

DOING as they can

slave life in the american south



Viewer's Guide to the 30-minute documentary by the American Social History Project

A fugitive woman slave describes life, work, and day-to-day resistance to slavery on a cotton plantation during the 1840s and 1850s. The master dictates time and work, but slaves strive to make life in the quarters independent of his control. She escapes to the North in the 1850s, only to discover that her former master's legal power extends even to the "free" city of New York.

Visit the ASHP website for more information: www.ashp.cuny.edu

THE *WHO BUILT AMERICA?* MATERIALS

Doing As They Can and nine other documentaries are a part of the *Who Built America?* series, which explores the central role working women and men played in key events and developments of American History. See also the two-volume *Who Built America?* textbook, *Freedom's Unfinished Revolution*, a high school text on the Civil War and Reconstruction, and the *WBA?* interactive CD-ROM.

Complete list of *WBA?* documentaries:

History: The Big H— This film-noir detective story introduces the history of working people and the challenge of understanding the past.



Tea Party Etiquette— Boston shoemaker George Robert Twelves Hewes narrates his experience of the Boston Tea Party, Boston Massacre, and the American Revolution.

Daughters of Free Men— Lucy Hall leaves her New England farm to work in the Lowell textile mills of the 1830s and confronts a new world of opportunity and exploitation.

Five Points— The story of 1850s New York City and its notorious immigrant slum district, the Five Points, is seen through the conflicting perspectives of a native born Protestant reformer and an Irish-Catholic family.

Doing As They Can— A fugitive woman slave describes her life, work, and day-to-day resistance on a North Carolina cotton plantation during the 1840s and 1850s.

Dr. Toer's Amazing Magic Lantern Show— The struggle to realize the promise of freedom following the Civil War is told by ex-slave J.W. Toer and his traveling picture show.

1877: The Grand Army of Starvation— In the summer of 1877 eighty thousand railroad workers went on strike and hundreds of thousands soon followed. The Great Uprising began a new era of conflict about equality in the industrial age.

Savage Acts: Wars, Fairs and Empire— The story of the Philippine War (1899-1902) and turn-of-the-century world's fairs reveal the links between everyday life in the U.S. and the creation of a new expansionist foreign policy.

Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl— Framed by the 1909 New York shirtwaist strike, this program presents a panoramic portrait of immigrant working women in the turn-of-the-century city.

Up South: African-American Migration in the Era of the Great War— Narrated by a Mississippi barber and a sharecropper woman, *Up South* tells the dramatic story of African-American migration to industrial cities during World War I.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO GROW UP AS A SLAVE?

In the years before the Civil War, millions of black men, women, and children in the American South lived their lives as slaves. What did it mean to be enslaved? How did slavery affect the way people worked? The way they raised children? How did they feel about being slaves? How did slavery, and the work that slaves performed, change over time?

Slavery placed harsh limits on the lives of black men and women. Slaves had to do any work the master ordered. Masters were free to punish their slaves and sell them away from family and friends. Yet even

within the rigid confines of slavery, African Americans struggled to assert their humanity. Through religion, music, daily resistance, and especially the family, slaves sought a measure of independence and dignity. *Doing As They Can* explores the world of slavery from the slaves' point of view. It draws on the testimony African Americans left in memoirs, letters, and interviews conducted after Emancipation. These first-hand accounts help us envision the slave community—a world that neither southern nor northern whites ever fully understood.

Is this what you think of when you think of slavery? What are your images of slave life?



“Five generations on Smith’s plantation, Beaufort, South Carolina.”

This African-American family was photographed in 1862. Photographs of slaves are rare. Most of the images used in this program are engravings printed in books and magazines of the period. Some of them present racial stereotypes. (See page 12)

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

IN THE BEGINNING

There were no slaves on the first English ships to reach North America in 1607. Yet by 1860, there were four million African-American slaves in the United States. Between settlement and the Civil War, a cruel system of unfree, unpaid labor developed in one of the most democratic societies in the world.

