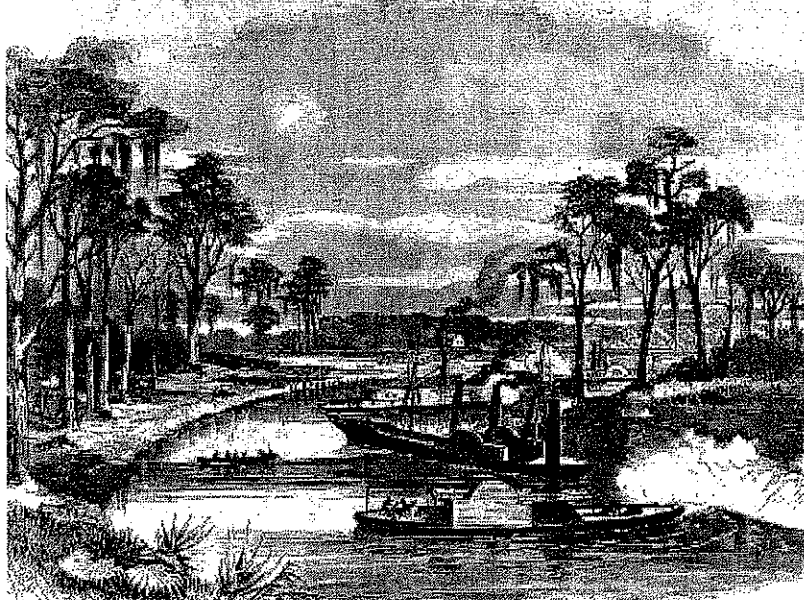
6. For what was Thomas L. Jennings known?
 - a. Being the first African American inventor
 - b. Being the first African American to be granted a patent
 - c. Being the first African American to speak with a founding father
 - d. Being an abolitionist

CHAPTER 1

HARRIET TUBMAN SPEAKS

My, my, what those Rebel officers must be thinking, seeing me - a 5'2" African American woman - at the front of a Union gunboat here in Maryland. In my dreams, I look at that white plantation house, just want to yell "FIRE!" and watch our cannonballs tear it to bits. But I know it's my

Photo # NH 58767 "The Fight at Corney's Bridge, Bayou Teche, Louisiana ... January 14, 1863."



people in that house, too - the slaves as servants, the slaves cooking, the slaves cleaning, the slaves taking care of their white children - and I don't want to frighten all those people in the plantation house.

ANTEBELLUM AND THE CIVIL WAR, 1801-1865



HARRIET TUBMAN

This is one of my many unexpected moments in the Civil War. From the gunboat deck, I look down at the water, and have all these people in front of me, swimming to our boat, carrying chickens in cages over their heads, and baskets of fruit, and whatever belongings they can, looking to our boat as their salvation and freedom. They are in such a panic; the only thing I could think to do was sing to them. So I did, and they calmed down. They knew Harriet Tubman, conductor on the Underground Railroad, and they knew I wasn't going to leave them.

For the Underground Railroad, I made 13 trips to Maryland across 10 years, I rescued 70 slaves, always coming in and out without being captured. The South was so embarrassed they had a huge price on my head. I've been a cook, a nurse, a scout, a spy, and Lordy, now leading a team of three Union gunboats, thanks to the confidence of General Montgomery.

Let's help these poor people get on board now. That's it - come on board. You're free now. You're free. Let me help you with your belongings. Now dry your eyes. You're gonna want to save some of those tears of joy for when you see us burn down that plantation house!

THE EXPANDING NATION

In 1800, the U.S. Congress met in Washington, DC, for the first time. Just a few years later, in 1803, the country finalized the Louisiana Purchase, in which the country doubled in size by adding French territory.

It was not long after that the fairly new country again became embroiled in conflict, declaring war on Great Britain in 1812 due to British interference with the New England Coast. Because of the war against Napoleon in Europe, Great Britain began seizing and blockading the American navy. It did not

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

take long for the two to become entangled yet again in war. Early on, the British gained major ground after defeating Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo. During this time, they famously burned the White House and embarrassed the country before the world. By 1814, neither side had made major advances and decided to sign a peace treaty.

