**Carry A. Nation**

1. Born November 25, 1846 in Kentucky, Carry Amelia Moore is probably the member of the temperance movement most recognizable to people of the 21st century.

2. In Kentucky, she met and married her first husband, who died from alcoholism after just two years. Carry turned to teaching to support herself and her infant daughter; eventually she remarried.

3. Standing almost six feet tall and weighing about 175 pounds, Nation was a very imposing presence.

4. Carry and David Nation didn't live in Kansas until 1890, when they moved to Medicine Lodge from Texas. As David's law practice became established his wife was able to increase her civic and religious activities.

5.The town of Medicine Lodge soon knew her as "Mother Nation" for her generosity. Besides this trait she also was intelligent, combative, amusing, and driven. "Whatever she believes in she believes with her whole soul, and nothing except superior force can stay her," noted a contemporary.

6. She is most often remembered for the violent manner in which she opposed drinking; she is often depicted with a hatchet, because of her proclivity for using one to damage saloons and other watering holes. She was arrested 30 times for these acts of vandalism.

7. She didn’t start with a hatchet. The first place that she violently attacked was with rocks. Six months later she destroyed the bar in Wichita's finest hotel and, following a three-week incarceration, continued the crusade until she was rearrested.

8. On June 5, 1899, Nation believed she received a vision from God, telling her to smash saloons in Kiowa, Kansas. Kansas had been the first state in the nation to prohibit alcoholic beverages by constitutional amendment in 1880

9. Many bars placed signs out front for their customers stating “All Nations Welcome but Carrie.”

10. While Nation’s methods were excessive and she can be charged with being over-zealous, the original impetus behind the U.S. temperance movement was in a social change tradition that sought to better the lives of the poor and women and children.

11. Nation’s final speaking engagement was in Eureka Springs, AR, where she was then residing, on January, 1911; she collapsed during this engagement and her final words to the public were “I have done what I could.” She died six months later.

**Prudence Crandall**

Prudence Crandall was born on Sept. 3, 1803, in Rhode Island to a Quaker family, where she attended the Friends' Boarding School.

She later taught in a school for girls at Plainfield, Conneticutt.

In 1831 she returned to Canterbury to run the newly established Canterbury Female Boarding School.

When Sarah Harris, daughter of a free African American farmer in the vicinity, asked to be admitted to the school in order to prepare for teaching other African Americans, she was accepted. Immediately, the townspeople objected and pressured to have Harris dismissed.

Crandall was familiar with the abolitionist movement and had read William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator.*

Faced with the town's resolutions of disapproval, she met with abolitionists in Boston, Providence, and New York to enlist support for the transformation of the Canterbury school into a school for African American girls. The *Liberator* advertised for new pupils.

In February 1833 the white pupils were dismissed, and by April, 20 African American girls took up studies. A trade boycott and other harassments of the school ensued. Warnings, threats, and acts of violence against the school replaced disapproving town-meeting resolutions.

Abolitionists came to Crandall's defense, using the issue as a stand against opposition to furthering the education of freed African Americans. Despite attacks the school continued operation.

On May 24, 1833, the Connecticut Legislature passed a law prohibiting such a school with African Americans from outside the state unless it had the town's permission, and under this law Crandall was arrested in July. She was placed in the county jail for one night and then released under bond.

A prominent abolitionist, Arthur Tappan of New York, provided money to hire the ablest lawyers to defend the Quaker school teacher at her trial, which opened at the Windham County Court on Aug. 23, 1833. The case centered on the constitutionality of the Connecticut law regarding the education of African Americans. The defense held that African Americans were citizens in other states, were so therefore in Connecticut, and could not be deprived of their rights under the Federal Constitution. The prosecution denied that freed African Americans were citizens. The county court jury failed to reach a decision. Although a new trial in Superior Court decided against the school, when the decision reached the Supreme Court of Errors on appeal, the case was dismissed for lack of evidence.

The judicial process had not stopped the operation of the Canterbury school, but the townspeople's violence against it increased and finally closed it on Sept. 10, 1834. Crandall had married a Baptist preacher, Calvin Philleo, on Sept. 4, 1834. He took her to Ithaca, N.Y., and from there they went to Illinois and finally to Elk Falls, Kans., where she lived until her death on Jan. 28, 1890. In 1886 the Connecticut Legislature had voted her an annual pension of $400.

The school had a great reputation and enjoyed success – until dear Prudence admitted twenty-year old Sarah Harris, an African American girl who wanted to become a teacher. Well! The town of Canterbury went ballistic, with many white parents withdrawing their daughters and basically closed the school down. Undaunted dear Prudence re-opened but this time just for “young ladies and little misses of color”. She had the support of many nationally prominent abolitionists, including famed William Lloyd Garrison and the entire Anti-Slavery Society, but that did not stop the citizens of Connecticut from showering the school with mud, eggs and stones, and ultimately passing “The Black Law” prohibiting black students from attending school in their fair state. Poor Prudence was attacked by a mob, arrested twice and even had her home partially destroyed. Who could blame her for leaving town? She moved with her hubby to Illinois where she continued advocating for women’s rights. The state of Connecticut tried to make it up to her by sending her $400 a year until her death in 1890. Today you can visit the Prudence Crandall Museum, a National Historic Landmark, observe Prudence Crandall Day and in 1995 she was declared Connecticut’s State Heroine.

**Frederick Douglass**

* Frederick Douglass [was born](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/biography-early-life/) Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey.
* He was the first African American citizen to hold a high U.S. government rank.
* He is best known as a[civil rights leader in the abolition movement](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/abolitionist-activities/)and for advocating education for the advancement of African Americans.
* [Through his escape](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/from-slavery-to-freedom/) he changed his last name from Bailey to Johnson to Douglass but he never changed his first name.
* His mother was Harriet Bailey, a slave, his father was a white man believed to be his master Aaron Anthony. [Read early life.](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/biography-early-life/)
* His mother was the only colored woman in Tuckahoe who could read.
* Grandmother Betsy Bailey was held in high esteem as an old settler and a nurse.
* He saw his mother 4 or 5 times in his life. She had to walk 12 miles back and forth to see him and could only do so at night.
* Douglass was taught the alphabet by Sophia Auld. When she stopped teaching him he asked poor white neighbor children to teach him in exchange for bread. The names of these children were: Gustavus Dorgan, Joseph Bailey, Charles Farity and William Cosdry.
* He continued learning to read and write with the Webster’s Spelling book which he carried everywhere he went. He practiced writing in a board fence, brick wall and pavement.
* When he was about 12 years old Douglass bought the Columbian Orator which gave him a new concept of freedom. He bought the journal with the money he earned polishing boots.
* Found out the meaning of Abolition by reading the Baltimore American.
* When he was 17, he tried to escape but his plot was discovered. He was sent to jail.
* [Douglass successfully escaped in 1838](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/from-slavery-to-freedom/)when he was 20 years old. He borrowed documents from a sailor.
* Frederick’s first wife was a black free woman, Anna Douglass. His second wife was a white woman, Helen Pitts. She was 20 years younger and their families did not approve of the interracial marriage.
* Frederick and Anna Douglass had five children, three sons and two daughters. Rosetta, Lewis Henry, Frederick, Charles Remond and Annie. Their younger daughter, Annie, died when she was 10 years old.
* Despite efforts, Anna Douglass never succeeded in learning to read and write.
* He met William Garrison and William Coffin, prominent abolitionists in New England. They offered him a job as an[agent for the Massachusetts Antislavery Society](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/free-man/). During the 1850’s he would tour six months a year giving speeches.
* During the winter of 1855-56 he covered five thousand miles and gave 70 speeches.
* Douglass’ sons, Charles and Lewis, were the first two [colored recruits](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/african-american-civil-war/) to join the 54thMassachusetts Infantry during the [Civil War.](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/role-in-civil-war/) Son Frederick worked as a recruiter.
* Douglass met [President Lincoln](http://www.abraham-lincoln-history.org/) three times.
* He was a Republican.
* His salary in the American Antislavery Society was $450 a year. When slavery was abolished he was paid from $50 to $100 per speech.
* His most famous speech was [Self Made Men.](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/self-made-men/)
* Douglass lived in Rochester, NY for 25 years, longer than anywhere else he had lived in his life.
* Douglass wrote three autobiographies:[*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*in 1845](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/narrative-of-the-life-of-frederick-douglass/), [*My Bondage and My Freedom* in 1855](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/my-bondage-and-my-freedom/) and[*Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* in 1881](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/life-and-times-of-frederick-douglass/).
* [After escaping from slavery](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/free-man/) Frederick devoted his life to [abolishing slavery](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/abolitionist-activities/). When slavery was abolished he advocated for civil rights and the advancement of the African American race.
* Frederick Douglass died of a massive heart attack at his [Cedar Hill house](http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/cedar-hill-house/) in Anacostia, Washington D.C. at age 77.
* He is buried at Section “A” of the Mount Hope Cemetery in Rochester, New York.

Here are five things you might not know about him:

**1. He worked across the aisle**

Republican House Speaker John Boehner recently called the statue of Douglass "a fitting tribute to one of the greatest Americans and voices for freedom who ever lived."

The GOP connection to Douglass goes back centuries.

Douglass had the ear of President Abraham Lincoln on matters concerning slavery and the treatment of black soldiers who fought in the Civil War.

However, the two had a complicated relationship. Douglass was frustrated by what he saw as Lincoln's delayed support of emancipation. Douglass would later go on to call Lincoln the nation's "greatest president."

During the 1888 Republican National Convention, Douglass was both a speaker and became the first African-American in a major party roll call vote to have his name put forth for president.

Douglass also conferred with Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson, on supporting the right of blacks to vote.

[What 'Lincoln' misses and another Civil War film gets right](http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/08/showbiz/slavery-pbs/index.html?iref=allsearch)

**2. He held several government positions**

At a time when many African-Americans were trying to establish lives after slavery, Douglass was appointed to several high-level U.S. government positions.

He served as minister and [general counsel to the Republic of Haiti](http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/01/26/joseph.african.americans.haiti/index.html?iref=allsearch). He spoke at the 1892 Chicago World's fair where he detailed Haiti's journey as a colony founded on slave labor to one governed by former slaves, and drew a connection to the African-American struggle for freedom. Douglass was also the first black U.S. marshal and served in Washington.

[Abolition through education](http://www.cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/living/2011/06/09/cfp.lusout.douglass.foundation.cnn.html)

**3. He was a twice-married supporter of women's rights**

Douglass was first married to Anna Murray, a free black woman who shared his passion and commitment to the abolitionist cause. She helped him escape slavery and the couple eventually adopted the last name Douglass.

The couple and their five children were heavily involved in printing an abolitionist newspaper and helping support Murray's underground railroad efforts as she aided runaway slaves on their journey north.

Douglass' second wife was Helen Pitts, the white daughter of an abolitionist who was very active in the women's rights movement.

Douglass spoke passionately at the Seneca Falls Convention on women's rights and urged the gathering to support the right to vote for both genders regardless of race.

**4. He often found himself in difficult political positions**

As an outspoken advocate for the right to vote for African-Americans and women, Douglass often found his relationship with those who supported similar causes strained.

Abolitionist John Brown tried to convince Douglass to join the raid on Harper's Ferry, a violent and ultimately failed attempt to start an armed slave revolt.

"I...told him that Virginia would blow him and his hostages sky-high, rather than that he should hold Harper's Ferry an hour. Our talk was long and earnest; We spent the most of Saturday and a part of Sunday in this debate: Brown for Harper's Ferry, and I against it; He for striking a blow which should instantly rouse the country, and I for the policy of gradually and unaccountably drawing off the slaves to the mountains, as at first suggested and proposed by him," Douglass wrote in "The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass."

Douglass also found himself at odds with longtime friend and women's suffrage advocate Elizabeth Cady Stanton, over the 15th Amendment, which prevents the government from denying citizens the right to vote based on race. Stanton had hopes to link women's voting rights to the bill; Douglass worried this would sink the measure.

Douglass publicly expressed frustration with Lincoln's latent support of emancipation and once wrote of Johnson, who had blanched at meeting the black abolitionist: "'Whatever Andrew Johnson may be, he certainly is no friend of our race.'"

[Commentary: Lincoln's remarkable tie to former slave](http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/02/11/horton.lincoln.douglass/index.html?iref=allsearch)

**5. The abolitionist's statue will stand in a place built by slave labor**

It is no small symbol that Douglass' statue will stand in the U.S. Capitol, a landmark built partly slave labor. They quarried the stones used in the columns, walls and floors.

Douglass' statue will be featured prominently in Emancipation Hall and will be one of the first big visuals millions of Americans see when they arrive.

Douglass' statue is the first to represent the District of Columbia and the third of an African-American at the Capitol. Martin Luther King Jr., and [Rosa Parks](http://www.cnn.com/2013/02/27/politics/rosa-parks-statue)from the civil rights era also have statues as does abolitionist [Sojourner Truth](http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/04/28/sojourner.truth/).

The unveiling comes on a day when many states celebrate "Juneteenth," a day in 1865 when African-American slaves in Texas were finally told they were free.

**Horace Mann**

## Early Years

Horace Mann was born into poverty in Franklin, Massachusetts, in 1796. Chiefly self-taught, Mann was 20 years old when he was admitted to the sophomore class at Brown University.

There he took an interest in politics, education and social reform, and upon graduation he gave a speech on the advancement of the human race through which education, philanthropy, and republicanism could combine to benefit mankind.

