

Chapter 1 : Underground Railroad - Wikipedia

The Underground Railroad was a network of people, African American as well as white, offering shelter and aid to escaped slaves from the South. It developed as a convergence of several different.

Political background[edit] At its peak, nearly 1, slaves per year escaped from slave-holding states using the Underground Railroad – more than 5, court cases for escaped slaves were recorded – many fewer than the natural increase of the enslaved population. The resulting economic impact was minuscule, but the psychological influence on slave holders was immense. Under the original Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, officials from free states were required to assist slaveholders or their agents who recaptured runaway slaves, but citizens and governments of many free states ignored the law, and the Underground Railroad thrived. With heavy lobbying by southern politicians, the Compromise of 1850 was passed by Congress after the Mexican–American War. It stipulated a more stringent Fugitive Slave Law ; ostensibly, the compromise addressed regional problems by compelling officials of free states to assist slave catchers, granting them immunity to operate in free states. Many Northerners who might have ignored slave issues in the South were confronted by local challenges that bound them to support slavery. This was a primary grievance cited by the Union during the American Civil War , [14] and the perception that Northern States ignored the fugitive slave law was a major justification for secession. Vigilance committee Harriet Tubman photo H. A worker on the Underground Railroad, Tubman made 13 trips to the South, helping to free over 70 people. She led people to the northern free states and Canada. The escape network was not literally underground nor a railroad. It was figuratively "underground" in the sense of being an underground resistance. It was known as a "railroad" by way of the use of rail terminology in the code. Participants generally organized in small, independent groups; this helped to maintain secrecy because individuals knew some connecting "stations" along the route but knew few details of their immediate area. Escaped slaves would move north along the route from one way station to the next. Without the presence and support of free black residents, there would have been almost no chance for fugitive slaves to pass into freedom unmolested. A conductor sometimes pretended to be a slave in order to enter a plantation. Once a part of a plantation, the conductor would direct the runaways to the North. They rested, and then a message was sent to the next station to let the station master know the runaways were on their way. They would stop at the so-called "stations" or "depots" during the day and rest. The stations were often located in barns, under church floors, or in hiding places in caves and hollowed-out riverbanks. The resting spots where the runaways could sleep and eat were given the code names "stations" and "depots", which were held by "station masters". Using biblical references, fugitives referred to Canada as the " Promised Land " or "Heaven" and the Ohio River as the " River Jordan ", which marked the boundary between slave states and free states. Some groups were considerably larger. Abolitionist Charles Turner Torrey and his colleagues rented horses and wagons and often transported as many as 15 or 20 slaves at a time. Most escapes were by individuals or small groups; occasionally, there were mass escapes, such as with the Pearl incident. The journey was often considered particularly difficult and dangerous for women or children. Children were sometimes hard to keep quiet or were unable to keep up with a group. In addition, enslaved women were rarely allowed to leave the plantation, making it harder for them to escape in the same ways that men could. One of the most famous and successful conductors people who secretly traveled into slave states to rescue those seeking freedom was Harriet Tubman , an escaped slave woman. Southern newspapers of the day were often filled with pages of notices soliciting information about escaped slaves and offering sizable rewards for their capture and return. Federal marshals and professional bounty hunters known as slave catchers pursued fugitives as far as the Canada–US border. With demand for slaves high in the Deep South as cotton was developed, strong, healthy blacks in their prime working and reproductive years were seen and treated as highly valuable commodities. Both former slaves and free blacks were sometimes kidnapped and sold into slavery, as was Solomon Northup of Saratoga Springs, New York. Some buildings, such as the Crenshaw House in far southeastern Illinois , are known sites where free blacks were sold into slavery, known as the " Reverse Underground Railroad ". Under the terms of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, when suspected fugitives

were seized and brought to a special magistrate known as a commissioner, they had no right to a jury trial and could not testify in their own behalf. Technically, they were guilty of no crime. The marshal or private slave-catcher needed only to swear an oath to acquire a writ of replevin for the return of property. Congress was dominated by southern Congressmen, as apportionment was based on three-fifths of the number of slaves being counted in population totals. They passed the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 because of frustration at having fugitive slaves helped by the public and even official institutions outside the South. In some parts of the North, slave-catchers needed police protection to exercise their federal authority. Opposition to slavery did not mean that all states welcomed free blacks. For instance, Indiana, whose area along the Ohio River was settled by Southerners, passed a constitutional amendment that barred free blacks from settling in that state.