Africans were first brought to Virginia in 1619. By then, African slaves were already working the mines and sugar cane fields of the Caribbean and South America. As the slave trade developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the exchange of people and goods across the Atlantic shaped the “New World” societies in the Caribbean and the Americas. In North America, Africans were first sold as indentured servants, who might earn their freedom with seven years of unpaid labor. African and white indentured servants grew tobacco for the first Virginia planters and made up a major portion of the workforce.

By 1700 the southern colonies were expanding. As health conditions improved in the colonies and indentured servants lived long enough to claim land and demand rights as citizens, tensions emerged between the wealthy settlers and the growing number of freed servants. White indentured servants became more scarce, and planters turned to slavery to solve both their labor problem and the tensions between the wealthy and poor. Planters used Africans’ black skin and non-Christian religion to justify lifetime bondage and codified racial difference and race-based slavery by passing a series of laws that regulated slavery. During the next century, thou-

sands of African women, men, and children were brought to America and sold as slaves.

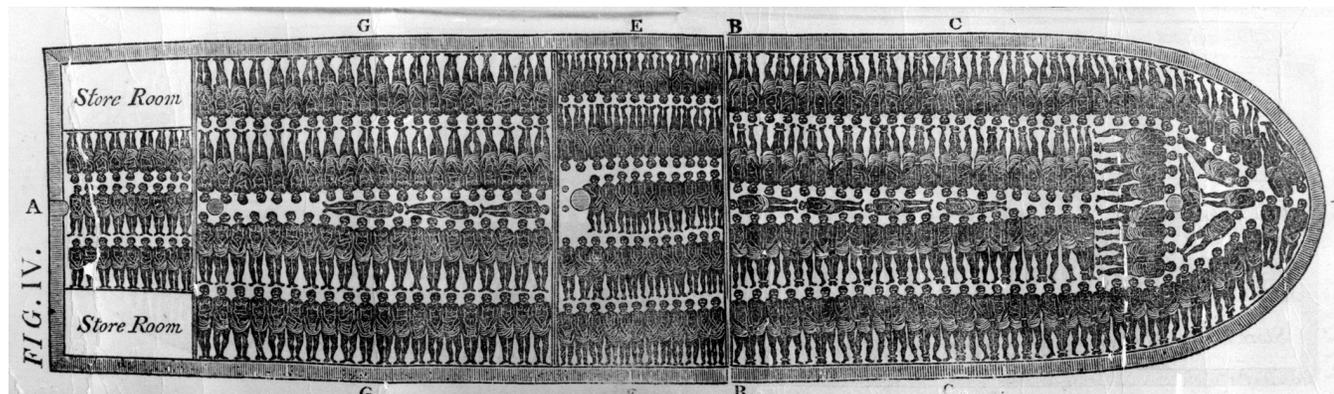
In their homelands, Africans had been farmers and cattleraisers, hunters and traders, skilled weavers and ironmakers. Others were musicians, priests, and poets. Captured and taken across the sea, they brought with them a host of languages, religions, and cultures. Though much was lost, slaves adapted African traditions to life in America. By 1776, a distinct African-American culture had emerged.

“The stench of the hold was loathsome. . . The ship was so crowded that each scarcely had room to turn himself. . . This wretched situation was aggravated by the galling of the chains and the filth. . . The shrieks of the women and the groans of the dying rendered the whole a scene of horror. . .”

—EX-SLAVE OLAUDAH EQUIANO, 1789

When the American Revolution began, there were almost half a million slaves in the thirteen colonies. During the war, 5,000 slaves joined the Revolutionary forces in a bid for their freedom. Thousands of others fought for the British, who also offered liberty in exchange for military service. As many as 50,000 slaves seized the opportunity to run away.