## Professional Life

After Brown, Mann practiced law before winning a seat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, where he served from 1827 to 1833. From 1835 to 1837, he served in the Massachusetts Senate, spending time as the majority leader and aiming his sights at infrastructure improvements via the construction of railroads and canals, among other projects.

## The Educational Reform Movement Begins

While Mann served in the Senate, the Massachusetts education system, with a history going back to 1647, was suffering, and the quality of education was deteriorating. Soon a vigorous reform movement arose, and in 1837 the state created the nation’s first board of education, with Mann as its secretary.

With funds for the board’s activities at a minimum, the position required more moral leadership than anything else, and Horace Mann proved himself up to the role. He started a biweekly journal, Common School Journal, in 1838 for teachers and lectured on education to all who would listen.

## Mann's Six Principles of Education

At this time he also developed his hugely influential, although at the time controversial, main principles regarding public education and its troubles: (1) Citizens cannot maintain both ignorance and freedom; (2) This education should be paid for, controlled, and maintained by the public; (3) This education should be provided in schools that embrace children from varying backgrounds; (4) This education must be nonsectarian; (5) This education must be taught using tenets of a free society; and (6) This education must be provided by well-trained, professional teachers.

Mann’s words angered groups across the social and political spectrum -- from clergymen to educators to politicians -- but his ideas prevailed and still do today.

Mann served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1848 to 1853 and then became the president of [Antioch College](http://online.antioch.edu/). A commencement speech he gave two months before his death served as a clarion call, asking students to embrace his influential worldview: “I beseech you to treasure up in your hearts these my parting words: Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.”

## Career and Contribution

Intemperance and the humane treatment of criminals were topics debated in polite society around Dedham, and Mann championed reforms ranging from temperance to religious toleration. He realized that through proper educating of the public, lasting change could be effected.

The positions of trust Mann achieved in Dedham in the 1820s made him confident to offer for the legislature in Massachusetts. The same year he was elected to the Dedham School Commission, he was also elected to the state's general assembly. Mann added the title legal counsel to the state supreme court, as well as commissioner to the new mental hospital, to his growing list of responsibilities.

After the death of his wife Charlotte in 1832, Mann liquidated his estate and resigned all offices, including his seat in the legislature. To those around him, it was apparent he planned to immerse himself in his work. Taking lodging at a boarding house in Boston, Mann joined the law firm of his old friend, Edward Loring. Boarders there were Boston notables such as Elizabeth Peabody, social crusader, and Reverend William Ellery Channing, the voice of Unitarianism in Boston. Elizabeth Peabody's sister, Mary, was there as well.

Friends persuaded him that he should stand for the Massachusetts senate in 1834 as a Whig. Mann had never competed politically at this level, and campaigns for senate races brought vitriolic debates not seen in his career before. As he celebrated his forty-first birthday, he contemplated his newest responsibility, president of the Massachusetts senate. This honor as a junior senator typifies the trust and respect colleagues placed in his judgment. One issue that the senate wrestled with for several years prior to Mann's election was how public education could better prepare people for citizenship in this expanding young republic. As senate president, Horace signed into law the bill creating the Massachusetts State Board of Education, unique for its time and designed to disseminate education information statewide and to improve curriculum, method, and facilities.

Educating the masses was also the concern of James G. Carter of Boston, and he published in 1825 the Outline for an Institute for the Education of Teachers. He wrote on the necessity of training teachers in the art of teaching. Normal schools were an outgrowth of this important early work in educational thought. Carter, a legislator, and Mann, president of the senate, maneuvered a revolutionary bill through both houses and to the desk of Governor Edward Everett.

The members of the board of the newly created State Department of Education selected Mann as its first secretary. Mann resigned his seat in the state senate. Mann, like many Bostonians, believed that the emphasis on public education held more promise than either government or religion for yielding lasting social reform. He accepted a 50 percent cut in pay, from $3,000 a year to $1,500. His personal journal records, "I have faith in the improvability of the race, in their accelerating improvability…. "

The struggle for common schools in Massachusetts defined the parameters of the free school movement for decades to come. Though Mann engaged in reforms such as temperance and the treatment of the insane, the perfection of the common school concept occupied his waking hours for the rest of his life. Mann argued that all citizens, regardless of race or economic status, should have equal access to a tuition-free, tax-supported public school system. Such a system must be responsive to all races and nonsectarian if society is to achieve the unshackled status of a true democracy.

Mann knew he had to convince the entire state that the common school system was desirable and worth the increased tax revenue. He conducted town meetings across the state, giving a speech "The Means and Objects of Common School Education." The obstacle was a populace that did not care whether more schooling was offered.

Mann's tour of the state's schools concluded with Salem, the town where Mary Peabody was teaching. Once more, he pleaded for a statewide system of tuition-free education that would, he claimed, break down the troubling hierarchy of class in American society. Mann had spent months on tour, and much of what he had encountered discouraged him. Revenue would have to be raised to build adequate schools and staff them with learned teachers. There was the problem of poor versus wealthy districts; and that of the poor counties' being able to offer an education comparable to that of wealthy counties. Inadequate instruction troubled Mann as much as broken-down school buildings. He contemplated teacher training academies, called normal schools, as a solution.

Required by state law to make an annual report to the legislature on the condition of the state's school districts and programs, Mann turned the legal mandate into a yearly treatise on educational philosophy and methods. His annual reports became his platform for launching new programs and educating the public on new ideas in pedagogy. He explored new ideas in school design and the teaching of reading by words rather than by alphabet letters. Simple instruction in daily hygiene was emphasized along with more interesting ways of teaching science. Mann saw education as the uniting force to bring understanding and toleration between factions of the populace, as well as between the various states themselves. One novel idea Mann put forth was that teachers should gather together periodically to share ideas.

Mann developed the special teacher training colleges that he called normal schools. Instruction expertise rose yearly because the normal schools graduated capable teachers and eliminated the unfit. With teaching skills garnered from the normal school programs, teachers looked forward to a higher pay scale. Horace Mann was certain that better schools coupled with compulsory education would cure the ills of society. Traditional education did not vanish quickly in Massachusetts, however. Many found that curriculum and instruction varied little from content and materials of their grandparents' time.

Mann recalled the small library he had known while growing up. He believed that every child should have that advantage, so he set up a library expansion program. Mann also liked the German kindergarten idea that his confidant, Mary Peabody, espoused. Horace married Mary Peabody in 1843 in the bookstore that her sister, Elizabeth, ran on West Street, a store that was a gathering place for William Ellery Channing, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry David Thoreau. Mary's sister, Sophia, had wed Nathaniel Hawthorne there a few months earlier. Horace wished to take a trip to [Europe](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Europe.aspx) to visit common schools, so they settled upon that idea as their honeymoon.

One person Mann wanted to meet in [England](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/England.aspx) was Charles Dickens, the social reformer and novelist. Dickens gave Mann and his wife a tour of London's wretched east side. The squalor was worse by far than anything Mann had seen in America. The English schools did not impress Mann, either. Recitation and Anglican dogma dulled the student's appetite for intellectual stimulation. He was amazed that teachers talked in monotone voices and stood transfixed during lecture. The Manns traveled widely in England and on the continent. While touring the University of [Berlin](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Berlin.aspx), Horace learned that Alexander von Humboldt had implemented a state certification process and written examinations for teachers. Horace realized that this is what he must do in Massachusetts to eliminate the problem of incompetent teachers.

Mann's seventh annual report to the board was written partly on the voyage home. The comparisons he made with European schools, especially German schools, offended school administrators. Critics questioned Mann's credentials to lead school reform. Mann stood his ground for five more years and continued to bring uniformity to programs and quality of instruction.

Mann saw revenue for education rise precipitously over the twelve years of his tenure (1836–1848). He popularized the idea of a centralized bureaucracy to manage primary and secondary education. He advised the legislature on fiscal responsibility in implementing equal programs throughout the state. He standardized the requirements for the diploma.

When the eighth congressional seat became vacant due to the death of John Quincy Adams, Mann ran for the office and was successful in his first federal election. The two terms he spent in Washington were neither satisfactory nor productive. He had disagreements with his loyal political friends Daniel Webster and Charles Sumner. Against a backdrop of the rising tension over slavery, Horace sought a way out after his second term.

In 1852 Mann heard of a new college being built in Yellow Springs, [Ohio](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Ohio.aspx), with support from a liberal Christian denomination. He decided that if the college presidency were offered, he would accept and resign from Congress. The post was offered, and Mann became the first president of Antioch College. The Ohio churchmen were so liberal in their doctrinal beliefs that they accepted Mann, a Unitarian. Antioch was a sectarian foundation and chapel attendance was not compulsory. Antioch College opened its doors to eight young men in 1850.

The Ohio frontier proved a different world from the East. Money was a problem from the start, grand illusions in the minds of the trustees never bore fruit, and paydays were missed regularly. Mann never compromised his expectations in scholarship. The financial problems at Antioch began before the buildings went up, and they steadily got worse.

The curriculum and methodology had all been Mann's development, and it was a creditable program. A preparatory school was added to accept the less qualified and was open to all no matter what race or gender. The mood of the populace, however, turned against Mann due to his Unitarian belief.

Mann turned his attention to the idea of publicly funded universities. He believed that church-sponsored colleges and universities undid the work of the free-school movement. The fight for the publicly funded university would be someone else's battle as Mann had developed a form of debilitating cancer. Mann's last educational act was to salvage the bankrupt Antioch College with a syndicate of [New England](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/New_England.aspx) investors. Mann died August 2, 1859. He could not have realized that he would become part of the legend of democracy built upon the foundation of a tuition-free public school system. Mann's last professional statement concluded the commencement address at Antioch College: "I beseech you to treasure up in your hearts these my parting words: Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity."

**Elizabeth Blackwell**

Early Life:

Elizabeth Blackwell born on 3rd February 1821, was the first female doctor in the United States. She was the first openly identified woman to graduate from medical school, a pioneer in educating women in medicine in the United States, and was prominent in the emerging women’s rights movement.

Talking about Elizabeth’s educational life, she was rejected by all the leading schools to which she applied and almost all the other schools as well. When her application arrived at Geneva Medical College at Geneva, New York, the administration asked the students to decide whether to admit her or not. The students, reportedly believing it to be only a practical joke, approved her admission.

At first, she was even kept from classroom medical demonstrations, as unsuitable for a woman but very soon the students started getting impressed by her ability and persistence. Finally she graduated first in her class in 1849, becoming the first woman doctor of medicine in the modern era. She worked in clinics in London and Paris for two years, and studied midwifery at La Maternité where she contracted “purulent opthalmia” from a young patient. When Blackwell lost sight in one eye, she returned to New York City in 1851, giving up her dream of becoming a surgeon.

After returning to New York City, she applied for several positions as a physician, but was rejected because she was a woman. Blackwell then established a private practice in a rented room, where her sister Emily, who had also pursued a medical career, soon joined her. Their modest dispensary later became the New York Infirmary and College for Women, operated by and for women. Dr. Blackwell also continued to fight for the admission of women to medical schools. In the 1860s she organized a unit of female field doctors during the Civil War where Northern forces fought against those of the South over, among other things, slavery and secession.

Contributions and Achievements:

Dr. Blackwell did not give up and continued her efforts to open the medical profession to women. In 1857, Blackwell along with her sister Emily founded their own infirmary, named the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women and Children. During the American Civil War, Blackwell trained many women to be nurses and sent them to the Union Army. Many women were interested and received training at this time. Her articles and her autobiography also attracted widespread attention and inspired many women.

She also began to see women and children in her home. As she developed her practice, she also wrote lectures on health, which she published in 1852 as The Laws of Life, with Special Reference to the Physical Education of Girls.

Blackwell was an early outspoken opponent of circumcision and in said that “Parents should be warned that this ugly mutilation of their children involves serious danger, both to their physical and moral health. She was a proponent of women’s rights and pro-life. Her female education guide was published in Spain, as was her autobiography. Blackwell also had ties to the women’s rights movement from its earliest days. She was proudly proclaimed as a pioneer for women in medicine as early as the Adjourned Convention in Rochester, New York in, two weeks after the First Woman’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls.

In 1856, she adopted Katherine “Kitty” Barry, an orphan of Irish origin, who was her companion for the rest of her life.

Later Life:

In 1907 Blackwell was injured in a fall from which she never fully recovered. She died on 31 May 1910 at her home in Hastings in Sussex after a stroke. She was buried in June 1910 in Saint Mun’s churchyard at Kilmun a place she loved in Argyllshire, in the Highlands of Scotland.

## Synopsis

Elizabeth Blackwell was born on February 3, 1821, in Bristol, England. As a girl, she moved with her family to the United States, where she first worked as a teacher. Despite widespread opposition, she later decided to attend medical college and graduated first in her class, thus also becoming the first woman to receive her M.D. in the United States. She created a medical school for women in the late 1860s, eventually returning to England and setting up private practice. Blackwell died on May 31, 1910, in Hastings.

## Background and Education

Physician and educator Elizabeth Blackwell was born on February 3, 1821, in Bristol, England. Brought up in a liberal household that stressed education, Blackwell eventually broke into the field of medicine to become the first woman to graduate from medical school in the United States.

In 1832, Blackwell and her family moved to the United States, first settling in New York and later moving to Cincinnati, Ohio. After her father’s death in 1838, Blackwell (who was versed in French and German), her mother and two older sisters all worked as educators to make ends meet.

## Historical Achievement

While in her mid-20s, Blackwell had a friend suffering from a terminal disease who had felt embarrassed going to male doctors, lamenting that she would have fared better having a female physician. Deeply affected by her friend's words and struggling with an affair of the heart as well, Blackwell opted to pursue a career in medicine. But the road to becoming a doctor was not an easy one. As some other women did at the time, she studied independently with doctors before getting accepted in 1847 to Geneva Medical College in upstate New York. Her acceptance was deemed by the student body as an administrative practical joke.