Terminology[edit] Members of the Underground Railroad often used specific terms, based on the metaphor of the railway. The Railroad was often known as the "freedom train" or "Gospel train", which headed towards "Heaven" or "the Promised Land", i. He kept careful records, including short biographies of the people, that contained frequent railway metaphors. He maintained correspondence with many of them, often acting as a middleman in communications between escaped slaves and those left behind. He later published these accounts in the book *The Underground Railroad: Authentic Narratives and First-Hand Accounts*, a valuable resource for historians to understand how the system worked and learn about individual ingenuity in escapes. According to Still, messages were often encoded so that they could be understood only by those active in the railroad. The additional word *via* indicated that the "passengers" were not sent on the usual train, but rather via Reading, Pennsylvania. In this case, the authorities were tricked into going to the regular location station in an attempt to intercept the runaways, while Still met them at the correct station and guided them to safety. They eventually escaped either to the North or to Canada, where slavery had been abolished during the 1830s. The National Park Service has designated many sites within the network, posted stories about people and places, sponsors an essay contest, and holds a national conference about the Underground Railroad in May or June each year. *Quilts of the Underground Railroad and Songs of the Underground Railroad* Since the 1970s, claims have arisen that quilt designs were used to signal and direct slaves to escape routes and assistance. According to advocates of the quilt theory, ten quilt patterns were used to direct slaves to take particular actions. The quilts were placed one at a time on a fence as a means of nonverbal communication to alert escaping slaves. The code had a dual meaning: In addition, Underground Railroad historian Giles Wright has published a pamphlet debunking the quilt code. Similarly, some popular, nonacademic sources claim that spirituals and other songs, such as "Steal Away" or "Follow the Drinking Gourd", contained coded information and helped individuals navigate the railroad. They have offered little evidence to support their claims. Scholars tend to believe that while the slave songs may certainly have expressed hope for deliverance from the sorrows of this world, these songs did not present literal help for runaway slaves. For example, "Song of the Free", written in 1845 about a man fleeing slavery in Tennessee by escaping to Canada, was composed to the tune of "Oh! Every stanza ends with a reference to Canada as the land "where colored men are free". Slavery in Upper Canada now Ontario was outlawed in 1793; in 1828, John Robinson, the Attorney General of Upper Canada, declared that by residing in Canada, black residents were set free, and that Canadian courts would [38] protect their freedom. Slavery in Canada as a whole had been in rapid decline after an court ruling, and was finally abolished outright in 1833. Legal and political[edit] When frictions between North and South culminated in the Civil War, many blacks, slave and free, fought for the Union Army. I have never approved of the very public manner in which some of our western friends have conducted what they call the Underground Railroad, but which I think, by their open declarations, has been made most emphatically the upperground railroad. He went on to say that, although he honors the movement, he feels that the efforts serve more to enlighten the slave-owners than the slaves, making them more watchful and making it more difficult for future slaves to escape. Estimates vary widely, but at least 30,000 slaves, and potentially more than 100,000, escaped to Canada via the Underground Railroad. These were generally in the triangular region bounded by Niagara Falls, Toronto, and Windsor. Several rural villages made up mostly of ex-slaves were established in Kent and Essex counties. Fort Malden in Amherstburg, Ontario, was deemed the "chief place of entry" for slaves seeking to enter Canada. The abolitionist Levi Coffin supported this assessment, describing Fort Malden as "the great landing place, the

principle terminus of the underground railroad of the west. Appleby, a celebrated mariner, facilitated the conveyance of several fugitive slaves from various Lake Erie ports to Fort Malden. Important black settlements also developed in other parts of British North America now parts of Canada. These included Lower Canada present-day Quebec and Vancouver Island , where Governor James Douglas encouraged black immigration because of his opposition to slavery. He also hoped a significant black community would form a bulwark against those who wished to unite the island with the United States. While the British colonies had no slavery after , discrimination was still common. Many of the new arrivals had to compete with mass European immigration for jobs, and overt racism was common. For example, in reaction to Black Loyalists being settled in eastern Canada by the Crown, the city of Saint John, New Brunswick , amended its charter in specifically to exclude blacks from practicing a trade, selling goods, fishing in the harbour, or becoming freemen; these provisions stood until While some later returned to Canada, many remained in the United States. Thousands of others returned to the American South after the war ended. The desire to reconnect with friends and family was strong, and most were hopeful about the changes emancipation and Reconstruction would bring.

Chapter 2 : The Underground Railroad (novel) - Wikipedia

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

What was the Underground Railroad? The Underground Railroad was formed in the early 19th century and reached its height between 1800 and 1850. Much of what we know today comes from accounts after the Civil War and accurate statistics about fugitive slaves using the Underground Railway may never be verifiable. It is believed that around 100,000 slaves between 1800 and 1850 escaped using the network. The majority of the slaves came from the upper south states that bordered free states such as Kentucky, Virginia and Maryland; very few escaped from the Deep South. The Underground Railroad was not located underground nor was it a railroad. Here is a comprehensive list of secret codes and phrases. Organization The Underground Railway was a loosely organized network of connections with no clear defined routes. They provided houses, transportation to aid slaves to freedom. This system kept the secrecy of those involved and lowered the risk of infiltrations. Routes were often indirect to confuse slave catchers. There was no one set route, there were likely many of them. Hundreds or perhaps thousands of houses across the north were used as stations. The National Park Service has a list of these sites. Fugitives would move from one station to the next at night crossing rivers, swamps and hiking mountains. Most travelled by foot and hid in barns or out of sight places such as basements and cup boards. Committees were formed in large cities such as Boston, New York and Philadelphia. These committees raised funds to help fugitives settle by temporarily providing shelter and job recommendations. Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 Until living in free states was relatively low risk for fugitives. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act as part of the Compromise of 1850 the Underground Railroad was rerouted to Canada as its final destination. Thousands of slaves settled in newly formed communities in Southern Ontario. Suddenly their job became more difficult and riskier. The Act made it illegal for a person to help a run away, and citizens were obliged under the law to help slave catchers arrest fugitive slaves. Slave catchers were handsomely rewarded, even free African Americans could be sent back south by destroying their free papers. After the war ended, the 13th amendment to the Constitution was approved in which abolished slavery in the entire United States and therefore was the end of the Underground Railroad. Supporters of the Underground Railroad Sympathizers of the network were black and white abolitionists, free blacks, Native Americans and religious associations such as the Religious Society of Friends also known as Quakers and Congregationalists. The first call for the abolition of slavery in America came in from the Quakers in Pennsylvania.

Chapter 3 : Underground Railroad | HistoryNet

Underground Railroad summary: The Underground Railroad was the term used to describe a network of meeting places, secret routes, passageways and safe houses used by slaves in the U.S. to escape slave holding states to northern states and Canada.