In this tumultuous time, African Americans again saw an opportunity to continue to advance their cause for freedom and equality. Just as they had in the American Revolution, African Americans enlisted to gain freedom or respect. Free African American men even formed their own unit of freedmen under Andrew Jackson. This unit was imperative in winning the Battle of New Orleans, which occurred after the signing of the 1814 peace treaty. The British went back on their promises of peace and attacked New Orleans, but the American troops, mostly African American and indigenous, held the attacks off, causing the British to suffer two thousand casualties in comparison with their seventy.

Just a few years after the end of the war, in 1819, the Spanish ceded Florida to the United States, causing the country to grow again. This had an enormous impact on the African American communities in Florida who had lived in freedom under Spanish rule. These communities had established free towns and trading posts, integrated into the Creek and Seminole Native American settlements as early as 1771 and served as a safe haven for slaves who escaped during the American Revolution from Georgia and South Carolina. However, as time went on, the territory became a burden for Spanish governing officials to maintain, and granted the territory to the United States through the Adams-Onís Treaty. African Americans who fled to the surrounding Bahaman islands developed new forms of music, dance, and art, as well as their own cultivation of agricultural practices to help their communities thrive.

Following this treaty, Florida became an official state in 1821 and permitted slavery legally. In order to maintain their control over the state, American officials prohibited free African Americans from moving to Florida, sought to expel African Americans from the state, and aimed to force free African Americans back into slavery. This caused an enormous shift in Florida, as wealthy agriculturalists bought

ANTEBELLUM AND THE CIVIL WAR, 1801-1865

up swaths of land to convert into plantations, bringing their own slave labor with them and buying formerly free African Americans. By 1860, nearly half of the population of Florida was enslaved.

The situation in Florida due to the legalization of slavery there demonstrated a tension throughout the rest of the country. In 1820, the Missouri Compromise was made by Congress, which admitted Maine as a free state and Missouri as a slave state into the United States. This limited the number of slave states that could be admitted, in an attempt to limit the scourge of slavery but still appease the wealthy landowners of the South. This argument continued to arise, as it did in 1846 when a representative introduced the Wilmot Proviso, attempting to block and ban slavery in the newly acquired territories with Mexico over Texas. Although the Wilmot Proviso failed, it further intensified the debate about slavery at the national and local levels.



This entire period in the South before the Civil War where there was much debate over the injustice of slavery created a period of unrest and was considered the Antebellum of slavery, which means a particular time period before a war. Antebellum refers to the particular economic boom in the South owing

to slave labor. The image of slavery was that everyone in the south owned slaves and profited from this industry. However, a large property owner with hundreds of slave was rare. Three-quarters of Southern whites did not even own slaves; of those who did, only about 10% owned more than 10. The majority of white farmers utilized family labor and were the embodiment of the ideal American: honest, virtuous, hardworking, and independent. The institution of slavery was not part of their everyday life and was not

how they prospered. Yet, most non-slaveholding white Southerners identified with and defended the institution of slavery, though many resented the wealth and power of the large slaveholders, they still aspired to join the privileged ranks. Prestige, power, and success were synonymous with the number of slaves you owned. In addition, slavery gave the poor whites a group of people to feel superior to. They may have been poor, but they were not slaves, and they were not black. They gained a sense of power and privilege simply by being white.

The plantation continues to be a symbol of the Antebellum South, as it was the center of economic and cultural means during this time period. This period marked some of the worst atrocities committed against African Americans by white Americans, such as beatings, the sale of family members, sexual assault and abuse, and much more.



When the Civil War broke out in 1861, African Americans had long been ready for their freedom. When Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as president, secessionist forces attacked Fort Sumter in South Carolina, and seven southern states declared themselves independent from the North. The South became known

as the Confederacy, meaning a league or alliance, in this case, of states. The war was fought to end slavery,

and the Confederacy sought to separate or secede from the Union, or the North. The war ended in 1865

when General Robert E. Lee surrendered, but the war had been extremely hard-fought and had severely

damaged relations in the young country. The death toll reached 625,000, nearly as many American soldiers as having died in all other conflicts put together.

In this conflict to liberate their people, African Americans played a key role for both sides. Over 180,000 African American soldiers served in the Civil War on the Union side alone. Both freedmen and escaped slaves enlisted to contribute to this fight.