After the Revolution, the Founding Fathers not only failed to end slavery, they actually strengthened it. The Constitution protected the importation of new slaves until 1808. And it promised that federal armed forces would put down slave rebellions. White liberty and black slavery were etched into



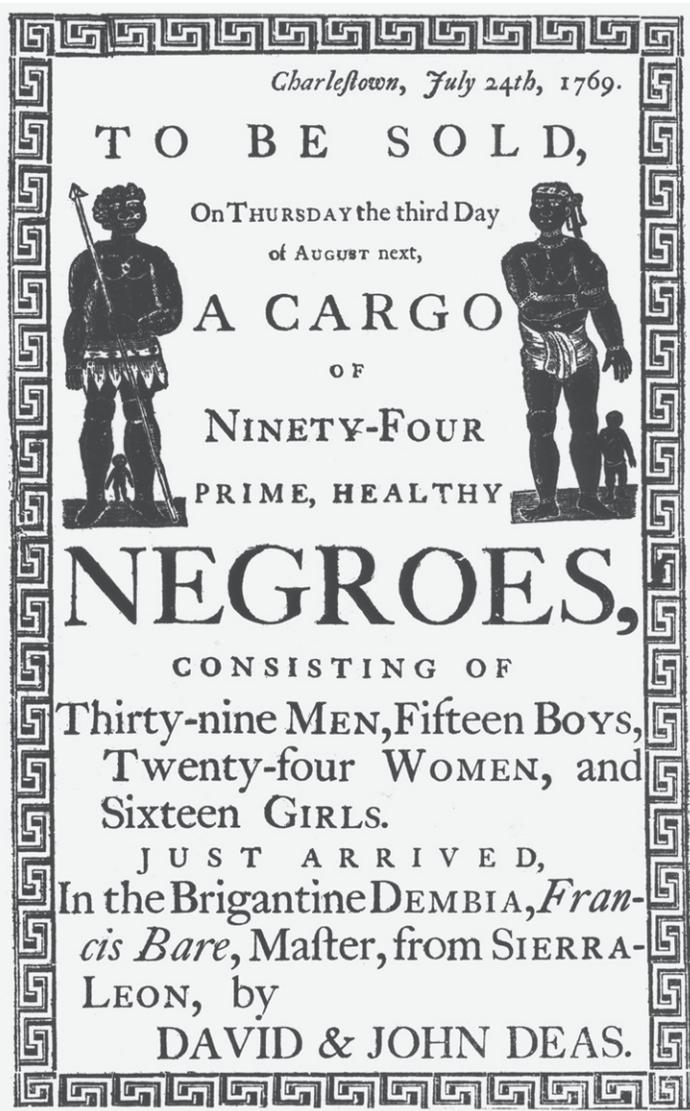
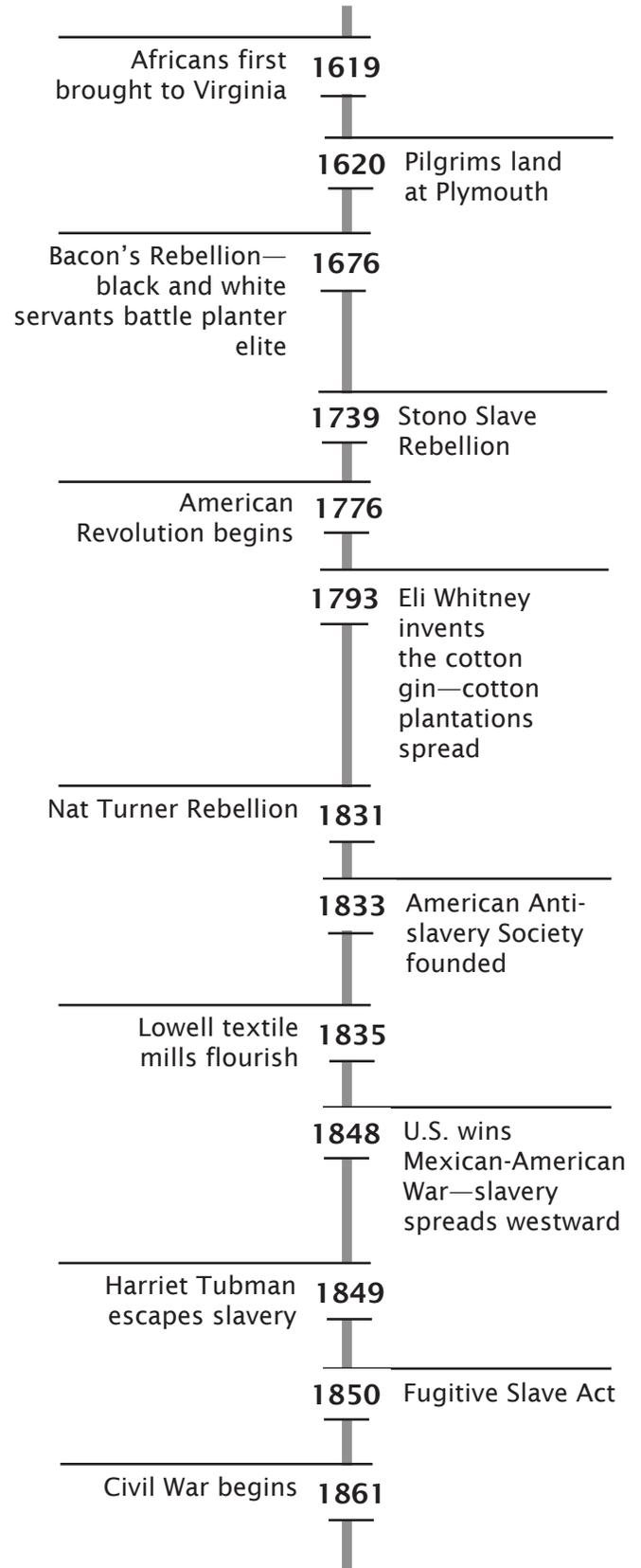
The Middle Passage.