Yet a serious Blackwell showed up to pursue her studies, with her admittance creating community uproar due to the prejudices of the time over women receiving a formal education in medicine. She was ostracized by educators and patients alike at times, though it was also reported that uncouth male students became particularly studious and mature in her presence. Blackwell held firm despite myriad challenges, earning the respect of many of her peers and eventually writing her doctoral thesis on typhus fever. Ranked first in her class, Blackwell graduated in 1849, thus becoming the first woman to become a doctor of medicine in the contemporary era.

## Medical Establishments in New York

Blackwell returned to Europe and worked in London and Paris. She focused on midwifery at La Maternité, where she contracted a disease during a procedure on an infant that left her blind in one eye; she was thus unable to practice surgery as she had wished. Blackwell later returned to New York City and established a private practice, at first struggling financially again due to the prejudices of the day.

In the mid-1850s, she opened a clinic that became known as the New York Dispensary for Poor Women and Children. With help from her sister and fellow doctor Emily Blackwell, who worked as a surgeon, and physician Marie Zakrzewska, Elizabeth Blackwell also established the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women and Children in 1857, an institution that would last for more than a century. At the end of the decade, while lecturing in England, she became the first woman listed on the British Medical Register.

Having maintained that clean sanitary conditions were an important aspect of health, especially in war, Blackwell helped establish the U.S. Sanitary Commission in 1861 under the auspices of [President Abraham Lincoln](http://www.biography.com/people/abraham-lincoln-9382540). In the late 1860s, Blackwell open a medical school for women. The students of the Women’s Medical College of the New York Infirmary thus had a comprehensive, highly structured and competitive curriculum. One of the school’s students for a brief time was Sophia Jex-Blake, who would later open a medical school for women in London.

Soon after establishing the college, Elizabeth Blackwell returned to England. She set up private practice and served as a lecturer at the London School of Medicine for Women. She eventually moved to Hastings, England. Elizabeth Blackwell died at her home there on May 31, 1910. A grand visionary who created opportunities for female physicians of the future, Blackwell published several books over the course of her career, including her 1895 autobiography Pioneer Work in Opening the Medical Profession to Women.

**William Lloyd Garrison**

## Garrison's Brand of Abolitionism

The antislavery movement at this time was decentralized and divided. Some people believed slavery should be abolished gradually, some immediately; some believed slaves should be only partly free until educated and capable of being absorbed into society, others that they ought to be freed but settled in colonies outside the United States. There were those who saw slavery as a moral and religious issue; others considered abolition a problem to be decided by legal and political means. Garrison, like Lundy, at first favored gradual emancipation and colonization. But soon Garrison opposed both means as slow and impractical, asking in his first editorial in the *Genius* for "immediate and complete emancipation" of slaves.

Garrison's militancy got the paper and himself into trouble. Successfully sued for libel, he spent 44 days in jail, emerging in June 1830 with plans for an abolitionist paper of his own. Encouraged by Boston friends, he and a partner published the first number of the *Liberator* on Jan. 1, 1831, bearing the motto, "Our country is the world—our countrymen are mankind," adapted from Thomas Paine. Attacking the "timidity, injustice, and absurdity" of gradualists and colonizationists, Garrison declared himself for "the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population." Promising to be "as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice," he warned his readers, "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 *Liberator,* which never had a circulation of over 3,000 and annually lost money, soon gained Garrison a national abolitionist reputation. Southerners assumed a connection between his aggressive journalism and Nat Turner's 1831 slave rebellion in Virginia and tended to see him as a symbol of unbridled Northern antislavery radicalism; Georgia, in fact, offered $5,000 for his arrest and conviction. Garrison, for his part, continued to pour invective not only on slaveholders but on those who failed to attack the system as violently as he; Northerners who equivocated were guilty of "moral lapses," Southerners were "Satanic man stealers." His bitter attacks on the colonizationists, summarized in *Thoughts on Colonization* (1832), and his running battle with the New England clergy (whose churches he called "cages of unclean birds") for their refusal to condemn slavery unconditionally probably lost more adherents for the antislavery cause than they gained. Garrison introduced discussions into his paper of "other topics … intimately connected with the great doctrine of inalienable human rights," among them women's rights, capital punishment, antisabbatarianism, and temperance (he also opposed theaters and tobacco). Thus by the late 1830s abolition was but one portion (albeit the most important) of Garrison's plan for the "universal emancipation" of all men from all forms of sin and injustice.

# William Lloyd Garrison

***William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879), American editor, reformer, and antislavery crusader, became the symbol of the age of aggressive abolitionism.***

William Lloyd Garrison was born on Dec. 10, 1805, in Newburyport, Mass. His father deserted the family in 1808, and the three children were raised in near poverty by their mother, a hardworking, deeply religious woman. Young Garrison lived for a time in the home of a kindly Baptist deacon, where he received the bare rudiments of an education. He was later apprenticed to a shoemaker, a cabinetmaker, and finally to the printer and editor of theNewburyport Herald.

## Editor and Printer

Garrison borrowed money in 1826 to buy part of the Newburyport Free Press; it soon failed. He worked as a printer in Boston and in 1827 helped edit a temperance paper, the National Philanthropist. Seeing life as an uncompromising moral crusade against sin, and believing it possible to perfect a Christian society by reforming men and institutions, Garrison fitted easily into the evangelical currents of his time. In 1828 a meeting with Benjamin Lundy, the Quaker antislavery editor of the Genius of Emancipation,called his attention to that cause. Since 1828 was a presidential election year, Garrison accepted editorship of a pro-Jackson newspaper in Vermont, in which he also supported pacifism, temperance, and the emancipation of slaves. After the election, Garrison accepted a position with Lundy on theGenius in Baltimore.

## Garrison's Brand of Abolitionism

The antislavery movement at this time was decentralized and divided. Some people believed slavery should be abolished gradually, some immediately; some believed slaves should be only partly free until educated and capable of being absorbed into society, others that they ought to be freed but settled in colonies outside the United States. There were those who saw slavery as a moral and religious issue; others considered abolition a problem to be decided by legal and political means. Garrison, like Lundy, at first favored gradual emancipation and colonization. But soon Garrison opposed both means as slow and impractical, asking in his first editorial in the Genius for "immediate and complete emancipation" of slaves.

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## Organizing the Movement

Recognizing the need for organization, Garrison was instrumental in forming the New England Antislavery Society (later the Massachusetts Antislavery Society) in 1832 and served as its secretary and salaried agent. He visited England in 1833, returning to help found the national American Antislavery Society. In September 1834 he married Helen Benson of Connecticut, who bore him seven children, five of whom survived. When his friend George Thompson, the British abolitionist, visited Boston in 1835, feeling ran so high that a "respectable broadcloth mob," as Garrison called it, failing to find Thompson, seized and manhandled Garrison. Garrison's refusal to consider political action as a way of abolishing slavery (he felt it would delay it) and his desire to join the antislavery movement to other reforms gradually alienated many supporters. In 1840 his stand seriously divided the American Antislavery Society and led to formation of the rival American and Foreign Antislavery Society.

In 1844 Garrison adopted the slogan "No union with slaveholders," arguing that since the Constitution was a proslavery document, the Union it held together should be dissolved by the separation of free from slave states. Yet, despite his reputation, Garrison was a pacifist and did not believe in violence. He thought Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin important chiefly as a novel of "Christian non-resistance," and though he respected John Brown's aim, he did not approve of his method. He wanted, he wrote, "nothing more than the peaceful abolition of slavery, by an appeal to the reason and conscience of the slaveholder."

## Civil War

Garrison supported the Civil War for he believed it an act of providence to destroy slavery, and his son served as an officer in a Massachusetts African American regiment. Critical at first of President Abraham Lincoln for making preservation of the union rather than abolition of slavery his chief aim, Garrison praised the President's Emancipation Proclamation and supported his reelection in 1864—as Wendell Phillips and some other abolitionists did not. Garrison favored dissolution of the American Antislavery Society in 1865, believing its work done, but he lost to Phillips, who wished to continue it. Garrison wrote his last editorial on Dec. 29, 1865, "the object for which theLiberator was commenced—the extermination of chattel slavery—having been gloriously consummated," and retired to Roxbury, Mass., writing occasionally for the press. He died on May 24, 1879.

Despite his reputation, Garrison's influence was restricted to New England (where it was not unchallenged), and his brand of immediatism was never the majority view. When the main thrust of abolition after 1840 turned political, pointing toward the Free Soil and Republican parties, Garrison remained outside, and in terms of practical accomplishment, others did more than he. Yet it was Garrison who became the general symbol of abolitionism. He was influential in relating it to issues of free speech, free press, and the rights of assembly and petition and to the powerful religious evangelism of the times. In his harsh and tactless way, he forced popular awareness of the gap between what the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution said and what the nation did, constantly challenging the country to put its ideals into practice.

William Lloyd Garrison,  (born December 10, 1805, [Newburyport](http://www.britannica.com/place/Newburyport), [Massachusetts](http://www.britannica.com/place/Massachusetts), U.S.—died May 24, 1879, [New York](http://www.britannica.com/place/New-York-state), New York), American journalistic crusader who published a [newspaper](http://www.britannica.com/topic/newspaper), *[The Liberator](http://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Liberator-American-newspaper)* (1831–65), and helped lead the successful abolitionist campaign against [slavery](http://www.britannica.com/topic/slavery-sociology) in the United States.

Garrison was the son of an itinerant seaman who subsequently deserted his family. The son grew up in an atmosphere of declining [New England](http://www.britannica.com/place/New-England) [federalism](http://www.britannica.com/topic/federalism) and lively Christian benevolence—twin sources of the [abolition movement](http://www.britannica.com/topic/abolitionism-European-and-American-social-movement), which he joined at age 25. As editor of the*National Philanthropist* ([Boston](http://www.britannica.com/place/Boston)) in 1828 and the *Journal of the Times* ([Bennington](http://www.britannica.com/place/Bennington-Vermont), Vermont) in 1828–29, he served his apprenticeship in the moral reform cause. In 1829, with pioneer abolitionist [Benjamin Lundy](http://www.britannica.com/biography/Benjamin-Lundy), he became co-editor of the *Genius of Universal Emancipation* in [Baltimore](http://www.britannica.com/place/Baltimore); he also served a short term in jail for libeling a Newburyport merchant who was engaged in the coastal [slave trade](http://www.britannica.com/topic/slave-trade). Released in June 1830, Garrison returned to [Boston](http://www.britannica.com/place/Boston) and, a year later, established [*The Liberator*](http://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Liberator-American-newspaper), which became known as the most uncompromising of American antislavery journals. In the first issue of *The Liberator* he stated his views on[slavery](http://www.britannica.com/topic/slavery-sociology) vehemently: “I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation.… I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD.”

Like most of the abolitionists he recruited, Garrison was a convert from the [American Colonization Society](http://www.britannica.com/topic/American-Colonization-Society), which advocated the return of free blacks to [Africa](http://www.britannica.com/place/Africa), to the principle of “immediate emancipation,” borrowed from Elizabeth Heyrick and other English abolitionists. “Immediatism,” however variously it was interpreted by American reformers, condemned slavery as a national sin, called for emancipation at the earliest possible moment, and proposed schemes for incorporating the freedmen into American society. Through *The Liberator*, which circulated widely both in [England](http://www.britannica.com/place/England) and the United States, Garrison soon achieved recognition as the most radical of American antislavery advocates. In 1832 he founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society, the first immediatist society in the country, and in 1833 he helped organize the [American Anti-Slavery Society](http://www.britannica.com/topic/American-Anti-Slavery-Society), writing its Declaration of Sentiments and serving as its first corresponding secretary. It was primarily as an editorialist, however, excoriating slave owners and their moderate opponents alike, that he became known and feared. “If those who deserve the lash feel it and wince at it,” he wrote in explaining his refusal to alter his harsh tone, “I shall be assured that I am striking the right persons in the right place.”

In 1837, in the wake of financial panic and the failure of abolitionist campaigns to gain support in the North, Garrison renounced church and state and embraced doctrines of Christian “[perfectionism](http://www.britannica.com/topic/perfection),” which combined abolition, women’s rights, and nonresistance, in the biblical injunction to “come out” from a corrupt society by refusing to obey its laws and support its institutions. From this blend of pacifism and anarchism came the Garrisonian principle of “No Union With Slaveholders,” formulated in 1844 as a demand for peaceful Northern secession from a slaveholding South.

By 1840 Garrison’s increasingly personal definition of the slavery problem had precipitated a crisis within the [American Anti-Slavery Society](http://www.britannica.com/topic/American-Anti-Slavery-Society), a majority of whose members disapproved of both the participation of women and Garrison’s no-government theories. Dissension reached a climax in 1840, when the Garrisonians voted a series of resolutions admitting women and thus forced their conservative opponents to secede and form the rival American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Later that year a group of politically minded abolitionists also deserted Garrison’s standard and founded the Liberty Party. Thus, 1840 witnessed the disruption of the national organization and left Garrison in control of a relative handful of followers loyal to his “come-outer” doctrine but deprived of the support of new antislavery converts and of the Northern reform community at large.