Although President Lincoln was concerned that allowing African Americans to enlist would further alienate Border States such as Maryland, by 1862, they needed the manpower, so African Americans were allowed to enlist. These black regiments did not receive equal pay and continued to face discrimination, but continued to play instrumental roles in winning this deadly conflict. These men, the U.S. Colored Troops, comprised roughly 10% of the entire Union Army. African American women also contributed to the war effort, working as nurses, spies, and scouts.

By 1863, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, by executive order, which formally and legally freed African Americans and granted them formal citizenship - but only in the states that seceded from the Union.

CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Who was Harriet Tubman?
 - a. A spy
 - b. A soldier
 - c. A leader of the Underground Railroad
 - d. All of the above

2. In what year did the newly formed U.S. Congress meet for the first time in Washington, DC?
 - a. 1800
 - b. 1861
 - c. 1776
 - d. 1805

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

Why did the 1819 act of the Spanish ceding Florida to the United States have an enormous impact on African Americans?

- a. Africans lived as free men under Spanish rule
- b. African American wanted to go to war with the Spanish
- c. The United States didn't take very good care of its territories
- d. African Americans thought this caused a war with France

4. TRUE or FALSE: Following the treaty of 1821, American legalized slavery in Florida and aimed to force free slaves back into slavery.

- a. True
- b. False

5. What happened to many free African Americans once Florida was incorporated into the United States?

- a. They continued to be free
- b. They were forced to leave and move north to free states
- c. They were forced into slavery
- d. They were forced to leave the country

6. What was the Missouri Compromise?

- a. A compromise that allowed Missouri to be admitted into the union as a slave state in order to satisfy the demands of the wealthy southern.
- b. An agreement that forced free African Americans back into slavery in Florida in exchange for Missouri becoming a free state.
- c. An agreement that allowed Missouri to be admitted to the union as a slave state and Ohio be admitted as a free state
- d. None of the above

7. Define "Antebellum":

- a. A period before a war
- b. The South in the United States before 1861
- c. A period of history during slavery
- d. All of the above

8. How many African Americans served in the Union army?

- a. 180
- b. 1,800
- c. 18,000
- d. 180,000

9. What was the Emancipation Proclamation?

- a. The formal declaration of war between the North and the South
- b. Abraham Lincoln's speech about abolition
- c. The legal document that granted African American slaves freedom and citizenship
- d. The document refuting the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850

ANTEBELLUM AND THE CIVIL WAR, 1801-1865

10. TRUE or FALSE: Only a $\frac{1}{4}$ of the whites in the south owned slaves?
 - a. True
 - b. False

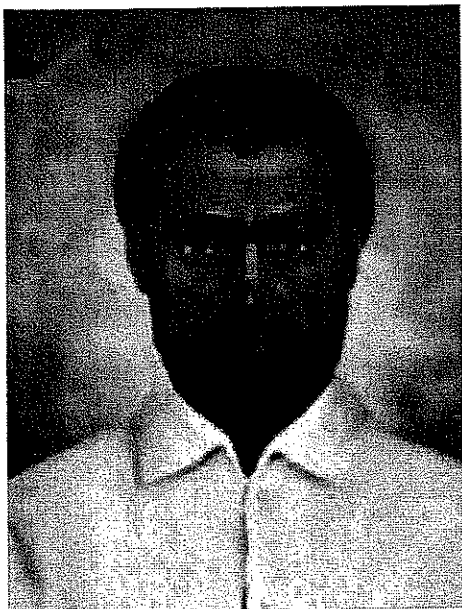
11. TRUE or FALSE: Slavery was an industry dominated by wealthy white landowners?
 - a. True
 - b. False

CHAPTER 3

HEROISM

The wars of this time period showcased the bravery and heroism of the many African American men who fought for the United States and also for the British as these soldiers searched for a way to advance the opportunities of their own community.