Africans crossed the Atlantic squeezed into the cargo holds of slave traders’ ships. Sometimes more than half died before the voyage was over.

Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the African Slave-Trade by the British Parliament* (1808)

the highest law of the land.

After the Revolution the northern colonies instituted gradual abolition of slavery—slowly reducing the slave population from fifty thousand in 1775 to twenty-seven thousand in 1810 until the last slave was freed in the North in 1847. Most slaves in the North worked in cities as laborers or domestic servants. Slaves made up eighteen percent of New York City’s population with perhaps half of the city’s households owning a slave by the 1740s. Free black communities thrived throughout the North, establishing churches, schools, anti-slavery organizations, and voluntary associations.



Advertising a slave sale.
This handbill announcing an auction of African captives was posted around the city of Charleston in 1769.

KING COTTON

"The master fed us reg'lar on good, 'stantial food just like you'd tend to your horse, if you had a real good one."

—ANONYMOUS EX-SLAVE

The rise of English textile mills and the growth of a worldwide textile market in the 1790s sparked the expansion of the slave system. At the same time, Eli Whitney's cotton gin, invented in 1793, efficiently removed seeds from the cotton boll, speeding production. Cotton became king, and slavery grew more profitable. Between 1800 and 1860 cotton plantations and slavery spread west to Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas.

Changes in the demand for cotton directly affected slaves' lives. When high demand raised the price of cotton, planters cultivated more land and worked slaves harder than ever. Yet high demand (and the end of slave importation) also increased the price of slaves, encouraging masters to improve slaves' living conditions. When demand tapered off and cotton prices fell, the planter's economic difficulties could mean hard times and sale for slaves.

By 1860 the American South produced two thirds of the world's cotton. Cotton and slavery brought great wealth to large planters. Slavery also benefited northerners who shipped cotton to England or made loans to planters buying slaves and land. Profits from such transactions helped finance the building of the first factories in the North. With a steady stream of cotton from the South, cotton mills in Lowell, Massachusetts and Rhode Island expanded and began employing young women and new immigrants and in turn increased the demand for slave-produced cotton. (see *Daughters of Free Men* viewer's guide)



King Cotton.