Plot[edit] The story is told in the third person, focusing mainly on Cora. Cora is a slave on a plantation in Georgia and an outcast after Mabel ran off without her. She harbors a great deal of resentment towards Mabel for escaping, although readers later learn that her mother, in an attempt to return to Cora, actually died from a snake bite and never reached her. Caesar approaches Cora about a plan to flee. Reluctant at first, she eventually agrees as her situation with her master and fellow slaves worsens. Cora is forced to kill a teenage boy to protect herself and Caesar, eliminating any possibility of merciful treatment should she ever be recaptured. With the help of an inexperienced abolitionist, Cora and Caesar find the Underground Railroad, depicted as a literal underground train system that runs throughout the south that transports runaways northwards. They take a train to South Carolina. Meanwhile, Cora and Caesar have taken up comfortable residence in South Carolina under assumed names. South Carolina is enacting a program where the government owns former slaves but employs them, provides medical treatment, and gives them communal housing. The two enjoy their time there and put off the decision to leave until Cora learns of plans to sterilize black women and use black men as test subjects in an experiment to track the spread of syphilis. Ridgeway arrives before the two can leave, and Cora is forced to return to the Railroad alone. She later learns that Caesar was killed by an angry mob after having been caught and jailed by Ridgeway. Cora eventually arrives in a closed-down station in North Carolina. North Carolina has recently decided to abolish slavery, using indentured servants instead, and violently executing any runaway slaves found in the state as well as some freedmen. Martin, terrified of what the North Carolinians might do to an abolitionist, hides Cora in his attic for several months. While Cora is down from the attic, a raid is conducted on the house, and she is recaptured by Ridgeway. Ridgeway takes Cora back toward Georgia, detouring through Tennessee to return another slave to his master. Cora travels to a farm in Indiana owned by a free black man named Valentine, along with one of her rescuers, a man called Royal. The farm is populated by a number of freedmen and escapees, living and working in harmony. Royal, who is an operator on the Railroad, begins a romantic relationship with Cora, although she remains hesitant because of a rape by other slaves in her childhood. Unfortunately for the pair, a small faction of freedmen fears that their peaceful life will be ruined by the presence of escaped slaves, and tips off some slavecatchers to their presence. The farm is burned, and many people, including Royal, are killed in a raid by white Indianans. Ridgeway recaptures Cora and forces her to take him to a closed-down Railroad station nearby. When they arrive, she pushes him down a flight of stairs, severely injuring him. She then runs off down the tracks. Eventually, she emerges from the underground tracks to find a caravan traveling out West.

Chapter 4 : Asking the Wrong Questions: The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead

The Underground Railroad remained in operation until the end of slavery in the U.S., which (despite the Emancipation Proclamation) did not end in the Confederate States until the end of the Civil War.

Decades later, so too did those opposed to the draft and the Vietnam War. And today, immigrants are crossing from the US into Canada over fear of persecution. Many new arrivals, including those who escaped slavery, met with a mixed reception. Some Canadians feared opening the floodgates to newcomers. Others resented smuggling in the new arrivals to avoid US law. And everyone has a role to play in making Canada a more equitable society. Deirdre Reynolds guides a group of and year-old boys from Buffalo to a recreated suspension bridge that once spanned the Niagara River. But the boy is right to ask: They are in the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center, an experiential space that allows visitors to retrace the steps of enslaved black Americans fleeing the United States for their life to Canada. They regroup at a window that looks across the international border — a Canadian flag fluttering across the gorge — where American abolitionist Harriet Tubman herself crossed. Even at this border, Americans may be well versed in what happens at the Mexican border, she says, without realizing that foreigners are also crossing here to leave the US. The number of asylum seekers intercepted at unofficial points of entry into Canada — to avoid being sent back to the US under an agreement between the two nations — spiked last year. But they continue to arrive. Spongr, whose center opened in May and is connected to a train station that shares space, perhaps fittingly for the experience, with United States Customs and Border Protection. The center faces the former site of a suspension bridge that spanned the Niagara River and was part of the Underground Railroad in the 19th century. Canada has served as a refuge for Americans since the founding of the US, when colonists loyal to the British Crown fled before and after the American Revolution. When President Trump won the presidential election, liberal Americans lit up social media with ideas about emigrating north. We still do it. We are the people with the open-door policy with blankets around refugees as opposed to putting them in handcuffs. After the Fugitive Slave Act was put into place in , support for the abolitionist movement waned in some corners, giving way to fears of a massive migration of black refugees from the US. By signing up, you agree to our Privacy Policy and European users agree to the data transfer policy. That is what Ms. Reynolds seeks to teach her school-age group on a recent day. None says he would.

Chapter 5 : NPR Choice page

"The idea of the underground railroad, and being the terminus of the underground railroad, was quite popular," says Karolyn Smardz Frost, a Canadian historian and author of "Steal Away Home."