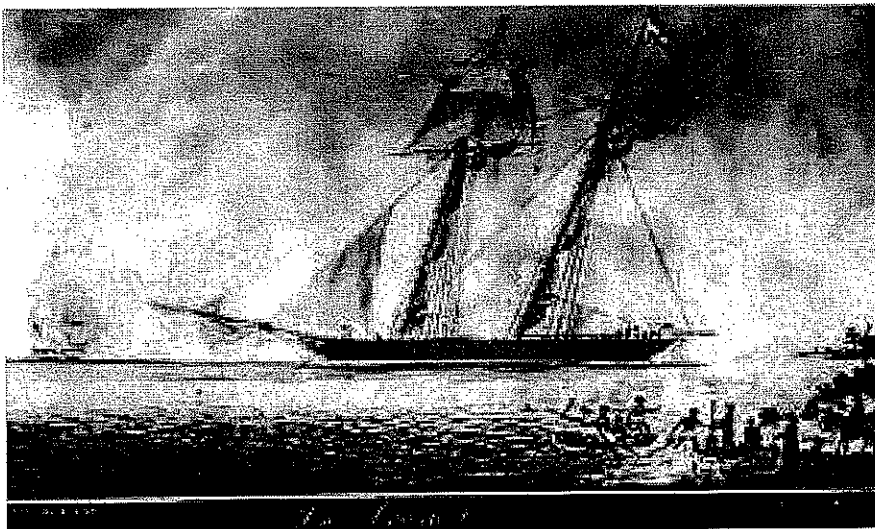
Simultaneously, as the country came into its own, there continued to be push-back for the immoral holding of slaves. During this time, there were a number of slave revolts orchestrated by African American men and women, who advocated for their own freedom and attempted to take it through organization and armed insurrection.



One such example is Denmark Vesey, a carpenter in South Carolina who had purchased his freedom by winning the lottery for \$600. However, he was unable to buy the freedom of his wife and children, which many say gave him his unwavering commitment to abolishing slavery. Vesey became well-known in the local church and began preaching to the African American community about how they were similar to the Israelites in the Old Testament, in spite of the monitoring of white authorities.

Vesey eventually began plotting a slave-led rebellion with other members of the church. Their plan sought to kill the governor of Charleston, seize the city's weapons, set fire to the city, and seek revenge on every white man in the city. However, slaves who were nervous that the plan would fail told their masters. Vesey was arrested and hanged. Although his story ends tragically and unjustly, Vesey became a symbol of African American resilience and the abolitionist movement.

Similarly, and potentially inspired by Vesey's boldness, Nat Turner incited a slave rebellion in Virginia in 1831. Turner was a religious and highly intelligent African American man. He gained a following of other enslaved African Americans in his community in Southampton County, which was a plantation area comprised mainly of slaves. Turner coordinated with his fellow slaves, planning their revolt for months. Finally, on the day of a solar eclipse, Turner communicated with his fellow slaves through song and whistles. They began by traveling from house to house, killing any white people with the use of knives and hatchets as opposed to firearms. This successful uprising resulted in the death of approximately 60 white men, women, and children. Turner hid from authorities in the woods but was eventually found and hanged. Turner's bravery and organization with his fellow slaves also ended tragically, but it did strengthen abolitionist arguments. And backlash, as white slave owners became hysterically terrified of slave revolts and sought the passage of laws further limiting the freedom of African Americans.

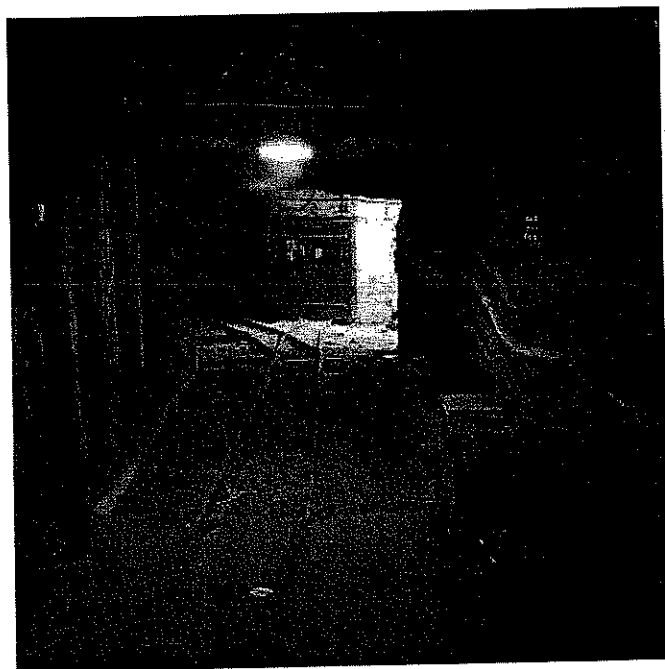


In July 1839, 53 Africans – enslaved in Sierra Leone, and in transit to plantation owners in Havana, Cuba – broke free from their captors, took over the slave ship *La Amistad* (Spanish for “Friendship”), and ordered the survivors to sail the ship back to