In the two decades between the schism of 1840 and the[Civil War](http://www.britannica.com/event/American-Civil-War), Garrison’s influence waned as his radicalism increased. The decade before the war saw his opposition to slavery and to the federal government reach its peak: *The Liberator* denounced the [Compromise of 1850](http://www.britannica.com/event/Compromise-of-1850), condemned the [Kansas-Nebraska Act](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Kansas-Nebraska-Act), damned the [Dred Scott decision](http://www.britannica.com/event/Dred-Scott-decision), and hailed[John Brown](http://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Brown-American-abolitionist)’s raid as “God’s method of dealing retribution upon the head of the tyrant.” In 1854 Garrison publicly burned a copy of the [Constitution](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Constitution-of-the-United-States-of-America) at an abolitionist rally in[Framingham](http://www.britannica.com/place/Framingham), Massachusetts. Three years later he held an abortive secessionist convention in [Worcester](http://www.britannica.com/place/Worcester-Massachusetts), Massachusetts.

The [Civil War](http://www.britannica.com/event/American-Civil-War) forced Garrison to choose between his pacifist beliefs and emancipation. Placing freedom for the slave foremost, he supported [Abraham Lincoln](http://www.britannica.com/biography/Abraham-Lincoln) faithfully and in 1863 welcomed the [Emancipation Proclamation](http://www.britannica.com/event/Emancipation-Proclamation) as the fulfillment of all his hopes. Emancipation brought to the surface the latent conservatism in his program for the freedmen, whose political rights he was not prepared to guarantee immediately. In 1865 he attempted without success to dissolve the American Anti-Slavery Society and then resigned. In December 1865 he published the last issue of *The Liberator* and announced that “my vocation as an abolitionist is ended.” He spent his last 14 years in retirement from public affairs, regularly supporting the [Republican Party](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Republican-Party) and continuing to champion [temperance](http://www.britannica.com/topic/temperance-movement), women’s rights, [pacifism](http://www.britannica.com/topic/pacifism), and free trade. “It is enough for me,” he explained in justifying his refusal to participate in radical egalitarian politics, “that every yoke is broken, and every bondman set free.”

**Sojourner Truth**

Sojourner Truth was an African-American abolitionist and women's rights activist. She was born into slavery in Swartekill, Ulster County, New York, but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826. After going to court to recover her son, she became the first black woman to win such a case against a white man. For more information on Sojourner Truth, see the fact file below.

* Sojourner Truth’s real name was Isabella Baumfree.
* She was born in 1797, on the Colonel Johannes Hardenbergh estate in Swartekill, New York.
* Her parents were Elizabeth and James Baumfree and both were also slaves. She had 12 siblings.
* She was sold at the age of 9 to John Neeley, along with a herd of sheep for $100.
* Sojourner Truth only spoke Dutch until she was sold to the Neeley family. They only spoke English and she learned to speak English quickly because she was severely beaten when she didn’t understand what the family was saying. She was sold several times after that and treated very badly
* She was forced to marry an older slave named Thomas and they had four children: Peter, James, Elizabeth, and Sophia
* Dumont, her last owner, promised Sojourner freedom, but broke his promise. She left one morning with her infant daughter, Sophia
* She wandered, praying for direction, and came to the home of Isaac and Maria Van Wagenen. Dunmont found her and wanted to take her baby when she refused to leave with him, the Van Wagenen’s paid Dunmont $20 for her and she remained with them until state emancipation on July 4, 1827
* Sojourner Truth had a life-changing religious experience while living with the Van Wagenen family. She became an amazing preacher and she eventually became a traveling preacher. In later years she became a political activist, fighting for the freedom of slaves and women’s rights.
* Sojourner Truth died on November 26, 1883, in Battle Creek Michigan, at the age of 86. She has been honored many times since her death.

# Sojourner Truth

**Born: 1797**  
**Ulster County,** [New York](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/New_York.aspx)  
**Died: November 26, 1883**  
**Battle Creek,** [Michigan](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Michigan.aspx)   
African American abolitionist

One of the most famous nineteenth-century black American women, Sojourner Truth was an uneducated former slave who actively opposed slavery. Though she never learned to read or write, she became a moving speaker for black freedom and women's rights. While many of her fellow black abolitionists (people who campaigned for the end of slavery) spoke only to blacks, Truth spoke mainly to whites. While they spoke of violent uprisings, she spoke of reason and religious understanding.

Sojourner Truth was born Isabella Baumfree around 1797 on an estate owned by Dutch settlers in Ulster County, New York. She was the second youngest in a slave family of the ten or twelve children of James Baumfree and his wife Elizabeth (known as "Mau-Mau Bett"). When her owner died in 1806, Isabella was put up for auction. Over the next few years, she had several owners who treated her poorly. John Dumont purchased her when she was thirteen, and she worked for him for the next seventeen years.

In 1817 the state of New York passed a law granting freedom to slaves born before July 4, 1799. However, this law declared that those slaves could not be freed until July 4, 1827. While waiting ten years for her freedom, Isabella married a fellow slave named Thomas, with whom she had five children. As the date of her release approached, she realized that Dumont was plotting to keep her enslaved. In 1826 she ran away, leaving her husband and her children behind.

## Wins court case to regain son

Three important events took place in Isabella's life over the next two years. She found refuge with Maria and Isaac Van Wagenen, who bought her from Dumont and gave her freedom. She then underwent a religious experience, claiming from that point on she could talk directly to [God](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/God.aspx). Lastly, she sued to retrieve her son Peter, who had been sold illegally to a plantation owner in[Alabama](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Alabama.aspx). In 1828, with the help of a lawyer, Isabella became the first black woman to take a white man to court and win.

Soon thereafter, Isabella moved with Peter to New York City and began following Elijah Pierson, who claimed to be a prophet. He was soon joined by another religious figure known as Matthias, who claimed to be the [Messiah](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Messiah.aspx). They formed a cult known as the "Kingdom" and moved to Sing Sing (renamed Ossining) in southeast New York in 1833. Isabella grew apart from them and stayed away from their activities. But when Matthias was arrested for murdering Pierson, she was accused of being an accomplice. A white couple in the cult, the Folgers, also claimed that Isabella had tried to poison them. For the second time, she went to court. She was found innocent in the Matthias case, and decided to file a slander suit against the Folgers. In 1835 she won, becoming the first black person to win such a suit against a white person.

## Changes name

For the next eight years, Isabella worked as a household servant in New York City. In 1843, deciding her mission was to preach the word of God, Isabella changed her name to Sojourner Truth and left the city. Truth traveled throughout [New England](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/New_England.aspx), attending and holding prayer sessions. She supported herself with odd jobs and often slept outside. At the end of the year, she joined the Northampton Association, a Massachusetts community founded on the ideas of freedom and equality. It is through the Northampton group that Truth met other social reformers and abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass (1817–1895), who introduced her to their movement.

During the 1850s, the issue of slavery heated up in the [United States](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/United_States.aspx). In 1850 Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law, which allowed runaway slaves to be arrested and jailed without a jury trial. In 1857 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case of Dred Scott (1795?–1858) that slaves had no rights as citizens and that the government could not outlaw slavery in new territories.

## Lectures to hostile crowds

The results of the Scott case and the unsettling times did not frighten Truth away from her mission. Her life story, Narrative of Sojourner Truth, cowritten with Olive Gilbert, was published in 1850. She then headed west and made stops in town after town to speak about her experiences as a slave and her eventual freedom. Her colorful and down-to-earth style often soothed the hostile crowds she faced. While on her travels, Truth noted that while women could be leaders in the abolitionist movement, they could neither vote nor hold public office. Realizing she was discriminated against on two fronts, Truth became an outspoken supporter of women's rights.

By the mid-1850s, Truth had earned enough money from sales of her popular autobiography to buy land and a house in Battle Creek, Michigan. She continued her lectures, traveling throughout the Midwest. When the [Civil War](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Civil_War.aspx)began in 1861, she visited black troops stationed near [Detroit](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Detroit.aspx), Michigan, offering them encouragement. Shortly after meeting U.S. president [Abraham Lincoln](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Abraham_Lincoln.aspx) (1809–1865) in October 1864, she decided to stay in the Washington area to work at a hospital and counsel freed slaves.

## Continues fight for freed slaves

Following the end of the Civil War, Truth continued to work with freed slaves. After her arm had been dislocated by a streetcar conductor who had refused to let her ride, she fought for and won the right for blacks to share Washington streetcars with whites. For several years she led a campaign to have land in the West set aside for freed blacks, many of whom were poor and homeless after the war. She carried on her lectures for the rights of blacks and women throughout the 1870s. Failing health, however, soon forced Truth to return to her Battle Creek home. She died there on November 26, 1883.

**Lucretia Mott**

Lucretia Mott - Early Life

Lucretia Mott was one of eight children born to Ann Folger and Thomas Coffin, Jr. in Nantucket, Massachusetts. Raised as a Quaker, she was used to being treated more or less equally to men, for the Quaker religion fostered a sense of education in all its members. When she was a teenager, Mott was sent to a co-educational school called Nine Partners. By the time she was fifteen, she was working as an assistant teacher there. She also met her future husband, James Mott.

Lucretia and James married in 1811. James Mott was an unusual husband for his time, because he encouraged his wife's activities outside the home. Lucretia began to speak at Quaker meetings in 1818. By 1821, she had become an official minister of the religion.

Lucretia and James Mott

Lucretia James Mott

The World Anti-Slavery Conference

As were many progressives (people who fought for economic and social equality for the masses), Lucretia Mott was heavily involved in the anti-slavery movement. In 1837, she helped organize the first Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women in New York City. She traveled from the East to the Midwest and back again, attending meetings and speaking where she was needed. She worked closely with other anti-slavery advocates, including Frederick Douglass and Lucy Stone. She even assisted escaping slaves along the Underground Railroad, housing them in her own home.

Along with other anti-slavery activists, Lucretia Mott and her husband attended the World Anti-Slavery Conference, held in London, England. Despite being chosen as a delegate, Mott - along with other women delegates - was denied a seat. She was denied the right to speak at the conference. It was then that Mott began to see that women were, in a way, almost as subjugated as slaves.

But it was at the World Anti-Slavery Conference that Mott met Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a fellow delegate who had also been denied a seat at the convention. It was there they formed a friendship - one that would lead to their organizing the first women's annual rights convention (the Seneca Falls Convention) eight years later.

## Synopsis

Born Lucretia Coffin on January 3, 1793, in Nantucket, Massachusetts, Lucretia Mott was a women's rights activist, abolitionist, and religious reformer. Mott was strongly opposed to slavery and a supporter of William Lloyd Garrison and his American Anti-Slavery Society. She was dedicated to women's rights, publishing her influential Discourse on Woman and founding Swarthmore College. Mott died in Pennsylvania in 1880.

## Early Life

Women's rights activist, abolitionist and religious reformer Lucretia Mott was born Lucretia Coffin on January 3, 1793, in Nantucket, Massachusetts. A child of Quaker parents, Mott grew up to become a leading social reformer. At the age of 13, she attended a Quaker boarding school in New York State. She stayed on and worked there as a teaching assistant. While at the school, Mott met her future husband James Mott. The couple married in 1811 and lived in Philadelphia.

## Civil Rights Activist

By 1821, Lucretia Mott became a Quaker minister, noted for her speaking abilities. She and her husband went over with the more progressive wing of their faith in 1827. Mott was strongly opposed to slavery, and advocated not buying the products of slave labor, which prompted her husband, always her supporter, to get out of the cotton trade around 1830. An early supporter of William Lloyd Garrison and his American Anti-Slavery Society, she often found herself threatened with physical violence due to her radical views.

Lucretia Mott and her husband attended the famous World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840, the one that refused to allow women to be full participants. This led to her joining Elizabeth Cady Stanton in calling the famous Seneca Falls Convention in New York in 1848 (at which, ironically, James Mott was asked to preside), and from that point on she was dedicated to women's rights and published her influential Discourse on Woman (1850).

While remaining within the Society of Friends, in practice and beliefs Mott actually identified increasingly with more liberal and progressive trends in American religious life, even helping to form the Free Religious Association in Boston in 1867.

## Final Years

While keeping up her commitment to women's rights, Mott also maintained the full routine of a mother and housewife, and continued after the Civil War to work for advocating the rights of African Americans. She helped to found Swarthmore College in 1864, continued to attend women's rights conventions, and when the movement split into two factions in 1869, she tried to bring the two together.

Mott died on November 11, 1880, in Chelton Hills (now part of Philadelphia), Pennsyvlania.

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton**

[13 Things About Elizabeth Cady Stanton](http://historyiselementary.blogspot.com/2008/02/13-things-about-elizabeth-cady-stanton.html)

1. Her father Daniel Cady was hoping for a boy when Elizabeth was born in 1815.  
  
2. Elizabeth got a lifelong exposure to the law in that her father was a lawyer, assemblyman, and congressman.  
  
3. She excelled in Greek, Latin, and Math at Troy Female Seminary.  
  
4. She married Henry Brewster Stanton, a prominent abolitionist. At first Elizabeth’s father objected to the match because Stanton had no means of support, but relented when Stanton agreed to legal training with his father-in-law.  
  
5. Because the young couple were only focused on reforms they never obtained the type of wealth Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s parents or sisters enjoyed.  
  
6. She had the word obey omitted from her wedding ceremony and then spent her honeymoon at the Anti-Slavery Convention held in 1840 in the city of London. She was a little miffed when women were not included as delegates at the convention.  
  
7. In July, 1848 she spoke out for a women’s rights convention with Lucretia Mott and others. Later she drafted the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments radically calling for the right to vote.  
  
8. Susan B. Anthony also became a great friend of Staton. Together they spoke out against laws that discriminated against married women including statutes that denied married women the right to own property or even hold the guardianship of their children.  
  