The narrative returns to Cora, who is once again in a classroom. This time, the children in the class are racing ahead of her. As part of their lessons, members of the class recite the Declaration of Independence—“all except the youngest, who are only 6 and 7. Active Themes One Saturday, the farm residents prepare for an evening feast, and the smell of smoked meat fills the air. Cora shares a cabin with Molly and her mother, Sybil. They are proud of the house and have done their best to make it beautiful. Sybil is 12 years older than Cora and Cora loves witnessing the love between her and Molly. Sybil had fled a tobacco plantation when Molly was 2 after hearing that the master planned to sell her and thus separate her from Molly. Through sheer luck, she encountered a black farmer who helped her and Molly access the underground railroad. Some suggest that Mabel might be in Canada, which is where a lot of runaways go now. This issue is made more painful by the fact that Sybil took Molly with her when Molly was only 2—“indeed, she ran away precisely to avoid being separated from her child. Regardless of how many years have passed, Cora is still shocked and pained by the fact that Mabel fled without saying goodbye or taking Cora with her. However, she cannot admit this to those around her, even her trusted friends such as Sybil. Active Themes There is no consumption of alcohol on Valentine except for on Saturday nights. John Valentine himself has lost count of how many people live on the farm; there are at least 50 children, most of whom are under 5. On this night, Valentine is in Chicago while the rest of the farm leaders handle other business, such as attending abolitionist meetings. With the rest of the residents seated and quiet, Gloria Valentine steps up to the lectern to deliver a short speech. John Valentine had bought her freedom years ago and married her within a week. Now, it seems as if she has been to a finishing school for white women. Although overall this is an important goal, it can have the effect of making formerly enslaved people feel shame for their lack of education and plantation mannerisms. Active Themes Lately there have been disagreements on Valentine about whether the residents should move west, where there are other communities of black people and where they can be further away from the slave states. A man named Mingo argues that the community should stay put, but should limit its size by kicking out runaways like Cora. Mingo has an impressive reputation; he raised enough money through extra work to purchase freedom for himself and his family, but Sybil believes that it was simply good fortune that his master would agree to such a thing. Sometimes musicians perform, and tonight there is a poet who gives a reading. Cora is disturbed by her feelings for Royal, just as she is made anxious by her attachment to Molly. Having learned her lesson in South Carolina, she refuses to become too attached to life on Valentine and remains suspicious that something about her turn of good fortune must be too good to be true. This sense of uneasiness is echoed in the broader dilemma of the Valentine farm as a whole. They have established a stable, harmonious, and productive community in Indiana, but they remain in proximity to danger. Is it a greater risk to abandon their current situation and seek safety in the west, or to remain in Indiana? Just as the dancing begins, Cora heads home, where Royal is waiting for her. He gives her an almanac as a gift, the first book Cora has ever opened new. Cora admits that she is worried about being kicked out of Valentine. The last time Cora was at a railroad station, it was the night she escaped from Tennessee, the memory of which still haunts her. Royal seems to be something of an outsider to the community at Valentine, although he also possesses insider knowledge such as his awareness of the abandoned underground railroad tunnel. How long has he been at Valentine? And why does he take such a particular liking to Cora? Active Themes Back in Tennessee, after leaving Ridgeway and his crew behind, Royal had introduced himself to Cora; the other men were called Justin and Red. The station they arrive at is decorated in a luxurious fashion. Royal is the first freeborn black person Cora has ever met. He was born in Connecticut to a barber and midwife who had also both been freeborn in New York City. At 18, Royal moved to Manhattan and began working for abolitionist causes, eventually coming to work for the underground railroad. This passage illustrates the variation in the backgrounds of people who work for the underground railroad, emphasizing that not everyone comes ends up

working for black freedom for the same reasons or via the same route. Justin is clearly more sensitive and thus assumedly less accustomed to witnessing violence or perhaps simply stunned to see a black person inflict violence on a white person. Royal, on the other hand, has the optimism and determination of someone who has lived his entire life as a free man. Meanwhile, it remains a mystery why the station agent chooses to decorate the station in an elegant, expensive fashion. Red walked the Freedom Trail searching for their bodies, but never found them. When Red learns that Cora killed the year-old boy, he comments: When the train arrived, Cora was thrilled to ride in a real passenger carriage, rather than being forced to grip onto a flatcar. Royal told Cora it was up to her whether to stay Valentine or keep riding the railroad through Indiana. Although Royal, Justin, and Red acted efficiently as a team when they rescued Cora, they are in fact three very different men with dissimilar life stories and relationships to violence and rebellion. Justin is the most timid of the three, with Red the boldest and Royal in the middle. Active Themes John Valentine passes as white, but black people recognize his Ethiopian features. The farm in Indiana began with invited guests, and soon became a haven for runaways and a station of the underground railroad. When Royal showed Cora the railroad station, he explained that he wanted her to know it was there. This passage provides an explanation of how Valentine farm— which seems almost fantastically idyllic in comparison to the other places depicted in the novel— came to exist and survive. The details about John Valentine highlight the fact that only through clever manipulation of the norms of white supremacy could a community like Valentine end up becoming real. John uses his racial privilege as a white-passing man, as well as his inherited wealth, to construct a safe and productive community for black freemen and runaways. However, there are clues that Valentine might not be as safe and secure as it seems on the surface. Sam tells Cora that Ridgeway found Caesar at the factory before he had a chance to warn him. Sam fled north and worked as a station agent, at times posing as a slave catcher to help get people to freedom. Cora is thrilled to see Sam happy and healthy, where so many of her other friends have been killed. Sam then tells Cora that Terrance is dead. He had grown obsessed with finding Cora and brutally punished the enslaved people at Randall in his frustration. He died of heart failure in a brothel in New Orleans. Ridgeway, meanwhile, is a laughingstock. Homer rescued him after the confrontation with Royal, and the two ran off together, their reputation in ruins. While Cora has tortured herself with all the possibilities of what could have happened to the people she encountered on her journey to freedom, she can now at least accept the truth of what actually happened. Some people do survive and flourish, and even this small minority makes the pursuit of freedom worth it. Active Themes Sam stays on Valentine for three days, unsuccessfully trying to pursue Georgina. On the third night, there is a shucking competition, during which two teams participate while joyful music plays in the background. The night before, Cora let Royal kiss her. However, Royal assures her that now that Terrance is dead, she is free. Now Royal joins in with the singing, but Cora struggles to dissociate singing with her memories of working in the fields. When Sam leaves, he promises to write once he has settled somewhere. Cora begins to spend more and more time in the library with Molly, and one day a passerby comments, impressed: In the library, there are books about Africa and slave narratives by black Americans. At least with Terrance alive, Cora could reasonably assume that she knew what was taking place back on the plantation. Now, she is thrown back into uncertainty. The time Cora spends in the library can be interpreted as another way of reassuring herself of reality in the face of uncertainty. In a white supremacist world, true information about black people is a rare and essential gift. Cora is ashamed by her debt to him so she usually avoids him. Cora asks about the meeting at which Elijah Lander will speak. There is a strong culture of debate on Valentine, initiated by conversations between John and scholars and abolitionists who visit the farm. The debate with Lander will focus on the future of the farm; Mingo plans to argue in favor of excluding runaways and trying to improve relations with the local white community. White people despise the idea of a black person even knowing how to read, so what would happen if they discovered the library? John Valentine is committed to an inclusive, egalitarian style of leadership, and thus makes a point of not giving preference to any particular viewpoint or member of the community. However, this is frustrating for Cora, who seeks his reassurance and protection. John speaks proudly of the supposedly healthy culture of debate on the farm, but this viewpoint speaks to the security of his position. For Cora, this debate is not a good thing in itself, as it could mean the end of her time on Valentine and her return to the brutal existence of life on