Africa. Instead, they were sailed to the north and eventually were captured off the coast of Long Island by the *USS Washington*. The owners of the ship, and the Spanish government claimed them as property to be returned, while the United States argued that they were legally free since both the United States and Great Britain had banned the trans-Atlantic slave trade in 1808. The case got appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, and in 1841, in a rare Federal-level court victory for African-Americans in the 1800s, the survivors were ordered to be freed, since they had been illegally transported and acted in self-defense. In 1842, helped by funds raised by the United Missionary Society, 35 survivors were returned to Africa.



A few years later, in 1850, the Fugitive Slave Act made the return of escaped slaves into law and thwarted these brave individual's attempts to find freedom. As one result, the Underground Railroad was founded to help fugitives avoid being returned to slavery under the Fugitive Slave Act. The Underground Railroad using secret



meeting points, routes, transportation, and safe houses, orchestrated by former slaves and white and black abolitionists helped slaves escape to freedom. The slaves escaped to Free states, Canada and Nova Scotia. Some of the Underground Railroad members included free African Americans, Quakers, Presbyterians, Methodists, and more. The Underground Railroad had many

notable participants, including John Fairfield, the son of a slaveholding family, who made many daring rescues, Levi Coffin, a Quaker who ran a Sunday school for blacks which was heavily opposed and subsequently forced to close. Levi Coffin wrote, "Both my parents and grandparents were opposed to slavery, and none of either of the families ever owned slaves; and all were friends of the oppressed, so I claim that I inherited my anti-slavery principles." Questioned about why he aided slaves, Coffin said "The Bible, in bidding us to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, said nothing about color, and I should try to follow out the teachings of that good book. The many whites who were strongly against slavery held to a common thread, "to be successful; revolutionary change requires people of action — those who little by little chip away at the forces who stand in the way". The sentiment of "conductors" of the Underground Railroad and those who risk their lives by housing and caring for blacks during their transport were not content to wait for laws to change or for slavery to implode itself; railroad activists helped individual fugitive slaves find the road to freedom. Harriet Tubman born a slave herself and having freed her own family by way of the railroad was perhaps the most famous "conductor". Together those active in the Underground Railroad freed more than 100,000 slaves between 1830-1871. All of the people involved in the Underground Railroad regardless of their role or race - may be considered heroes.

CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Who was Levi Coffin?
 - a. A Quaker
 - b. An abolitionist
 - c. An individual active in the Underground Railroad
 - d. All of the above

2. Why did Denmark Vesey, a man who had bought his own freedom, have an unwavering commitment to abolish slavery?
 - a. He wanted revenge
 - b. He was unable to buy the freedom for his wife and children
 - c. He hated all white people
 - d. He wasn't very smart

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

3. Who is Nat Turner?
 - a. A slave who organized the bloodiest slave revolt in American history
 - b. A white landowner who was particularly cruel to his slaves
 - c. A preacher who organized a failed slave revolt
 - d. The founder of the Underground Railroad

4. Approximately how many white people were killed during Nat Turner's Rebellion?
 - a. 50
 - b. 60
 - c. 70
 - d. 80

5. How many African Americans did the Underground Railroad liberate approximately?
 - a. 10
 - b. 100
 - c. 100,000
 - d. 10,000

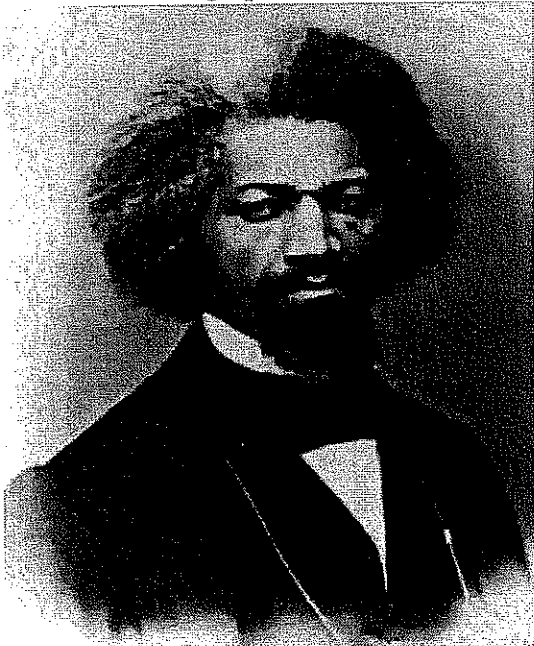
6. Harriet Tubman was active in which movements?
 - a. Abolition
 - b. Feminism
 - c. The Civil War
 - d. All of the Above