9. While many of the leaders of the early movement for women’s rights focused mainly on suffrage Elizabeth Cady Staton spoke out on many different issues involving women’s rights including equal wages and liberal divorce laws.  
  
10. She believed the Bible was partial to men…..so much so she wrote a book called The Women’s Bible where sexism was discussed. Many of her colleagues in the women’s rights movement did not hold her views and many began to distance themselves from her.  
  
11. She had a close working relationship with Susan B. Anthony where Stanton was the writer and Anthony delivered the speeches. After the Civil War when legislators were mainly focused on voting rights for black males Anthony and Stanton continued to speak out for women’s suffrage and formed the National Women’s Suffrage Association.  
  
12. One fact I find amazing…..one of the reasons why Stanton stayed home and allowed Anthony the job of foot soldier in the movement was Stanton stayed home with her seven children. Anthony had no children and it was easier for her to travel. Interesting……  
  
13. At her death she left behind an unmailed letter to Theodore Roosevelt asking for his support in the women’s suffrage movement.  
  
Finally, a great quote from Stanton, *“Whatever the theories may be of woman’s dependence on man, in the supreme moments of her life he can not bear her burdens.”*

1. Stanton’s passion for women’s rights was forged during childhood.

Stanton was the eighth of 11 children born to Margaret Livingston and Daniel Cady, a respected lawyer, judge and congressman. A precocious child, she spent much of her girlhood observing the goings on at her father’s law office, where she was disgusted to learn of the many inequitable laws restricting women’s freedom and ability to inherit property. She even schemed to snip the offending passages out of her father’s law books in the hope of invalidating them. While he would later disapprove of her activism, Judge Cady initially encouraged his daughter by loaning her law books and explaining that objectionable statutes could be overturned by public appeals to the government. “Thus was the future object of my life foreshadowed and my duty plainly outlined,” Stanton later wrote.

2. She got her start as an activist in the abolitionist movement.

In 1839, Elizabeth Cady met and fell in love with an abolitionist lecturer and journalist named Henry Stanton. The two were married a year later—Elizabeth insisted on having the word “obey” removed from their wedding vows—and went on to settle in Boston, where they became active in the anti-slavery cause and rubbed elbows with the likes of Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison. Along with providing a blueprint for her later social activism, Stanton’s experiences in the abolitionist movement helped spark her involvement in women’s rights. A key incident came at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where women delegates were unfairly excluded from the proceedings and banished to a visitors’ gallery. Stung by the hypocrisy of their male counterparts, Stanton and fellow abolitionist Lucretia Mott resolved to begin a political crusade on behalf of their gender. They would remain allies until Mott’s death in 1880.

lucretia mot

Lucretia Mott (Credit: Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery)

3. Stanton organized the first women’s rights convention.

While living in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848, Stanton joined with Lucretia Mott and others in convening 300 people for a convention “to discuss the social, civil and religious conditions and rights of Woman.” Stanton took center stage with a reading of her “Declaration of Sentiments,” a rewriting of the Declaration of Independence that proclaimed, “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal.” The document was accompanied by a series of resolutions to be ratified by those in attendance. Much to the chagrin of her fellow organizers, who feared they would be ridiculed, Stanton insisted on including a measure supporting women’s right to vote. The resolution passed after considerable debate, forever changing the direction of the movement and establishing Stanton as one of the most provocative thinkers on the subject of women’s rights.

4. She wrote many of Susan B. Anthony’s speeches.

Stanton gave birth to seven children between 1842 and 1859, but while she continued to write from the confines of her home, her duties as a wife and mother often prevented her from taking an active role in the women’s rights movement. The self-described “caged lioness” finally found a vehicle for her philosophy in 1851, when she met the Massachusetts-born Quaker and reformer Susan B. Anthony. The two women struck up a lifelong friendship, and the unmarried Anthony later traveled the country delivering speeches that Stanton had composed in between bathing her kids and cooking meals. Anthony sometimes even babysat the Stanton brood to give her friend time to work. Stanton returned to the road after her children were grown, but Anthony continued to serve as the face of the women’s rights movement for the rest of their lives. “I forged the thunderbolts and she fired them,” Stanton later said.

elizabeth cady stanton, susan b anthony

Elizabeth Cady Stantion and Susan B. Anthony (Credit: Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery)

5. Stanton was a critic of the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution.

Stanton strongly supported the abolition of slavery, but she and Anthony courted controversy during Reconstruction by opposing the 14th and 15th Amendments, which enshrined black voting rights in the Constitution. Their objections centered on the use of the phrase “male citizens” in the text of the 14th Amendment. Rather than risk a permanent setback in their own fight for the vote, the pair urged their fellow abolitionists to hold out for an amendment that included both men and women of all races. Stanton alienated many former allies by resorting to controversial arguments, once saying that it was better for a black woman “to be the slave of an educated white man, than of a degraded, ignorant black one.” Her pleas failed to stop either amendment, and by 1869, the debate had splintered the women’s rights movement into two rival factions. The groups wouldn’t be reunited until 1890, when they merged to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association with Stanton as its first president.

6. She was the first woman to run for Congress.

Though barred from voting, Stanton knew there was no law preventing her from taking national office if elected. With this in mind, she announced in 1866 that she was running for a Congressional seat in New York. “I have no political antecedents to recommend me to your support,” she wrote in a letter announcing her candidacy, “but my creed is free speech, free press, free men, and free trade—the cardinal points of democracy.” Stanton went on to receive a total of 24 votes—some of the first ever cast for a female politician.

elizabeth cady stanton

Credit: Time Life Pictures/Mansell/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

7. Stanton’s radical ideas earned her a public rebuke from the women’s rights movement.

Stanton made a career out of pushing the envelope, but her ideas were occasionally too revolutionary even for her fellow activists. She caused a scandal by calling for more liberal divorce laws at an 1860 women’s rights convention, and later shocked many suffragists by embracing a brand of feminism that advocated everything from equitable wage laws to women’s rights to serve on juries and withhold sex from their husbands. By far the biggest controversy unfolded in 1895, when the octogenarian reformer published the first volume of “The Woman’s Bible,” a scathing examination of the role organized religion played in denying women their rights. The book was as instant bestseller, but it drew harsh criticism from Christian members of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Ignoring protests from Susan B. Anthony, the Association later voted to formally denounce the book and distance itself from its author. Stanton would remain an outsider in the suffrage movement for the rest of her life.

8. She tried to donate her brain to science.

In 1887, fellow women’s rights activist Helen Gardener asked Stanton to will her brain to Cornell University for postmortem preservation and study. At the time, there were widespread claims that the shape and size of men’s brains made them naturally smarter than women, and Gardener hoped that an examination of Stanton’s grey matter would disprove them once and for all. Never one to doubt her own intelligence, Stanton approved a “Bequest of Brain to Cornell University,” but following her death in 1902, her children refused to honor the agreement. Undeterred, Gardener later donated her own brain to science after her death in 1925. It remains in the Cornell collection to this day.

Harriet Stanton Blach

Harriet Stanton Blach

9. Stanton’s daughter was also a prominent women’s rights activist.

In her later years, Stanton fought for women’s rights alongside her youngest daughter, Harriot Stanton Blatch. A graduate of Vassar College, Harriot joined the struggle in the 1880s and later assisted her mother and Susan B. Anthony in completing their multi-volume “History of Woman Suffrage.” After Stanton’s death, she founded the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women, an organization that enlisted thousands of low-income factory and garment workers into the suffrage movement. The group played a key role in finally securing passage of the 19th Amendment in 1919, and Harriot went on to join reformer Alice Paul and others in lobbying for an additional Equal Rights Amendment. Concerned that Stanton’s contributions to the cause were being forgotten, she later collaborated with her brother Theodore on a 1922 book about their mother’s life and legacy.

10 Facts About Women’s Rights Leader Elizabeth Cady Stanton

July 13, 2012

rorypond2020 History Elizabeth Cady Stanton, feminism, Seneca Falls, suffrage, Susan B. Anthony, voting rights, women's rights 1 Comment

1. Cady Stanton was heavily involved as an abolitionist before turning her sights to women’s rights, but she broke with many of her former allies after the Civil War, especially over the issue of giving African-American men the right to vote while denying it to women of all races.

2. Cady Stanton’s cousin, Gerrit Smith, was one of the “Secret Six” who supported John Brown’s raid at Harpers Ferry.

3. Cady Stanton’s husband, Henry Stanton, was rather wishy-washy on the subject of women’s rights. Also, while an avid social reformer, his dreams of a political career met with only limited success.

4. Although a speaker and thinker of tremendous gifts, Cady Stanton often had to be prodded by Susan B. Anthony to utilize her talents.

5. Cady Stantion co-authored the influential History of Woman Suffrage with Anthony and Matilda Joslyn Gage.

6. Cady Stanton is the subject of Vivian Gornick’s mesmerizing The Solitude of Self: Thinking About Elizabeth Cady Stanton, which focuses on the suffragist’s later years (and illuminates as much about Gornick as about Cady Stanton).

7. Cady Stanton’s “Declaration of Sentiments” was presented at the legendary Seneca Falls Convention and helped to jump-start the nascent suffragist movement in the U.S.

8. Cady Stanton’s wider view of women’s rights, which went beyond voting rights to include such things as property rights, parental rights, and divorce, helped to bring about a serious divide in the women’s rights movement of the time.

9. Cady Stanton’s daughter, Harriot Stanton Blatch, was also a women’s rights activist, and was known for her organizing strategies.

10. Cady Stanton died in 1902 was buried in Woodlawn Cemetary in the Bronx, NY.

**Susan B. Anthony**

Susan B. Anthony Facts

Susan B. Anthony was born on February 15th, 1820 into a Quaker family in Adams, Massachusetts that was committed to social equality. Her father was Daniel Anthony, an abolitionist and temperance advocate. Her mother was Lucy Reed, and although she herself was not a Quaker, she raised her children with Daniel in a less strict version of Quaker religious tradition. Throughout Susan's life she became known for her work as a women's rights advocate, abolitionist, and suffragist. By the time she was 17 she was already collecting anti-slavery petitions. Much of her life was spent speaking about equal rights around the country, collecting petitions and organizing women's rights and labor organizations.

Interesting Susan B. Anthony Facts:

Susan B. Anthony's full name was Susan Brownell Anthony.

Susan B. Anthony was the second of seven children in her family.

She attended public school until she was seven and the teacher refused to teach her long division. Her father then founded an educational program in her neighborhood where Susan and her siblings and other children were taught.

Susan taught at the school her father founded beginning in 1837, and various other schools in the early 1840s.

She joined a teachers union to fight for equal wages when she discovered that male teachers were making $10 a month and female teachers were only making $2.50 a month in wages.

Susan B. Anthony met Elizabeth Cady Stanton, credited with initiating the first women's suffrage and women's rights movements in America, in 1851. This was the beginning of a lifelong friendship and working relationship.

In 1856 Susan B. Anthony was appointed the New York state agent for American Anti-Slavery Society.

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton founded the National Women Suffrage Association in 1869.

Susan B. Anthony appeared every year from 1869 to 1906 (the year she died) before Congress, asking for the passage of a woman's suffrage amendment. The nineteenth amendment was finally passed in 1920, 14 years after Susan B. Anthony died.

The National American Woman Suffrage Association was formed in 1887, and Anthony and Stanton served as the first two presidents.

Susan B. Anthony was arrested in 1872 for voting - which was illegal for women at the time. She was convicted of the offence but never paid the fine.

Susan gave as many as 75 to 100 speeches each year in support of woman's suffrage.

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton started a newspaper called The Revolution in 1868. They ran it for 29 months and then transferred to a wealthy woman's rights activist when mounting debt threatened the paper's survival. The new owner published for less than two years after. Although the paper didn't last very long it helped to express important views.

A U.S. one dollar coin was minted in 1979 to 1981 and in 1999. She was the first real woman printed on circulating currency in the U.S.

Susan B. Anthony died on March 13th, 1906 in her home in Rochester, New York.

The last time she spoke publicly she spoke the words 'failure is impossible', which are now famous.

The National Susan B. Anthony Museum and House is located in Rochester at her home. It is registered as a National Historic Landmark.

### 1. She was not present at the 1848 Seneca Falls Woman’s Rights Convention

At the time of the [first Convention](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage1848/a/seneca_falls.htm), as Elizabeth Cady Stanton later wrote about in [her reminiscences in The History of Woman Suffrage](http://womenshistory.about.com/library/etext/bl_hws_chapter_xiiia.htm), Anthony was teaching school in Canajoharie, in the Mohawk valley.

Stanton reports that Anthony, when she read of the proceedings, was “startled and amused” and “laughed heartily at the novelty and presumption of the demand.” Anthony’s sister Mary -- with whom Susan lived for many years in adulthood -- and their parents attended a woman’s rights meeting held at the First Unitarian Church in Rochester, where the Anthony family had begun attending services, after the Seneca Falls meeting, and there signed a copy of the [Declaration of Sentiments](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage1848/a/seneca_declartn.htm) passed at Seneca Falls.  Susan was not present to attend.

### 2. She was for abolition before she was for women’s rights

Susan B.

Anthony was circulating anti-slavery petitions when she was 16 and 17 years old.  She worked for a while as the New York state agent for the American Anti-Slavery Society. Like many other women abolitionists, she began to see that in the “aristocracy of sex… woman finds a political master in her father, husband, brother, son.” She [first met Elizabeth Cady Stanton](http://womenshistory.about.com/library/etext/bl_hws_chapter_xiiib.htm) after Stanton had attended an anti-slavery meeting at Seneca Falls.