the run. Active Themes Related Quotes with Explanations Cora realizes that she has forgotten how precarious life at Valentine is. She tells John that, the week before, a group of white men yelled vulgar abuse at her and some other Valentine women while they were walking up the road. He says he is proud of the community in Indiana, but he is confident they will be able to rebuild elsewhere. Gloria has expressed interest in going to Oklahoma, and John is eager to make her happy. He tells Cora that he will follow the decision of the community, and that everyone will have a say. Cora asks him why he does what he does, and John replies: We have to do it ourselves. In general, John projects a self-assured and positive image to the residents of Valentine. During this private conversation with Cora, however, he admits that he has doubts about whether he and Gloria were right to stay in Indiana. Even more significant is his comment about why he has dedicated his life to running the farm.

Chapter 6 : Civil War and Underground Railroad Timeline and Resources from American historian Fergus I

The Underground Railroad operated at night. Slaves were moved from "station" to "station" by abolitionists. These "stations" were usually homes and churches – any safe place to rest and eat before continuing on the journey to freedom, as faraway as Canada.

George Washington complained in that one of his runaway slaves was aided by "a society of Quakers, formed for such purposes. Their influence may have been part of the reason Pennsylvania, where many Quakers lived, was the first state to ban slavery. Two Quakers, Levi Coffin and his wife Catherine, are believed to have aided over 3, slaves to escape over a period of years. For this reason, Levi is sometimes called the president of the Underground Railroad. In keeping with that name for the system, homes and businesses that harbored runaways were known as "stations" or "depots" and were run by "stationmasters. Once the fugitives reached safe havens – or at least relatively safe ones – in the far northern areas of the United States, they would be given assistance finding lodging and work. Many went on to Canada, where they could not legally be retrieved by their owners. A trip on the Underground Railroad was fraught with danger. The slave or slaves had to make a getaway from their owners, usually by night. Conductors On The Railroad Sometimes a "conductor" pretending to be a slave would go to a plantation to guide the fugitives on their way. Among the best known "conductors" is Harriet Tubman, a former slave who returned to slave states 19 times and brought more than slaves to freedom – using her shotgun to threaten death to any who lost heart and wanted to turn back. Operators of the Underground Railroad faced their own dangers. If someone living in the North was convicted of helping fugitives to escape he or she could be fined hundreds or even thousands of dollars, a tremendous amount for the time; however, in areas where abolitionism was strong, the "secret" railroad operated quite openly. Myers became the most important leader of the Underground Railroad in the Albany area. In other eras of American history, the term "vigilance committee" often refers to citizens groups who took the law into their own hands, trying and lynching people accused of crimes, if no local authority existed or if they believed that authority was corrupt or insufficient. Being caught in a slave state while aiding runaways was much more dangerous than in the North; punishments included prison, whipping, or even hanging – assuming that the accused made it to court alive instead of perishing at the hands of an outraged mob. White men caught helping slaves to escape received harsher punishments than white women, but both could expect jail time at the very least. The harshest punishments – dozens of lashes with a whip, burning or hanging – were reserved for any blacks caught in the act of aiding fugitives. A damper was thrown, however, when Southern states began seceding in December, following the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency. Even some outspoken abolitionist newspaper cautioned against giving the remaining Southern states reason to secede. She escaped from her owner near Wheeling in the Virginia panhandle now the northern panhandle of West Virginia and made her way to Cleveland in far northern Ohio, where abolitionists helped her secure lodging and employment as a domestic servant. A Grand Jubilee in her honor was held in Cleveland on May 6, Black men and women, whether or not they had ever been slaves, were sometimes kidnapped in those states and hidden in homes, barns or other buildings until they could be taken into the South and sold as slaves. Arnold Gragston struggled against the current of the Ohio River and his own terror the first night he helped a slave escape to freedom. With a frightened young girl as his passenger, he rowed his boat toward a lighted house on the north side of the river. Gragston, a slave himself in Kentucky, understood all too well the risks he was running. But as the division between slave and free states hardened in the first half of the 19th century, abolitionists and their sympathizers developed a more methodical approach to assisting runaways. Above all else, the system depended on the courage and resourcefulness of African Americans who knew better than anyone the pain of slavery and the dangers involved in trying to escape. The elderly woman who lived there approached him with an extraordinary request: His master, a local Know-Nothing politician named Jack Tabb, alternated between benevolence and brutality in the treatment of his slaves. Gragston remembered that Tabb designated one slave to teach others how to read, write and do basic math. He used to beat us, sure; but not nearly so much as others did, some of his own kin people, even. But when the time came, Gragston resolved to proceed. A Presbyterian