7. Why did Denmark Vesey hang for the 1822 slave revolt that never happened?
 - a. The plans were spoiled by nervous and fearful members
 - b. He did not have a well thought out plan
 - c. The members of his church did want to see the governor of Charleston killed
 - d. He ran away and refused to confess to planning the revolt

CHAPTER 5

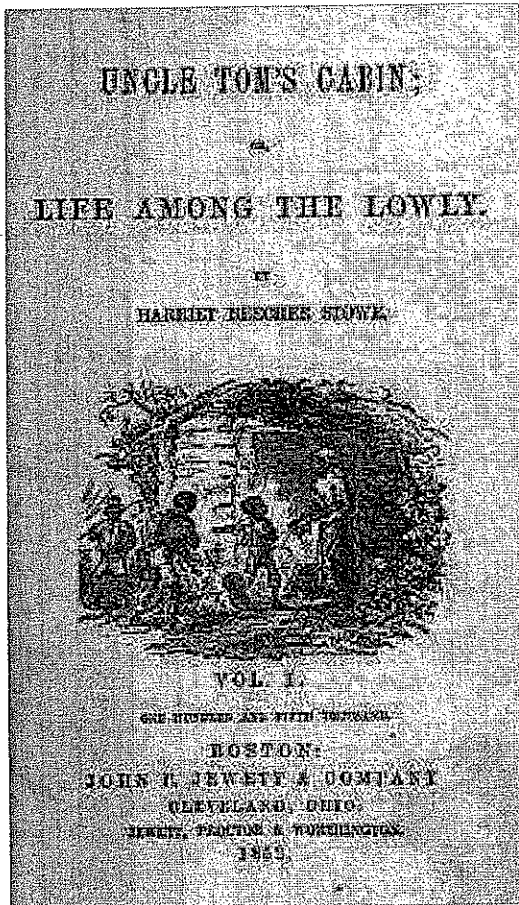
LITERATURE

Frederick Douglass (née Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey) was born a slave in the state of Maryland in 1818. After his escape from slavery at the age of 20, Douglass became a renowned abolitionist, editor, and feminist. Douglass traveled widely, and often to lecture against slavery. His first of three autobiographies, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave*, was



published in 1845. By 1830, there were more than 50 Negro abolitionists' organizations across the country. In 1847 Douglass moved to Rochester, New York, and started working with fellow abolitionist Martin R. Delany to publish a weekly anti-slavery newspaper, *North Star*. Douglass was a signer of the Declaration of Sentiments; he also promoted woman suffrage in his *North Star*. He authored 280 books.

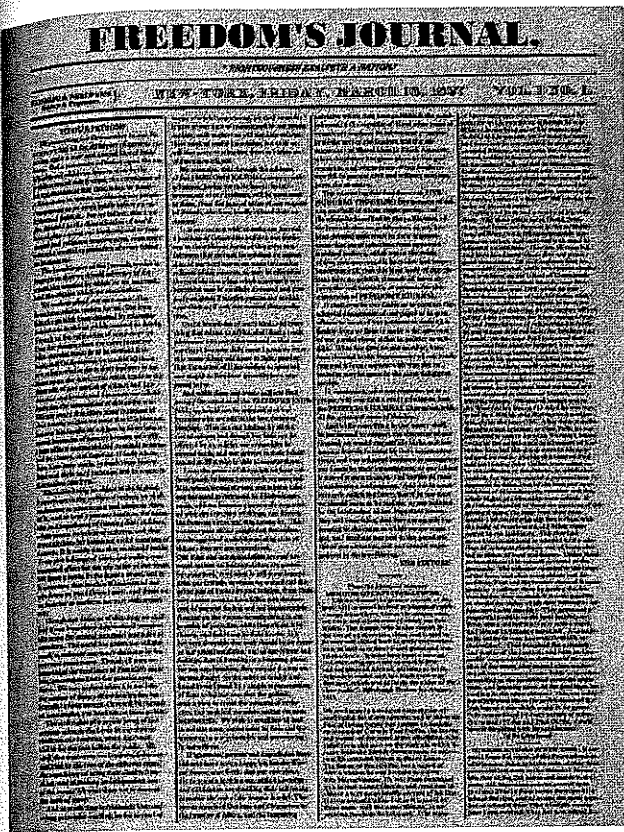
In 1870 Douglass launched *The New National Era* out of Washington, D.C. He was nominated for vice-president by the Equal Rights Party to run with Victoria Woodhull as a presidential candidate in 1872. He became U.S. marshal of the District of Columbia in 1877. His home in the District of Columbia is a national historic site.