### 3. With Elizabeth Cady Stanton, she founded the New York Women’s State Temperance Society

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and [Lucretia Mott](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffragepre1848/p/lucretia_mott.htm)’s experience of being unable to speak at an international Anti-Slavery meeting led to their forming the [1848 Woman’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage1848/a/seneca_falls.htm); when Anthony was not permitted to speak at a temperance meeting, she and Stanton formed a women’s temperance group in their state.

### 4. She celebrated her 80th birthday at the White House

By the time she was 80 years old, even though woman suffrage was far from won, she was enough of a public institution that President William McKinley invited her to celebrate her birthday at the White House.

### 5. She voted in the presidential election of 1872

Susan B. Anthony and a group of 14 other women in Rochester, New York, registered to vote at a local barber shop in 1872, part of the New Departure strategy of the woman suffrage movement. On November 5, 1872, she cast a ballot in the presidential election. On November 28, the fifteen women and the registrars were arrested. She contended that women already had the constitutional right to vote; the court disagreed in [United States v. Susan B. Anthony](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/laws/p/us_v_sba.htm).

### 6. She was the first real woman depicted on U.S. currency

While other female figures like Lady Liberty had been on the currency before, the 1979 dollar featuring Susan B. Anthony was the first time a real, historical woman appeared on any U.S. currency.

### 7. She had little patience for traditional Christianity

Originally a Quaker, with a maternal grandfather who had been a Universalist, she became more active with the Unitarians later. She, like many of her time, flirted with Spiritualism, a belief that spirits were part of the natural world and thus could be communicated with.  She kept her religious ideas mostly private, though she defended the publication of The Woman’s Bible and criticized religious institutions and teachings that portrayed women as inferior or subordinate. Claims that she was an atheist are usually based on her critique of religious institutions and religion as practiced.  She defended the right of Ernestine Rose to be president of the National Women’s Rights Convention in 1854, though many called Rose, a Jew married to a Christian, an atheist, probably accurately. Anthony said about that controversy that “every religion -- or none -- should have an equal right on the platform.” She also wrote, “I distrust those people who know so well what God wants them to do, because I notice it always coincides with their own desires.” At another time, she wrote, “I shall earnestly and persistently continue to urge all women to the practical recognition of the old Revolutionary maxim. Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God.” Whether she was an atheist, or just believed in a different idea of God than some of her evangelical opponents believed in, is not certain.

### 8. Frederick Douglass was a lifelong friend

Though they split over the issue of the priority of black male suffrage in the 1860s -- a split which also split the feminist movement until 1890 -- Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass were lifelong friends. They knew each other from early days in Rochester, where in the 1840s and 1850s he was part of the anti-slavery circle that Susan and her family were part of. On the day Douglass died, he had sat next to Anthony on the platform of a women’s rights meeting in Washington, DC. During the split over the Fifteenth Amendment’s granting of suffrage rights to black males, Douglass tried to influence Anthony to support the ratification, but Anthony, appalled that the Amendment would introduce the word “male” into the Constitution for the first time, disagreed.

### 9. Her earliest known Anthony ancestor was from Germany (via England)

Susan B. Anthony’s Anthony ancestors came to America via England in 1634. The Anthonys had been a prominent and well-educated family. The English Anthony’s were descended from a William Anthony from Germany who was an engraver who served as Chief Graver of the Royal Mint during the reigns of Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I.

### 10. Her maternal frandfather fought in the American Revolution

Daniel Read enlisted in the Continental Army after the battle of Lexington, served under Benedict Arnold and Ethan Allen among other commanders, and after the war was elected as a Whig to the Massachusetts legislature. He became a Universalist though his wife kept praying he would return to traditional Christianity.

### 11. Her position on abortion was not quite what it’s sometimes represented to be

While Anthony, like other leading women of her time, deplored abortion both as “child-murder” and as a threat to the life of women under then-current medical practice, she blamed men as responsible for women’s decisions to end their pregnancies, and the often-used quote about child-murder was part of an editorial asserting that laws attempting to punish women for having abortions would be unlikely to suppress abortions, and asserting that many women seeking abortions were doing so out of desperation, not casually. She also asserted that “forced maternity” within legal marriage -- because husbands were not seeing their wives as having a right to their own bodies and selves -- was another outrage.

### 12. She may have had female lovers or partners

Anthony lived at a time when the concept of “lesbian” hadn’t really surfaced. It’s hard to differentiate whether “romantic friendships” and “Boston marriages” of the time would have been considered lesbian relationships today. Anthony lived for many of her adult years with her sister Mary. Women (and men) wrote in more romantic terms of friendships than we do today, so when Susan B. Anthony, in a letter, wrote that she “shall go to Chicago and visit my new lover -- dear Mrs. Gross” it’s hard to know what she really meant. Clearly, there were very strong emotional bonds between Anthony and some other women. As Lillian Falderman documents in the controversial To Believe in Women, Anthony also wrote of her distress when fellow feminists got married to men or had children, and wrote in very flirtatious ways -- including invitations to share her bed. Her niece Lucy Anthony was a life partner of suffrage leader and Methodist minister Anna Howard Shaw, so such relationships were not foreign to her experience. Faderman suggests that Susan B. Anthony may have had relationships with Anna Dickinson, Rachel Avery and Emily Gross at different times in her life. There are photos of Emily Gross and Anthony together, and even a statue of the two created in 1896.  Unlike others in her circle, though, her relationships with women never had the permanence of a “Boston marriage.” We really can’t know for sure if the relationships were what we’d today call lesbian relationships, but we do know that the idea that Anthony was a lonely single woman is not at all the full story. She had rich friendships with her female friends. And some real friendships with men, too, though those letters are not so flirtatious.

### 13. A ship was named for Susan B. Anthony and holds a world’s record for lives saved

In 1942, a ship was named for Susan B. Anthony. Built in 1930 and called the Santa Clara until the Navy chartered it on August 7, 1942, the ship became one of very few named for a woman. It was commissioned in September, and became a transport ship carrying troops and equipment for the Allied invasion of North Africa in October and November. It made three voyages from the U.S. coast to North Africa.

After landing troops and equipment in Sicily in July 1943, as part of the Allied invasion of Sicily, it took heavy enemy aircraft fire and bombings, and shot down two of the enemy bombers. Returning to the United States, it spent months taking troops and equipment to Europe as preparation for the invasion of Normandy. On June 7, 1944, it struck a mine off of Normandy, and after failed attempts to save it, the troops and crew were evacuated and the Susan B. Anthony sank.

As of the year 2000, this was the largest rescue on record of people from a ship without any loss of life.

The B stands for Brownell  
1  
Susan was arrested for voting in 1872. She was fined $100 and never paid it!  
8  
She and her friend Elizabeth Cady Stanton founded the National Women's Suffrage (right to vote) Association in 1869.  
5  
Susan learned to read and write by age 3.  
2  
As a teacher, she earned $2.50 a week. Men earned $10.00 a week.   
3  
Susan gave speeches around the country to gain support for women's rights.   
  
  
6  
Susan never married and did not have any children.   
9  
Susan was a civil rights leader. She was an abolitionist and wanted equal rights for women.   
4  
She lived in Rochester, New York, and was friends with Frederick Douglass.   
7  
The Susan B. Anthony dollar was designed to honor her.  
10

**Dorothea Dix**

# DIX, DOROTHEA LYNDE

Dorothea Lynde Dix was a remarkably fore-sighted educator and social reformer who made major contributions to the welfare of persons with mental illness, prisoners, and injured Civil War soldiers. Dix was born on April 4, 1802, in Hampden, Maine. Her father, Joseph Dix, was an alcoholic and circuit-riding Methodist preacher who required young Dorothea to spend her time laboriously stitching and pasting the thick religious tracts he wrote and sold during his travels. Although considered a strict and sometimes abusive father, Joseph Dix taught his daughter to read and write at an early age. Dix, in turn, taught reading and writing to her two younger brothers. Her mother, Mary (Bigelow) Dix, suffered from depression that made it difficult for her to care for her three children.

At age 12, Dix lived briefly with her father's mother in Boston and then moved in with an aunt in Worcester, Massachusetts. Although her grandmother helped with her education, Dix

had little formal training. Gifted with strong beliefs and intellectual abilities, Dix, at age 14, began teaching young girls a rigorous curriculum that she had created with emphasis on the natural sciences and ethical responsibilities. In 1821, Dix moved back to Boston and opened a private school on property belonging to her grandmother.

Dix combined teaching with a prolific schedule of writing books and religious tracts, including Meditations for Private Hours (1828), The Garland of Flora(1829), and American Moral Tales for Young Persons (1832). One of her best known and most-often reprinted publications was Conversations on Common Things, which was published in 1824 as a guide to help parents answer everyday questions, such as "Why do we call this day Monday?" and "What is tin?"

"Man is not made better by being degraded;he is seldom restrained from crime by harsh measures, except the principle of fear predominates in his character;and then he is never made radically better for its influence."  
—Dorothea Dix

After her father's death in 1821, Dix used her income to support her mother and her two younger brothers who had come to live with her in Boston. In addition to the private school she ran, Dix also conducted free evening classes for indigent children. She read prodigiously, continued to study the natural sciences as well as history and literature, attended public lectures, and met the leading members of Boston's intellectual and religious communities. She made the acquaintance of many Unitarians and became friends with William Ellery Channing, the famed pastor of Unitarian Federal Street Church in Boston and his wife Julia Allen Channing.

Never robust, Dix suffered intermittently from depression and chronic upper respiratory infections variously attributed to tuberculosis and malaria. Her illnesses would flare up from time to time, exacerbated by the demanding schedule she kept and she developed a pattern of cutting back briefly on her work until she was able to resume her tasks. In 1836, Dix broke down while trying to care for her ill grandmother in addition to all her other duties and it became clear that she would need to take an extended period of rest.

She closed her school and sailed to Europe where she stayed in Liverpool, England, with William Rathbone and his wife who were friends of the Channings. Rathbone was a prominent humanitarian and philanthropist who introduced Dix to a number of social welfare advocates including prison reformer Elizabeth Fry and William Tuke, a Quaker who had opened the York Retreat for the Mentally Disordered and who pioneered the theory of humane treatment for persons with mental illness.

While Dix was in England, both her mother and her grandmother died, the latter leaving Dix a large inheritance. The income from the inheritance and royalties from her books were sufficient to give Dix a comfortable living for the rest of her life. Dix returned to Boston in 1838 and spent several years visiting friends and family members and traveling to various points of interest.

In 1841, a ministerial student asked Dix to teach a Sunday school class to a group of women incarcerated in the East Cambridge Jail in Massachusetts. Her first visit to the jail marked a turning point in her life. After teaching the class, Dix toured the jail. On the lower level she found the "dungeon cells" that housed inmates considered to be insane. Dix was horrified to find men, women, and children, half-naked and underfed, chained to walls, and forced to sleep on the floors of the filthy unlit cells.

Dix immediately took action. She surveyed every jail, poorhouse, and prison in Massachusetts. In 1843, she delivered a report to the Massachusetts state legislature. Legislators and others at first criticized the report and denied the charges. When Dix's charges were sustained by independent observations, the legislature allocated funds to expand the State Mental Hospital at Worcester.

Dix continued her investigations in other states, first in New England and eventually nationwide. Dix traveled the country systematically collecting data that she would then present in reports (called "memorials") to various state legislatures. Seeking the establishment of state-supported institutions, Dix would lobby state officials and influential persons and attempt to raise a public outcry over the dreadful conditions she had found.

Until Dix began her campaign to better the lives of persons with mental illness, the popular assumption was that persons who were insane were incurable and did not feel deprivation in the same way as ordinary persons. Dix was among the first to espouse the theory that insanity was treatable and that better living conditions could do much to help persons with mental illness.

In three years, the indefatigable Dix traveled over 30,000 miles crusading for her cause. Her labors proved highly successful. In 1843, when she delivered her first memorial, there were 13 mental institutions in the United States. Several decades later, that number had grown to 123 with Dix helping to found 32 of them. In addition, Dix's efforts played a major part in the founding of 15 schools for what were then called the "feeble-minded," a school for blind persons, and a number of training schools for nurses.

Buoyed by her success, Dix next set out to accomplish her goal of persuading Congress to set aside five million acres in federal land grants; the idea was that income from the land trusts would be used to endow state mental hospitals. In 1854, Congress passed the legislation she sought. Although President millard fillmore favored the bill, it did not reach his desk before the end of his term. The bill was vetoed by Fill-more's successor, President franklin pierce, thus dashing the hopes of Dix and her supporters of establishing federal funding for mentally ill persons. Eventually, in 1855, Congress provided funds for the founding of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C., which remains the oldest large mental hospital that is federally funded.

Worn out and discouraged, Dix traveled to Europe to rest. Instead, she found herself investigating the same deplorable conditions in prisons and poorhouses in numerous European countries and once again began campaigning for, and achieving, many reforms. Throughout the 1850s, Dix worked for humanitarian reform in the United States and Europe as well in Canada, Russia, and Japan.

In 1845, Dix published a treatise entitled Remarks on Prisons and Prison Discipline in the United States, in which she advocated for progressive reforms for ordinary prisoners including the separation of prisoners according to the type of offense committed and the need for education of prisoners.

In 1861, at the beginning of the Civil War, the 59-year-old Dix volunteered her services and was made superintendent of women nurses for the Union Army. Although she worked until 1866 helping to organize women volunteers, establish hospitals, and raise funds, her capabilities as an administrator were questioned and her tenure was viewed as only partially successful.