The South's staple, packed into bales and awaiting transport up the Mississippi River, filled a New Orleans wharf.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

SOUTHERN SOCIETY

At the top of southern society was a tiny group of planters who owned 50 or more slaves. Stephen Duncan, the richest man in the South, owned over 1,000 slaves in 1860. From the ranks of the big planters came several presidents and many congressmen. Below them on the social ladder was a much larger group of slaveowners who owned between 10 and 20 slaves. Any family owning even one slave had a valuable asset.

Most white families, however, did not own even one slave. The majority of white southerners lived on small, family-operated farms, much like those in the North. Though they did not benefit from slavery, most non-slaveowning whites supported the slave system. Belief in white supremacy was so widespread that even the poorest whites felt they had a stake in the system's preservation.

Slaveowners worked together to ensure the survival of the "peculiar institution." Wealthy planters made the laws that protected their right to own slaves, to sell them, and to discipline them with the whip. Poor white farmers manned the patrols that searched for runaways. Few southern whites opposed slavery, and even fewer could envision a soci-



The "Big House."

This image of the main residence at Oak Lawn, a Louisiana sugar plantation, illustrates how owners of large plantations created a world of luxury and aristocratic style.

Source: C. E. H. Bonwill, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, February 6, 1864

ety based on racial equality.

Throughout the South, but especially in the upper South, slaves who had been freed by their owners or were able to purchase their freedom worked as laborers, artisans, small shopkeepers or domestics. Most of these free blacks lived in urban areas, and

women generally outnumbered men. By the 1830s in the aftermath of Nat Turner's rebellion, whites passed laws restricting the rights of free blacks and making individual emancipation more difficult.



Night Patrol.

This scene of white patrollers examining "Negro passes" in Louisiana illustrates the constraints placed on all African Americans in the slave South.

Detail of a wood engraving based on a sketch by Frank H. Schell, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, July 11, 1863

Night patrols enforced planter control even after work hours and searched for runaways. Why did poor southern whites help keep blacks enslaved?

FROM DAWN TO DUSK

The slaves' working day began at dawn and lasted into the night. Most slaves—men, women, and even older children—spent 12 to 15 hours a day plowing, planting, hoeing, or picking in the fields. Though conditions varied, this back-breaking labor was usually done in large gangs, supervised by white overseers.

Fieldwork varied with the crop. Sugar fields, like cotton fields, were worked in gangs. But rice planting, which required skilled labor, was done by individuals with specific tasks to perform. The exhausting field work of the summer and fall contrasted with the slower paced winter and spring tasks of chopping wood,

"About the first of July. . . (the cotton) is hoed. . . The overseer follows the slaves on horseback with a whip. The fastest hoer takes the lead row. . . If one falls behind or is a moment idle, he is whipped."

—SOLOMON NORTHUP, *TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE*, 1855

splitting fence rails, slaughtering hogs, and clearing land.

Roughly one quarter of all slaves did not

work the land. A few female slaves worked at the beck and call of mistresses, doing such tasks as washing clothes, cleaning, cooking, and personal service. This work could be so difficult and isolating that many women preferred to work in the fields with their families. Ten percent of all slaves worked in industries like lumbering, road construction, or mining, often because their masters hired them out to perform such work. In southern cities, a few slaves worked as skilled artisans, such as blacksmiths.



Working in the Fields.

An unknown photographer captured this scene of men, women, and children picking cotton under the watchful eye of an overseer.

MASTER'S TIME, SLAVES' TIME

After a day's work, slaves returned to their quarters, where there were meals to prepare, clothes to wash and mend, and children to put to bed. Slaves viewed time away from the fields as their own and resisted masters' attempts to supervise life in the quarters. Here, slaves cemented the family and community ties that helped them endure under slavery.