Literature during this time was a powerful testament to the mounting physical, spiritual, and emotional toll slavery had taken on African American communities. As one of the most important works of this time, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), written by Harriet Beecher Stowe, told the story of a slave and his difficult life. Her sentimental novel became the second-best selling book of that century, following the *Bible*.

During this period, Sojourner Truth escaped slavery and used her writings to, not only discuss her life but also to push for the freedom of African Americans. Her speeches, and her novel *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* were some of the most important and prominent works written by an African

American woman during this period. The truth was born into slavery in New York but managed to escape with her daughter to freedom in 1826, leaving her son behind. Yet, in 1828, Truth took her son's owner to court to win him back and won, making her the first black women to win such a case against a white man. She went on to join feminists and abolitionists during this period, making her most famous speech in 1851 at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention. Titled "Ain't I A Woman?" it advocated for the recognition by white men and women of the ongoing struggle of black women. She spoke in the dialect of the time and played off of the theme of British abolitionists, who would commonly use the phrase, "Am I Not a Man and a Brother?" to advocate for liberation. Truth was a powerful advocate for abolition and has been named one of the top 100 most influential people of all time by the Smithsonian Institute.



The Freedom's Journal was the first African American owned and operation newspaper in America. "We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us. Too long has the public been deceived by misrepresentations, in things which concern us dearly" In March 12, 1827. The founders of *Freedom's Journal*, John B. Russwurm and Samuel Cornish, stated in their masthead that the paper was "devoted to the improvement of the colored population." They noted that blacks had been "incorrectly represented by the press and the church.

Their faults were always noted but their virtues remain unmentioned." There were 500,000 free persons of color in the U.S. and they anticipated that at least half of them would read the journal. The paper was published until 1830. Copies of the newspaper can still be found in the Library of Congress on microfilm.

In 1827, David Walker published "An Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World." David Walker was born in Wilmington North Carolina, although his father was enslaved his mother was free, therefore, he was a free man. Early on he became affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church activists. Having witness horrific atrocities to African Americans on account of racism and discrimination, including a case where a son was forced to whip his mother to death. In his appeal he urged African Americans to unite and fight for their freedom and equality. While the Appeal frightened many who feared repercussion, it also inspired future leaders and activists to stand up and against oppression. Walker advocated and spoke without hesitation on the importance of education, insisting that an educated black man was the white man's worse enemy and greatest fear.

In his appeal he considered slavery to be a sin, stating that God would punish the nation for their transgressions. Walker found the oppression and treatment of fellow blacks unbearable. "If I remain in this bloody land," he later recalled thinking, "I will not live long...I cannot remain where I must hear slaves' chains continually and where I must encounter the insults of their hypocritical enslavers. He argued: "See your Declaration Americans!!! Do you understand your own language? Hear your languages, proclaimed to the world, July 4th, 1776—"We hold these truths to be self-evident-that ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL!! that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness!!" Compare your own language above, extracted from your Declaration of Independence, with your cruelties and murders inflicted by your cruel and unmerciful fathers and yourselves on our fathers and on us—men who have never given your fathers or you the least provocation!!!!!!" Walker spoke out publicly and distributed his pamphlets where ever he could, even smuggling them when necessary. He especially aimed to get the appeal in the hands of those enslaved in the south. The appeal also held regular citizens responsible and encouraged them to act on religion and political principals to end slavery, discrimination and racism.