Dix resumed her work with persons with mental illness in 1867. She found many problems including rising immigration rates, state treasuries depleted by the war, a growing population of indigent persons with mental illness, and state legislatures that had new priorities. She continued her fight until ill health forced her to stop. In 1881, Dix took up residence in the guest quarters of the Trenton, New Jersey, state hospital she had helped found. She lived there until her death on July 17, 1887.

Dorothea Dix was an educator and social reformer whose devotion to the welfare of the mentally ill led to widespread international reforms.

## IN THESE GROUPS

* [FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO DIED IN TRENTON](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/death-city-trenton)
* [FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN ON APRIL 4](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/born-on-april-04)
* [FEMALE ACTIVISTS](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/famous-female-activists)
* [FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN IN UNITED STATES](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/born-in-united-states)

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## Synopsis

Born in Hampden, Maine, in 1802, Dorothea Dix was a social reformer whose devotion to the welfare of the mentally ill led to widespread international reforms. After seeing horrific conditions in a Massachusetts prison, she spent the next 40 years lobbying U.S. and Canadian legislators to establish state hospitals for the mentally ill. Her efforts directly affected the building of 32 institutions in the United States.

## Early Life

Dorothea Lynde Dix was born on April 4, 1802, in Hampden, Maine. She was the eldest of three children, and her father, Joseph Dix, was a religious fanatic and distributor of religious tracts who made Dorothea stitch and paste the tracts together, a chore she hated.

At age 12, Dix left home to live with her grandmother in Boston, and then an aunt in Worcester, Massachusetts. She began teaching school at age 14. In 1819, she returned to Boston and founded the Dix Mansion, a school for girls, along with a charity school that poor girls could attend for free. She began writing textbooks, with her most famous, Conversations on Common Things, published in 1824.

## Champion of the Mentally Ill

The course of Dix’s life changed in 1841, when she began teaching Sunday school at the East Cambridge Jail, a women’s prison. She discovered the appalling treatment of the prisoners, particularly those with mental illnesses, whose living quarters had no heat. She immediately went to court and secured an order to provide heat for the prisoners, along with other improvements.

She began traveling around the state to research the conditions in prisons and poorhouses, and ultimately crafted a document that was presented to the Massachusetts legislature, which increased the budget to expand the State Mental Hospital at Worcester. But Dix wasn’t content with reforms in Massachusetts. She toured the country documenting the conditions and treatment of patients, campaigning to establish humane asylums for the mentally ill and founding or adding additions to hospitals in Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Maryland, Louisiana, Alabama, South Carolina and North Carolina.

Dix also lobbied at the federal level, and in 1848 she asked Congress to grant more than 12 million acres of land as a public endowment to be used for the benefit of the mentally ill as well as the blind and deaf. Both houses of Congress approved the bill, but in 1854 it was vetoed by President Franklin Pierce.

Discouraged by the setback, Dix went to Europe. She discovered enormous disparity between public and private hospitals, and great differences among countries. She recommended reforms in many countries, and, most significant, met with Pope Pius IX, who personally ordered construction of a new hospital for the mentally ill after hearing her report.

## The Civil War

Dix returned to the United States in 1856. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, she volunteered her services and was named superintendent of nurses. She was responsible for setting up field hospitals and first-aid stations, recruiting nurses, managing supplies and setting up training programs. Although she was efficient and focused, many found her rigid, without the social skills that were necessary to navigate the military’s bureaucracy.

After the war, she briefly returned to her work on behalf of the mentally ill. She contracted malaria in 1870 and was forced to abandon aggressive traveling, although she continued to write, lobbying for her causes. She took up residence at the hospital she had founded 40 years earlier in Trenton, New Jersey, and died there on July 17, 1887.

## Personal Life

Though Dix had many admirers over her lifetime, and was briefly engaged to her second cousin, Edward Bangs, she never married.

**John Brown**

John Brown was a radical abolitionist who believed in the violent overthrow of the slavery system. During the Bleeding Kansas conflicts, Brown and his sons led attacks on pro-slavery residents. Justifying his actions as the will of God, Brown soon became a hero in the eyes of Northern extremists and was quick to capitalize on his growing reputation. By early 1858, he had succeeded in enlisting a small “army” of insurrectionists whose mission was to foment rebellion among the slaves. In 1859, Brown and 21 of his followers attacked and occupied the federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry. Their goal was to capture supplies and use them to arm a slave rebellion. Brown was captured during the raid and later hanged, but not before becoming an anti-slavery icon.

Abolitionist and insurrectionist. Born in Torrington, [Connecticut](http://www.history.com/topics/us-states/connecticut), Brown spent his boyhood in [Ohio](http://www.history.com/topics/us-states/ohio), where he mingled from the first with dedicated opponents of slavery. While his professional life featured a series of business failures, his family responsibilities grew even as his abolitionist principles deepened.

##### *Did You Know?*

*John Brown declared bankruptcy at age 42 and had more than 20 lawsuits filed against him.*

In 1855, after assisting the escape of several slaves, Brown and his five sons moved to [Kansas](http://www.history.com/topics/us-states/kansas) just after that territory had been opened for the possible expansion of slavery by the [Kansas-](http://www.history.com/topics/kansas-nebraska-act)[Nebraska](http://www.history.com/topics/us-states/nebraska) Act. Joining the struggle there between proslavery and Free-Soil settlers, Brown appointed himself “captain” of the antislavery forces on Osawatomie Creek. (The struggle arose out of a long-standing disagreement between North and South over slavery’s expansion that had its roots in the framing of the Constitution.) When proslavery forces sacked the “free state” town of Lawrence, guerrilla warfare ensued. The success of the proslavery guerrillas inspired Brown, with four of his sons and two other accomplices, to murder five reputedly proslavery settlers who lived along Pottawottamie Creek. Justifying his action as obedience to the will of a just God, Brown soon became a hero in the eyes of northern extremists and was quick to capitalize on his growing reputation. By early 1858 he had succeeded in enlisting a small “army” of insurrectionists, including three of his sons, whose mission was to foment rebellion among the slaves.

Brown had toyed with the idea for years, but it took form after a meeting of Brown and his followers in the free black community of Chatham, Ontario, in the winter of 1858. He proposed to provoke a black insurrection through armed intervention in northern [Virginia](http://www.history.com/topics/us-states/virginia), thereby establishing a stronghold to which escapees could flee and from which further insurrection might be spawned. Meanwhile, mounting frustration over the failure to achieve peaceful emancipation made many abolitionists receptive to Brown’s violent approach. Some of them, known subsequently as the “secret six”–Franklin Sanborn, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, George Luther Stearns, Gerrit Smith, Samuel Gridley Howe, and Theodore Parker–were aware of his intentions and became his financial supporters. Others, however, contributed funds and good wishes while remaining studiously ignorant of Brown’s exact plans. Early in 1859, he rented a farm near Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now [West Virginia](http://www.history.com/topics/us-states/west-virginia)), collected weapons and his “army,” and on October 16 with twenty-one followers attacked and occupied the federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry. Quickly surrounded by militia commanded by Col. [Robert E. Lee](http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/robert-e-lee), Brown’s position was overrun, ten of his followers were killed, and Brown himself was wounded and captured.

News of the raid electrified the North and outraged the white South. Brown was tried and convicted of treason. He conducted his defense with extraordinary astuteness, conveying to supporters and sympathizers the appearance of a powerfully inspired and selfless religious martyr. Popular expression of support for Brown was widespread in the North (the best remembered of which is Henry David Thoreau’s “Plea for Captain John Brown”) before he was hanged on December 2, 1859. In the South, his execution did little to allay spreading fears of slave insurrection and a growing conviction that northern opponents of slavery would continue to stimulate insurrection. Many analysts then and since have concluded that Brown’s raid did much to hasten the coming of the Civil War.

John Brown was a 19th-century militant abolitionist known for his raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859.

## IN THESE GROUPS

* [FAMOUS PEOPLE IN U.S. POLITICS](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/us-politics)
* [FAMOUS PEOPLE IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/american-civil-war)
* [FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO DIED ON DECEMBER 2](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/died-on-december-02)
* [FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO DIED IN 1859](http://www.biography.com/people/groups/died-1859)

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QUOTES

“...I believe to have interfered as I have done...in behalf of His despised poor, was not wrong, but right.”

—John Brown

## Synopsis

John Brown was born on May 9, 1800, in Torrington, Connecticut, in a Calvinist household and would go on to have a large family of his own. Facing much financial difficulty throughout his life, he was also an ardent abolitionist who worked with the Underground Railroad and the League of Gileadites, among other endeavors. He believed in using violent means to end slavery, and, with the intent of inspiring a slave insurrection, eventually led an unsuccessful raid on the Harpers Ferry federal armory. Brown went to trial and was executed on December 2, 1859.

## Early Life

John Brown was born on May 9, 1800, in Torrington, Connecticut, to Ruth Mills and Owen Brown. Owen, who was a Calvinist and worked as a tanner, ardently believed that slavery was wrong. As a 12-year-old boy traveling through Michigan, John would witness an enslaved African-American boy be beaten, haunting him for years to come and informing his own abolitionism.

Though the younger Brown initially studied to work in the ministry, he instead decided to take up his father's trade. Brown wed Dianthe Lusk in 1820, and the couple had several children before her death in the early 1830s. He remarried in 1833, and he and wife Mary Ann Day would have many more children.

## Ardent Abolitionist

Brown worked in a number of vocations and moved around quite a bit from the 1820s to 1850s, experiencing great financial difficulties. Brown also took part in the Underground Railroad, gave land to free African Americans and eventually established the League of Gileadites, a group formed with the intention of protecting black citizens from slave hunters.

Brown met with renowned orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass in 1847 in Springfield, Massachusetts. Then, in 1849, Brown moved and settled in the black community of North Elba, New York, which was created on land provided by philanthropist Gerrit Smith.

In 1855 Brown moved to Kansas, where five of his sons had relocated as well. With the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, there was conflict over whether the territory would be a free or slave state. Brown, who believed in using violent means to end slavery, became involved in the conflict; in 1856, he and several of his men killed five pro-slavery settlers in a retaliatory attack at Pottawatomie Creek.

## Harpers Ferry Attack

In 1858, Brown liberated a group of enslaved people from a Missouri homestead and helped guide them to freedom in Canada. It was also in Canada that Brown spoke of plans to form a free black community in the mountains of Maryland and Virginia.

On the evening of October 16, 1859, Brown led a party of 21 men on a raid of the federal armory of Harpers Ferry in Virginia (now West Virginia), holding dozens of men hostage with the plan of inspiring a slave insurrection. Brown's forces held out for two days; they were eventually defeated by military forces led by Robert E. Lee. Many of Brown's men were killed, including two of his sons, and he was captured. Brown's case went to trial quickly, and on November 2 he was sentenced to death.

In a speech to the court before his sentencing, Brown stated his actions to be just and God-sanctioned. Debate ensued over how Brown should be viewed, deepening the divide between North and South and having profound implications for the direction of the country. Several of his colleagues also petitioned that the courts should look at Brown's questionable mental state when it came to his actions. Brown was executed on December 2, 1859.

## John Brown Facts

John Brown (1800-1859) has been revered for generations as a martyr to the American antislavery cause. His attack on Harpers Ferry, Va., just before the Civil War freed no slaves and resulted in his own trial and death.

John Brown was born at Torrington, Conn., on May 4, 1800, to Owen Brown, a tanner, and Ruth Mills Brown, whose family had a history of mental instability. He spent his childhood there and on the family farm at Hudson, Ohio. A devoutly religious youth, Brown studied briefly for the ministry but quit to learn the tanner's trade. He married Dianthe Lusk in 1820, who bore him 7 children (two mentally deficient) before her death in 1832; a year later he married Mary Ann Day, who bore 13 children in the next 21 years. Of Brown's 20 children, 12 survived.

He said later that he had realized the sin of slavery, "the sum of all villainies," at 12, and that seeing an African American boy mistreated had "led him to declare, or *swear:* eternal war with slavery." He also developed a great interest in military history, especially in the guerrilla warfare of the Napoleonic Wars and in the Haitian slave rebellion. According to family testimony, he finally concluded that slavery could be destroyed only by atonement in blood, deciding in 1839 that the South, "Africa itself," should be invaded and the slaves freed at gunpoint. If he actually made such a plan, he kept it to himself for another decade, meanwhile trying and failing at a number of business ventures, always in debt. He moved his family 10 times until in 1849 he settled on a farm at North Elba, N.Y., that was part of a project financed by philanthropist Gerrit Smith for the training of free African Americans.

## Kansas Controversy

After the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 the territory hung in the balance between slave-and free-state status while pro-and antislavery settlers contested for control. Five of Brown's sons went to Kansas, joined the free-staters, and appealed to their father for help. Brown traveled through the East, speaking on the Kansas question and gathering money for arms, for "without the shedding of blood," he said, there could be "no remission of sin" in Kansas. In September he went to Kansas, settling near Osawatomie. "I am here," he said grimly, "to promote the killing of slavery." In spring of 1856 he led a retaliatory raid on a proslavery settlement at Pottawatomie, killing five men in cold blood. John Junior spent 3 months in jail as an accomplice, but Brown himself escaped. The Pottawatomie affair made him nationally known, and while some antislavery sympathizers disowned him, to others he seemed a hero.