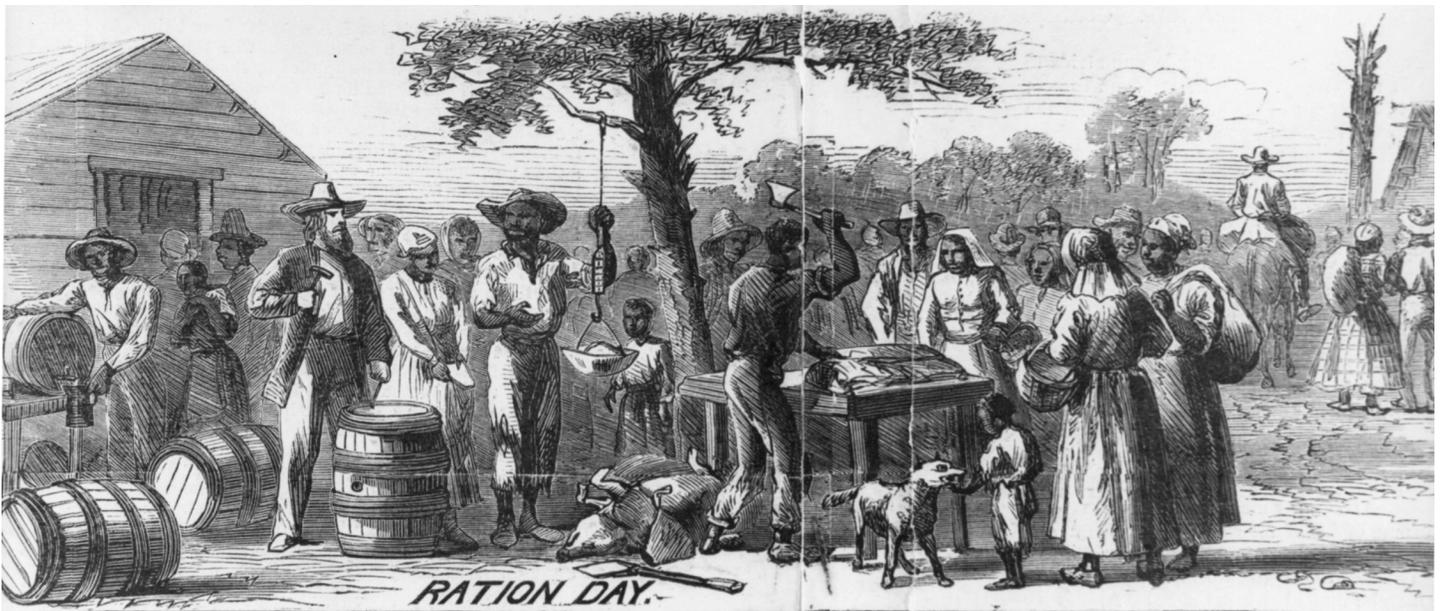
To some degree, slaves were able to decide who did what in the quarters. Often their division of chores was made according to gender. This sexual division of labor contrasted with the master's effort to make male and female slaves do the same work. To the extent that work in the quarters or in one's own garden was done according to slaves' own rules, it provided them with a measure of control over their lives. Slaves also recalled African traditions in their marriage rituals, language, songs, and games. They voiced their hopes, and fears, in beautiful spirituals, creating a rich African-American musical tradition. Even slave kinship patterns had African roots. For example, like their African ancestors, slaves did not marry their first cousins, as did many white southerners.



The cabins comprising the slave quarters on the Drayton Plantation, Hilton Head, South Carolina. Photographed in 1862.

Pictures and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Slaves mixed Christian and African beliefs to form a religion that had little to do with the masters' faith. Masters tried to use Christianity and the New Testament to make slaves obedient and to justify slavery. But slaves focused instead on Old Testament references to freedom, escape from slavery, revenge, and justice.



"Ration Day."

A master distributed provisions in this illustration from a weekly newspaper report about the operations of a plantation around 1860. The engraving suggests that this planter provided his slaves with a varied and nutritious diet, which was not typically the case. Slaves used gardens and other methods to supplement often meager or boring fare.

“SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A MOTHERLESS CHILD”

GREAT SALE of SLAVES JANUARY 10, 1855

HERE Will Be Offered For Sale at Public Auction at the SLAVE MARKET, CHEAPSIDE, LEXINGTON, All The SLAVES of JOHN CARTER, Esquire, of LEWIS COUNTY, KY. On Account of His Removal to Indiana, a Free State. The Slaves Listed Below Were All Raised on the CARTER PLANTATION at QUICK'S RUN, Lewis County, Kentucky.

3 Bucks Aged from 20 to 26, Strong, Ablebodied
1 Wench, Sallie, Aged 42, Excellent Cook
1 Wench, Lize, Aged 23 with 6 mo. old Picinnny
One Buck Aged 52, good Kennel Man
17 Bucks Aged from twelve to twenty, Excellent

TERMS: Strictly CASH at Sale, as owner must realize cash, owing to his removal to West. Offers for the entire lot will be entertained previous to sale by addressing the undersigned.

JOHN CARTER, Esq.
Po. Clarksburg Lewis County, Kentucky

Slaves for Sale.

The twenty-three slaves to be sold belonged to a Kentucky planter, John Carter, who decided to “liquidate his assets” before moving to the free state of Indiana.

John Winston Coleman, *Slavery Times in Kentucky* (1940)

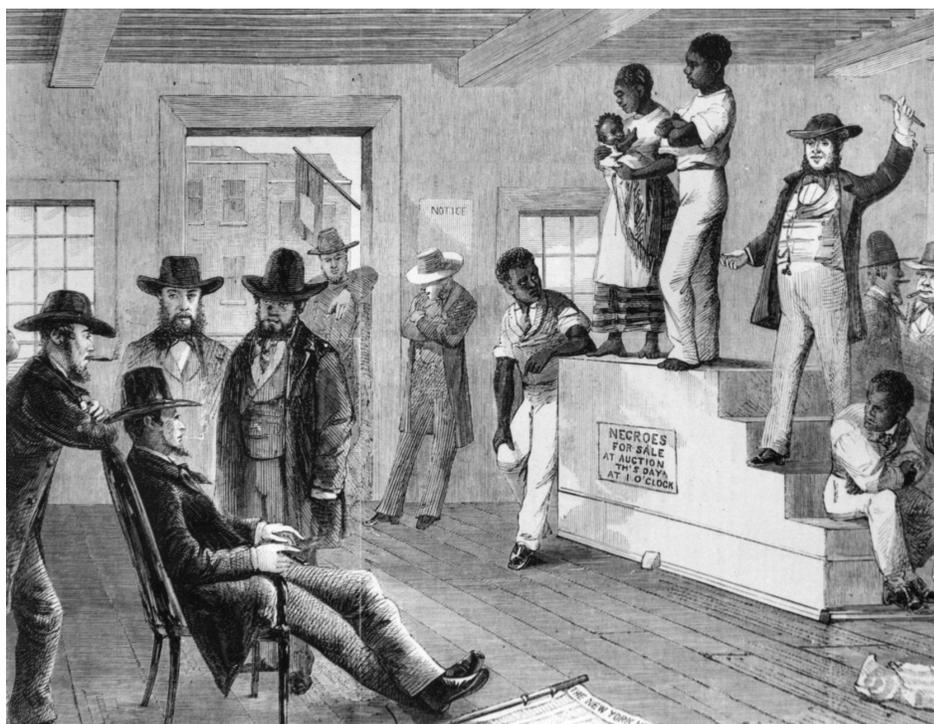
“All the threats of the slave dealer could not silence the afflicted mother. She kept on begging them not to separate the three . . . But it was on no avail. Then Eliza ran to [her son]. . . kissed him again and again, told him to remember her—all the while her tears falling in the boy’s face like rain.”