minister, Rankin published an anti-slavery tract in and later founded the American Anti-Slavery Society. Rankin and his neighbors in Ripley provided shelter and safety for slaves fleeing bondage. After returning to Kentucky one night from a river crossing with 12 fugitives, he realized he had been discovered. The time had come for Gragston and his wife to make the journey themselves. The youngest of 18 children, Still was born in , moved to Philadelphia in the mids and went to work for the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society as a mail clerk and janitor. Still was closely involved in the planning, coordinating and communicating required to keep the Underground Railroad active in the mid-Atlantic region. He became one of the most prominent African Americans involved in the long campaign to shelter and protect runaways. In *The Underground Rail Road*, a remarkable book published in , Still recounted the stories of escaped slaves whose experiences were characterized by courage, resourcefulness, pain at forced partings from family members and, above all, a desperate longing for freedom. For Still, aiding runaway slaves and helping to keep families intact was a deeply personal calling. Sydney and her family were returned to Maryland, but she escaped a second time to New Jersey. She changed her name to Charity to avoid detection and rejoined her husband, but their reunion was tarnished by the knowledge that she was forced to leave two boys behind. Her angry former owner promptly sold them to an Alabama slaveholder. William Still would eventually be united with one of his enslaved brothers, Peter, who escaped to freedom in the North—a miraculous event that after the war inspired William to compile his history, hoping it would promote similar reunions. The work of the Underground Railroad became the focal point of pro- and anti-slavery agitation after passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in . As the decade progressed, the Fugitive Slave Act gave the work of the Underground Railroad new urgency. Perhaps no one embodied the hunger for freedom more completely than John Henry Hill. After recovering from the shock of being told by his owner that he was to be sold at auction in Richmond, Hill arrived at the site of the public sale, where he mounted a desperate struggle to escape. Employing fists, feet and a knife, he turned away four or five would-be captors and bolted from the auction house. He hid from his baffled pursuers in the kitchen of a nearby merchant until he decided he wanted to go to Petersburg, Va. He stayed in Petersburg as long as he dared, leaving only when informed of a plot to capture him. Four days after departing Richmond on foot, he arrived in Norfolk and boarded ship—more than nine months after escaping from the auction. But other matters preoccupied him. Still, I have been looking and looking for my friends for several days, but have not seen nor heard of them. I hope and trust in the Lord Almighty that all things are well with them. My dear sir I could feel so much better satisfied if I could hear from my wife. In another letter, Hill fretted about the fate of his uncle, Hezekiah, who went into hiding after his escape and ultimately fled to freedom after 13 months. Despite enormous difficulties, some families managed to escape to freedom intact. My master was wanting to keep me in the dark about taking them, for fear that something might happen. Upon learning of his planned departure for Mississippi, quick-thinking Jackson gathered her children and headed for Pennsylvania. From Pennsylvania, the family continued north into Canada. The 40 or so years Jackson had spent in slavery were at an end. Jackson and her interesting family of seven children arrived safe and in good health and spirits at my house in St. Davidson, however, was a different story. Davidson assumed control of the farm and the slaves, Hammond remembered—and refused to complete the transaction Berry had arranged with her late husband. Hammond recalled that her father bribed the Anne Arundel sheriff for permits allowing him to travel to Baltimore with his wife and child. Davidson and one by the Anne Arundel sheriff, perhaps to protect himself from criticism for the role he played in aiding their escape in the first place. Coleman, who delivered merchandise to the towns between Baltimore and Hanover, Pa. Hammond attended school at a Quaker mission. When the war ended, her family returned to Baltimore. Hammond completed the seventh grade and, just like her mother, became a cook. Even as he mourned the loss of his son, Hill reflected on his contentment. Mitchell is the author of *Skirmisher*:

Chapter 7 : Underground Railroad - HISTORY

The "railroad" actually began operating in the s, but became known as the Underground Railroad in the s. The organization used railroad terms as code words. Those who helped people move from place to place were known as "conductors" and the fleeing refugees were called "passengers" or "cargo."