## First Raid: Osawatomie

Brown spent the summer of 1856 collecting money for Kansas in New England, where prominent public figures, some not wholly aware of the details of his Kansas activities, were impressed by his dedication to the abolitionist cause. The Massachusetts Kansas Committee, whose directors included such civic leaders as Theodore Parker, Samuel Gridley Howe, and Thomas W. Higginson, helped him to gather recruits, guns, and money. In August he led a skirmish at Osawatomie in which his son Frederick was killed. "I will die fighting for this cause," Brown wrote. "There will be no peace in this land until slavery is done for."

He went East in early 1857 with plans for a Southern invasion apparently in hand, ordered a thousand 6-foot pikes from a Connecticut firm, and in late summer gathered a band of recruits at Tabor, lowa, for training. He held frequent conferences with Eastern abolitionists and in early 1858 sent John Junior to survey the country around Harpers Ferry, Va., the site of a Federal arsenal. In April he held a curious 10-day meeting of sympathizers in Chatham, Ontario, Canada, during which he explained his plan to invade the South, arm the slaves, and set up a free state under a new constitution; the meeting adopted his plan and then voted him commander in chief. He returned to Kansas under the name of Shubel Morgan to lead a raid into Missouri, killing one man and taking some slaves back to Canada.

Brown was now considered a criminal in the eyes of Missouri and the U.S. government, and both offered rewards for his capture; still he was hailed in parts of the North as a liberator, and donations poured in. In early 1859 he again toured the East to raise money, and in July he rented a farm 5 miles north of Harpers Ferry, where he recruited 21 men (16 white and 5 black) for final training. He intended to seize the arsenal, distribute arms to the slaves he thought would rally to him, and set up a free state for african Americans within the South. Though Harpers Ferry was an isolated mountain town, with few slaves in the vicinity, the irrationality of his plan seemed to occur to no one.

## Raid on Harpers Ferry

On the night of Oct. 16, 1859, Brown set out for Harpers Ferry with 18 men and a wagonload of supplies, leaving 3 men behind to guard the farm. After cutting the telegraph wires, Brown's party slipped into the town and easily captured the armory watchmen. Inexplicably, Brown allowed the midnight train to go through; the conductor telegraphed an alarm the next morning. Shooting broke out early on the 17th between Brown's men and local residents, while militia soon arrived from Charles Town. By nightfall Brown's band lay trapped in the armory enginehouse, all but 5 wounded, Brown's sons Oliver and Watson fatally. That night Col. Robert E. Lee and Lt. J. E. B. Stuart, commanding 90 marines, arrived from Washington. The next morning the marines stormed the enginehouse, bayoneting 2 men and slashing Brown severely with sabers. Of Brown's original party 10 died and 7 were captured; on the other side the toll was a marine and 4 civilians, one of them, ironically, a free African American killed by mistake.

Brown was jailed at Charles Town and tried a week later, lying wounded on a stretcher, in a fair trial which some, however, felt to be unduly hasty. He put up no defense. "I believe that to have interfered as I have done," he said, "in behalf of His despised poor, I did no wrong, but right…. I am ready for my fate." The jury indicted him on three counts—treason against Virginia, conspiracy with african Americans, and first-degree murder. The court imposed the death sentence on November 2, to be executed a month later.

## Beginning of a Legend

News of Brown's deed—"so surprising, so mixed, so confounding," Bronson Alcott called it—shocked the nation. Was he martyr or murderer? Many praised him (Ralph Waldo Emerson called him "that new saint who will make the gallows like a cross"), and many condemned him. Seventeen of Brown's acquaintances sent affidavits to Governor Wise of Virginia raising, on good evidence, the issue of Brown's sanity, but Wise did not act on them. Brown was hanged at Charles Town on Dec. 2, 1859, with four of his men, after handing a prophetic note to his jailer on his way to the gallows: "I John Brown am now quite certain that the crimes of *this guilty land: will* never be purged *away;* but with Blood." Mass meetings of mourning were held throughout the North, and church bells tolled at the hour of his execution. He was buried at North Elba, N.Y., and the cause of abolition had its martyr. When a penny ballad about him, set to the music of an old revival hymn and named "John Brown's Body," appeared on the streets of Boston in early 1861, he was already a legend.

**Harriet Beecher Stowe**

Born in Litchfield, Connecticut, Harriet Beecher was the seventh child of the Reverend Lyman Beecher, a Congregational minister and moral reformer, and Roxanna Foote Beecher. She was schooled at the Pierce Academy and at her sister Catharine Beecher’s Hartford Female Seminary, where she also taught. She moved with the family to Cincinnati in 1832, when her father was appointed president of Lane Theological Seminary. The spectacle of chattel slavery across the Ohio River in Kentucky and its effects on the acquiescent commercial interests of white Cincinnati moved her deeply.

Letter to Sarah LoguePlay video

Letter to Sarah Logue

4min

The Meaning of July 4th for the NegroPlay video

The Meaning of July 4th for the Negro

4min

Gateway to Freedom: The Underground RailroadPlay video

Gateway to Freedom: The Underground Railroad

3min

In 1836, she married Calvin Ellis Stowe, professor of biblical literature at Lane. The death of a son in 1849 led her away from her father’s Calvinism and gave supremacy in her views to the redemptive spirit of Christian love. By 1850, the family had moved to Maine, where, in response to the Fugitive Slave Act of that year, Stowe wrote Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852), her most celebrated work. Sentimental and realistic by turns, the novel explored the cruelties of chattel slavery in the Upper and Lower South and exposed the moral ironies in the legal, religious, and social arguments of white apologists.

The immense impact of the novel (it sold 300,000 copies in its first year) was unexpected. Antislavery fiction had never sold well; Stowe was not an established writer, and few would have expected a woman to gain a popular hearing on the great political question of the day. Some female abolitionists had shocked decorum in the 1840s by speaking at public gatherings, but they were widely resented. The success of Uncle Tom’s Cabin went far toward legitimizing, if not indeed creating, a role for women in public affairs.

To the dismay of many northern radicals, Uncle Tom’s Cabin casually endorsed colonization rather than abolition. In fact, Stowe was unconcerned about the tactics that made slavery a political issue: for her, the problem was religious and emotional, and one that women were best equipped to confront. Her stated purpose, “to awaken sympathy and feeling for the African race” and to urge that readers “feel right” about the issue, belongs to a feminist and utopian agenda that contemporary readers were slow to recognize. In the South, the book was read as sectional propaganda; in the North, it was read as a compelling moral romance. Although Stowe blamed the slave system itself as “the essence of all abuse” rather than the slaveholders and deliberately made its chief villain, Simon Legree, a displaced New Englander, the novel’s effect was to exacerbate regional antagonisms. Indeed, Uncle Tom’s Cabin, which called forth anti-Tom novels from southern writers, so raised the temperature of the dialogue that Lincoln would later, half-seriously, apportion to Stowe some responsibility for starting the Civil War.

Notable among Stowe’s subsequent works are A Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1853), documenting her case against slavery; Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp (1856), also on slavery; and The Minister’s Wooing (1859), a historical novel that attacks Calvinism. Stowe also wrote realistic regional fiction, including The Pearl of Orr’s Island (1861), which influenced Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. Her miscellaneous writings include Lady Byron Vindicated (1870), which created an international sensation by charging Lord Byron with incest, and Palmetto Leaves (1873), written at her winter home in Florida, which encouraged a Florida land boom.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was an author and social activist best known for her popular anti-slavery novel Uncle Tom’s Cabin.

IN THESE GROUPS

FAMOUS PEOPLE IN WRITING & PUBLISHING

FAMOUS ABOLITIONISTS

FAMOUS FICTION AUTHORS

FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN ON JUNE 14

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QUOTES

“I did not write it. God wrote it. I merely did his dictation.”

—Harriet Beecher Stowe

Synopsis

Harriet Beecher Stowe was born on June 14, 1811, in Litchfield, Connecticut. Her father, Lyman Beecher, was a leading Congregationalist minister and the patriarch of a family committed to social justice. Stowe achieved national fame for her anti-slavery novel, Uncle Tom’s Cabin, which fanned the flames of sectionalism before the Civil War. Stowe died in Hartford, Connecticut, on July 1, 1896.

Early Life

Harriet Elizabeth Beecher was born on June 14, 1811, in Litchfield, Connecticut. She was one of 13 children born to religious leader Lyman Beecher and his wife, Roxanna Foote Beecher, who died when Harriet was a child. Harriet’s seven brothers grew up to be ministers, including the famous leader Henry Ward Beecher. Her sister Catharine Beecher was an author and a teacher who helped to shape Harriet’s social views. Another sister, Isabella, became a leader of the cause of women’s rights.

Harriet enrolled in a school run by Catharine, following the traditional course of classical learning usually reserved for young men. At the age of 21, she moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where her father had become the head of the Lane Theological Seminary.

Lyman Beecher took a strong abolitionist stance following the pro-slavery Cincinnati Riots of 1836. His attitude reinforced the abolitionist beliefs of his children, including Stowe. Stowe found like-minded friends in a local literary association called the Semi-Colon Club. Here, she formed a friendship with fellow member and seminary teacher Calvin Ellis Stowe. They were married on January 6, 1836, and eventually moved to a cottage near in Brunswick, Maine, close to Bowdoin College.

Career

Along with their interest in literature, Harriet and Calvin Stowe shared a strong belief in abolition. In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law, prompting distress and distress in abolitionist and free black communities of the North. Stowe decided to express her feelings through a literary representation of slavery, basing her work on the life of Josiah Henson and on her own observations. In 1851, the first installment of Stowe’s novel, Uncle Tom’s Cabin, appeared in the National Era. Uncle Tom's Cabin was published as a book the following year and quickly became a best seller.

Stowe’s emotional portrayal of the impact of slavery, particularly on families and children, captured the nation's attention. Embraced in the North, the book and its author aroused hostility in the South. Enthusiasts staged theatrical performances based on the story, with the characters of Tom, Eva and Topsy achieving iconic status.

After the Civil War began, Stowe traveled to Washington, D.C., where she met with Abraham Lincoln. A possibly apocryphal but popular story credits Lincoln with the greeting, “So you are the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war.” While little is known about the meeting, the persistence of this story captures the perceived significance of Uncle Tom’s Cabin in the split between North and South.

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Later Life

Stowe continued to write and to champion social and political causes for the rest of her life. She published stories, essays, textbooks and a long list of novels, including Oldtown Folks and Dred. While none of these matched Uncle Tom’s Cabin in terms of popularity, Stowe remained well known and respected in the North, particularly in reform-minded communities. She was often asked to weigh in on political issues of the day, such as Mormon polygamy.

Despite the moral rectitude of the Beechers, the family was not immune to scandal. In 1872, charges of an adulterous affair between Henry Ward Beecher and a female parishioner brought national scandal. Stowe maintained that her brother was innocent throughout the subsequent trial.

While Stowe is closely associated with New England, she spent a considerable amount of time near Jacksonville, Florida. Among Stowe’s many causes was the promotion of Florida as a vacation destination and a place for social and economic investment. The Stowe family spent winters in Mandarin, Florida. One of Stowe’s books, Palmetto Leaves, takes place in northern Florida, describing both the land and the people of that region.

Stowe died on July 1, 1896, in Hartford, Connecticut. She was 85. Her body is buried at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, under the epitaph “Her Children Rise up and Call Her Blessed.”

Legacy

Landmarks dedicated to the life, work and memory of Harriet Beecher Stowe exist across the eastern United States.

The Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Brunswick, Maine, is where Stowe lived when she wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin. In 2001, Bowdoin College purchased the house, together with a newer attached building, and was able to raise the substantial funds necessary to restore the house.

The Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Hartford, Connecticut, preserved the home where Stowe lived for the final decades of her life. The home is now a museum, featuring items owned by Stowe, as well as a research library. The home of Stowe’s next-door neighbor, Samuel Clemens (better known as Mark Twain), is also open to the public.

es­ter­day was the birth­day of Har­riet Beecher Stowe (14 June, 1811 – 1 July, 1896). Stowe is known mostly for her novel Uncle Tom’s Cabin but she was an avid writer all of her life.

Harriet Beecher StowePic­ture from Nation's his­tory is embed­ded in por­trait of a famous writer — boston.com

Books by Har­riet Beecher Stowe

1 ) Uncle Tom’s Cabin was orig­i­nally slated to be a short series in an abo­li­tion­ist magazine

2 ) Stowe was often crit­i­cized for not hav­ing first­hand knowl­edge of slav­ery. In response Stowe pub­lished A Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin which revealed her sources.

3 ) After the Amer­i­can Civil War, Stowe bought a home in Florida and started schools for African Amer­i­can children.

4 ) It is said that Stowe danced in the streets when Lin­coln announced the Eman­ci­pa­tion Proclamation.

5 ) When Stowe met Pres­i­dent Abra­ham Lin­coln he reported to have said: "So you're the lit­tle woman who wrote the book that made this great war!"

6 ) Uncle Tom’s Cabin sold 300,000 copies.

7 ) In 1853 Stowe was wel­comed in Eng­land as a lit­er­ary hero.

8 ) In Novem­ber 1857 Stowe was one of the orig­i­nal con­trib­u­tors to The Atlantic along with Ralph Waldo Emer­son.

9 ) When liv­ing in Hart­ford, CT Stowe’s next door neigh­bor was Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), it is said that the two were on friendly terms. Once Clemens vis­ited with­out a cra­vat (tie). When his wife chas­tised him, Clemens put a tie on a tray and had his but­ler deliv­er­ing it with an apolo­getic note. Stowe replied that Clemens dis­cov­ered a new prin­ci­ple "that a man can call by instalments”.

10) Stowe’s Hart­ford home is a museum (The Har­riet Beecher Stowe Cen­ter) which can be vis­ited if you’re in the area.