Southern states did respond with Georgia and Louisiana passing legislation that made distribution of the Appeal illegal. Other states banned distribute and imposed harsh punishments to anyone distributing on reading the pamphlet. North Carolina passed a law making it illegal to teach slaves to read. There was also a \$10,000 reward offered for Walker, dead or alive.

CHAPTER REVIEW

1. Who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?
 - a. Harriet Tubman
 - b. Harriet Powers
 - c. Harriet Beecher Stowe
 - d. Sojourner Truth

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

2. What book helped lay the groundwork for the Civil War?
 - a. *The Bible*
 - b. *The Life and Times of a Slave Girl*
 - c. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
 - d. Sojourner Truth's autobiography

3. TRUE or FALSE: Sojourner Truth escaped slavery
 - a. True
 - b. False

4. Why is Sojourner Truth remembered?
 - a. For being the first African American woman to win a court case against a white slave owner
 - b. For her oration abilities
 - c. For her abolitionist writings
 - d. All of the above

5. What is the name of Truth's infamous speech?
 - a. "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"
 - b. "Amazing Grace"
 - c. "Ain't I a Woman?"
 - d. "Freedom Now"

6. Who was Frederick Douglass?
 - a. He was the author of 280 books
 - b. He was the publisher of the anti-slavery newspaper the North Star
 - c. He was an abolitionist nominated to run as vice-president in 1872 presidential election
 - d. All of the Above

7. TRUE OR FALSE: The Freedom's Journal was created to provide a more accurate depiction of African Americans.
 - a. True
 - b. False

8. Why was the Appeal such a threat to the southern states in 1827?
 - a. The Appeal brought to light the atrocities practiced by the slave owners
 - b. The Appeal encouraged all citizen to take responsibility in ending slavery
 - c. The Appeal encouraged colored people to fight oppression regardless of risk
 - d. All of the above



African American History: The Untold Stories, was written to aid young men in America who could benefit from understanding and connecting with their history. An understanding of history helps us to understand who we are while providing direction for who we are capable of becoming. African American History: The Untold Stories was written for African American boys with the interest of providing them insight into a narrative of their forefathers and a more accurate perception of themselves and their potential.

African American History: The Untold Stories is also valuable to educators, individuals who rely upon the events of the past to serve as a guide in preventing repeated past mistakes, and those needing to find the missing gaps to their identity and purpose. The popular and currently told version of American history is missing large segments of the true American History story.

This book connects young African American boys and others to the true history of African Americans here in America. It's the true American History story – untold stories will inspire the reader to achieve to their fullest potential and to work towards a more united, equitable and just America. Our nation has lived in the shameful shadows of the past, in this book the truths are unveiled which will allow us to live more peaceful and harmoniously while demonstrating our greatness in leadership.



Yvette Long is the Founder and Executive Director of Platinum Minds, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization focused on working with boys and young men from challenged communities. The organization, founded in 2009, provides educational and leadership development skills to boys in sixth through twelfth grades. Platinum Minds also has a reading and mentoring component for younger boys in kindergarten to fifth grades.

As part of the educational and leadership component, the older boys are provided support to stay on a high academic track and to develop leadership skills, community consciousness, and entrepreneurial skills to help foster self-confidence and self-esteem. Yvette's twelve years of experience working with boys and young men have taught her a deeper understanding of what motivates, inspires, and also disenfranchises young men from excelling to their fullest potential.

Yvette holds certifications in counseling and teaching. She holds additional certifications to teach psychology and meditation. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Psychology from Thomas Edison State College and a Master's degree in Student Guidance Services from Montclair State University.

Yvette is passionate about the issues preventing individuals from achieving their true potential in life. She has spent a great deal of time volunteering for various organizations as her way of helping to ensure that those with the desire for a better life have the opportunity to realize their dreams. Yvette is the proud recipient of a number of awards, including the Boy Scouts of America Tribute to Women Award (recognized for excellence in working with boys), the Model Citizen Award for New Jersey, and the Outstanding Professional Counselor award from Montclair State University. Yvette lives in Morris County with her husband and their two daughters.

Yvette is also the Founder of Aspire, a counseling and life coaching service aimed at helping young men and individuals acquire the self-esteem and self-awareness they need to be successful on personal and professional levels.

This is her second book, following her earlier one titled "Aspire to Excellence: "Helping Young Men Make Better Choices," available on Amazon.com.



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