This booklet will provide a window into the past through a variety of primary sources regarding the Underground Railroad. These primary sources consist of broadsides, reward posters, newspaper clippings, historical documents, sheet music, photographs and narratives pertaining to the Underground Railroad. These items are found within the digitized collections of the Library of Congress. The Underground Railroad was a secret system developed to aid fugitive slaves on their escape to freedom. Involvement with the Underground Railroad was not only dangerous, but it was also illegal. So, to help protect themselves and their mission secret codes were created. The term Underground Railroad referred to the entire system, which consisted of many routes called lines. The free individuals who helped runaway slaves travel toward freedom were called conductors, and the fugitive slaves were referred to as cargo. The safe houses used as hiding places along the lines of the Underground Railroad were called stations. A lit lantern hung outside would identify these stations. A Dangerous Path to Freedom Traveling along the Underground Railroad was a long a perilous journey for fugitive slaves to reach their freedom. Runaway slaves had to travel great distances, many times on foot, in a short amount of time. They did this with little or no food and no protection from the slave catchers chasing them. Slave owners were not the only pursuers of fugitive slaves. In order to entice others to assist in the capture of these slaves, their owners would post reward posters offering payment for the capture of their property. If they were caught, any number of terrible things could happen to them. Many captured fugitive slaves were flogged, branded, jailed, sold back into slavery, or even killed. Not only did fugitive slaves have the fear of starvation and capture, but there were also threats presented by their surroundings. While traveling for long periods of time in the wilderness, they would have to fend off animals wanting to kill and eat them, cross treacherous terrain, and survive severe temperatures. For the slaves traveling north on the Underground Railroad, they were still in danger once they entered northern states. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 allowed and encouraged the capture of fugitive slaves due to the fact that they were seen as stolen property, rather than abused human beings. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 also outlawed the abetting of fugitive slaves. Their safety and freedom would not be reached until they entered into Canada. Not all slaves traveled north. There were also Underground Railroad lines that lead south en route for Mexico and the Caribbean. He was taken from his northern residence, arrested, and tried under this law in Boston, Massachusetts. His arrest spurred black and white abolitionists and citizens of Boston to riot and protest. After the trial, Burns was taken back to cruelty of the south which he thought he had escaped from. While he was enduring his return to slavery, abolitionists were working to raise funds and within a year of his trial they had enough money to buy his freedom. He escaped not on the Underground Railroad, but on a real train. He disguised himself as a sailor, but this was not enough. Luckily, the train conductor did not look closely at the papers, and Douglass gained his passage to freedom. Unfortunately, not all runaway slaves made it to freedom. But, many of those who did manage to escape went on to tell their stories of flight from slavery and to help other slaves not yet free. He shipped himself in a three foot long by two and a half foot deep by two foot wide box, from Richmond, Virginia to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. When he was removed from the box, he came out singing. Conductors helped runaway slaves by providing them with safe passage to and from stations. They did this under the cover of darkness with slave catchers hot on their heels. Many times these stations would be located within their own homes and businesses. The act of harboring fugitive slaves put these conductors in grave danger; yet, they persisted because they believed in a cause greater than themselves, which was the freeing of thousands of enslaved human beings. These conductors were comprised of a diverse group of people. They included people of different races, occupations and income levels. There were also former slaves who had escaped using the Underground Railroad and voluntarily returned to the lands of slavery, as conductors, to help free those still enslaved. If a conductor was caught helping free slaves they would be fined, imprisoned, branded, or even

hanged. Jonathan Walker was a sea captain caught off the shore of Florida trying to transport fugitive slaves to freedom in the Bahamas. She never lost one of them along the way. As a fugitive slave herself, she was helped along the Underground Railroad by another famous conductor—William Still. He went on to write *The Underground Railroad*: John Parker is yet another former slave who escaped and ventured back into slave states to help free others. He conducted one of the busiest sections of the Underground Railroad, transporting fugitive slaves across the Ohio River. His neighbor and fellow conductor, Reverend John Rankin, worked with him on the Underground Railroad. Both of their homes served as Underground Railroad stations. Conductors of the Underground Railroad undoubtedly opposed slavery, and they were not alone. Abolitionists took action against slavery as well. The organization created the Declaration of Anti-Slavery in which they gave reasons for the construction of the society and its goals. The society distributed an annual almanac that included poems, drawings, essays and other abolitionist material. Frederick Douglass was an escaped slave who became a famous abolitionist. He published a newspaper called the *North Star* in which he voiced his goals for the abolishment of slavery. Anthony was another well known abolitionist who spoke and wrote for the efforts to abolish slavery. Much of her book was based on the experiences of fugitive slave Josiah Henson. *Efforts of Abolitionists Telling Their Story*: He made many failed attempts to escape slavery; yet, he still had the courage and perseverance to continue in his fight for freedom after every capture and punishment. His perseverance paid off when he made a successful and much anticipated escape to the northern states and then on to Canada with the help of the Underground Railroad. The following is an excerpt from his narrative in which he discussed one of his many escapes and the challenges he had to overcome. I commenced from that hour making preparations for the dangerous experiment of breaching the chains that bound me as a slave. My preparation for this voyage consisted in the accumulation of a little money, perhaps not exceeding two dollars and fifty cents, and a suit which I had never been seen or known to wear before; this last was to avoid detection. On the twenty-fifth of December, , my long anticipated time had arrived when I was to put into operation my former resolution, which was to bolt for Liberty or consent to die a Slave. I acted upon the former, although I confess it to be one of the most self-defying acts of my whole life, to take leave of an affectionate wife, who stood before me on my departure, with dear little Frances in her arms, and with tears of sorrow in her eyes as she bid me a long farewell. It required all the moral courage that I was master of to suppress my feelings while taking leave of my little family. Had Matilda known my intention at the time, it would not have been possible for me to have got away, and I might have this day been a slave. My strong attachments to friends and relatives, with all the love of home and birth-place which is so natural among the human family, twined about my heart and were hard to break away from. And withal, the fear of being killed, or captured and taken to the extreme South, to linger out my days in hopeless bondage on some cotton or sugar plantation, all combined to deter me. But I had counted the cost, and was fully prepared to make the sacrifice. The time for fulfilling my pledge was then at hand. I must forsake friends and neighbors, wife and child, or consent to live and die a slave. This was the commencement of what was called the underground railroad to Canada. I walked with bold courage, trusting in the arm of Omnipotence; guided by the unchangeable *North Star* by night, and inspired by an elevated thought that I was fleeing from a land of slavery and oppression, bidding farewell to handcuffs, whips, thumb-screws and chains. I travelled on until I had arrived at the place where I was directed to call on an Abolitionist, but I made no stop: I prosecuted my journey vigorously for nearly forty-eight hours without food or rest, struggling against external difficulties such as no one can imagine who has never experienced the same: Another former slave who was well known for her efforts to end slavery was Sojourner Truth. She too along with Josiah Henson, J. Green and many others wrote narratives that shared their experiences. Their stories of strength and freedom provide much insight to the time in which they lived. Perhaps, so many fugitive slaves chose to write down their experiences to help others understand their trials and tribulations; or maybe they did this to help individuals learn from the mistakes of the past, in hopes of creating a better future.

Chapter 8 : When did the underground railroad start and end

The Underground Railroad was neither underground nor a railroad, but a secret network of safe houses and antislavery activists-black, white, and Native American-who helped slaves escape to.

Public Domain The Underground Railroad was established to aid enslaved people in their escape to freedom. The railroad was comprised of dozens of secret routes and safe houses originating in the slaveholding states and extending all the way to the Canadian border, the only area where fugitives could be assured of their freedom. Shorter routes led south from Florida to Cuba or from Texas to Mexico. The Underground Railroad also included the smuggling of fugitive slaves onto ships that carried them to ports in the North or outside the United States. The success of the Underground Railroad rested on the cooperation of former runaway slaves, free-born blacks, Native Americans, and white and black abolitionists who helped guide runaway slaves along the routes and provided their homes as safe havens. Although estimates of the number of people who escaped through the Underground Railroad between and vary widely, the figure most often cited is approximately 100,000. The Underground Railroad derived its name from the terminology used throughout the routes. The railroad included conductors, including William Still, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, arguably the most prominent one. It also included agents, stations, stationmasters, passengers or cargo, and even stockholders. The conductors were the guides, agents helped slaves find their way to the routes of the Underground Railroad, the stations were hiding places usually homes, stationmasters were those that hid slaves in their homes, the cargo referred to escaped slaves, and stockholders were those that donated money to keep the Underground Railroad running. The Underground Railroad worked as a series of networks. The journey north was an extremely long route and the Underground Railroad provided depots or safe houses along the way. Those that led the runaway slaves north did so in stages. No conductor knew the entire route; he or she was responsible for the short routes from station to station. This limited knowledge protected both the fugitive slaves and the integrity of the routes which sometimes extended over 1,000 miles. The success of the Underground Railroad generated much animosity among slaveholders and their allies. Because previous measures had failed to disrupt this system of slave escape, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 which allowed slave owners, or their agents to call on Federal, state and local law enforcement officials in non-slaveholding states to assist in capturing fugitive slaves. The law was greatly abused. Slave-catchers started abducting free-born African Americans. Since African Americans could not testify or have a jury present at trial they usually could not defend themselves. The Underground Railroad gave freedom to thousands of enslaved women and men and hope to tens of thousands more. Those who escaped became human witnesses to the slave system with many of them going on the lecture circuit to explain to Northerners the horrors of the servile institution. Others became members and supporters of the Underground Railroad. In both cases the success of the Underground Railroad hastened the destruction of slavery. Blight, *Passages to Freedom*:

Chapter 9 : The Underground Railroad East End

The Underground Railroad went north to freedom. Sometimes passengers stopped when they reached a free state such as Pennsylvania, New Jersey, or Ohio. After , most escaping slaves traveled all the way to Canada.

Summary Analysis The final chapter of the novel is preceded by a runaway ad for Cora; however, unlike the other ads, this one deviates from the conventional script by announcing: Back on Valentine, she fought and kicked Ridgeway while the farmhouse and library burned in the background. When Ridgeway points a gun at her, she tells him where the station is. Ridgeway looks ill and disheveled. Thinking about Royal, Cora feels full of regret that she rebuked his advances for so long. Ridgeway unshackles Cora and forces her to dig, while Homer snickers. Eventually, she reaches the trapdoor. Cora grabs him and they scuffle until Cora manages to throw him down the stairs, leaving his body mangled. In this sense, Ridgeway symbolizes the entire system of slavery and white supremacy that seeks to deny Cora her freedom at all costs, while Cora symbolizes the spark of black rebellion. Ridgeway has always had a huge advantage over Cora, due to his weapons, his crew of assailants, and the law, but in the end, their struggle becomes a one-on-one battle in which Cora manages to overpower him through cunning and sheer force of will. Active Themes Related Quotes with Explanations As Ridgeway lies in agonizing pain, he calls for Homer and asks him to write something down in his journal. Cora, meanwhile, pushes against the handcar pump with all her might, and eventually manages to roll out of the station. She digs the tunnel as she goes, swinging a pickax into the rock. She stops to sleep for a while, and, upon waking, decides to walk the rest of the way. She sleeps twice again, dreaming of Royal and waking up in tears. She can tell from the sun that she has made it north, although she has no idea where exactly. Cora finds a trail and eventually comes across three wagons. One of the drivers, a redheaded Irishman, stops on seeing her and asks if she needs anything. He gives her some bread and suggests that they catch up. He introduces himself as Ollie, and explains that they are on the way to California. Cora tells him that she is a runaway from Georgia, and wonders what Ollie is running from. The final passage of the novel is concerned with the mythology of America. The traditional story told of American history is that the country began as a place of refuge for people facing persecution in Europe. Unlike the European settlers, however, black Americans had no place to escape, and thus became permanent runaways in their own land. Although little information is given about Ollie, he and Cora form an instant bond through their shared experience of flight. Retrieved November 13,