—SOLOMON NORTHUP,
TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE, 1855

No matter how successful slaves were at gaining some autonomy, they remained slaves. No one could forget that fact. One constant reminder was the slave sale. In the words of one woman who had been sold away from her husband, “White folks got a heap to answer for the way they’ve done to colored folks! So much they wouldn’t never pray it away!”

As slavery expanded after 1800, tens of thousands of black men, women, and children were torn from their families and sold to new masters in the West. Migrating masters who took their slaves with them also broke up families, since husbands and wives often belonged to different masters. Some slaves were sold away from their families as a form of punishment. In these and other ways, masters broke up as many as one third of all slave marriages.

Trying to preserve a sense of family continuity, slaves developed an elaborate system of naming their children. Through the assignment of first names, slaves honored dead relatives and created a mechanism through which kin could be traced over several generations. Other slaves took names such as Freeman to deny their assigned status as property.



On the Auction Block.

This engraving depicts an auction of what appears to be a slave family rather than the wrenching scene of family separation that frequently occurred during slave sales.

“A slave auction in Virginia,” *Illustrated London News*, February 16, 1861

SLAVE REBELLIONS



Turner Rebellion.

This woodcut was published in an 1831 account of the slave uprising.

Samuel Warner, *Authentic and impartial narrative of the tragical scene which was witnessed in Southampton County (Virginia) . . .* (New York, 1831)
Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

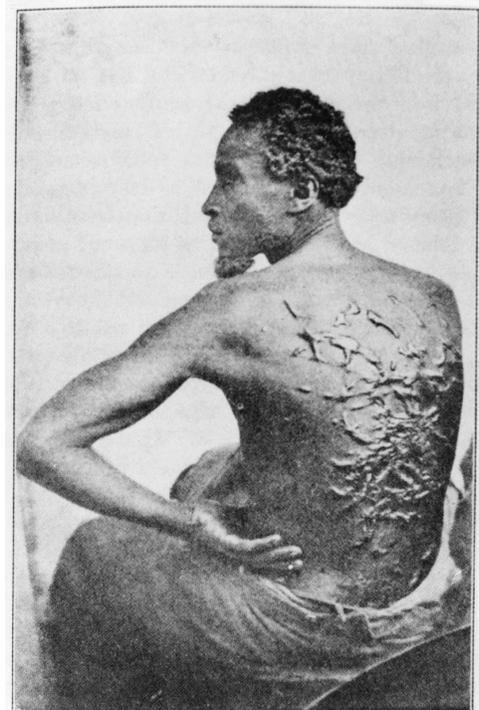
Again and again, slaves fought against great odds to overthrow their masters. Slave rebellions, big and small, occurred regularly beginning in the seventeenth century. The most successful slave uprising occurred in Saint Domingue, where slaves overthrew French colonial rule and established their own nation, Haiti, the first independent black state in the Americas. In 1831, Nat Turner led dozens of Virginia slaves in a religiously inspired rebellion against whites.

For two days in August 1831, Turner and a band of followers went from plantation to plantation, killing whites and freeing slaves. Nearly 60 whites died before troops dispersed Turner's band. Within weeks white authorities rounded up and executed over one hundred slaves, including many who had not taken part in the rebellion. Many more were punished. Turner himself died on the gallows still thoroughly convinced that God approved his actions.

After the rebellion, masters took new steps to defend slavery. Southern states passed new laws limiting slaves' ability to move about on their own. Teaching a slave to read or write became a crime. Feeling threatened, planters no longer allowed public criticism of slavery. Southern leaders, who had once spoken of slavery as a "necessary evil" now began to describe and defend it as an ideal social system, a "positive good."

*It was slavery I hated . . .
Feeding and clothing me could
not atone for taking my
Liberty away."*

— FREDERICK DOUGLASS,
*MY BONDAGE AND
MY FREEDOM*, 1855



A map of servitude.

The back of a Louisiana slave named Gordon, photographed in 1863 after he escaped to the Union forces.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

DAY TO DAY RESISTANCE

For thirty years following Nat Turner's death, slaves did not rise up in a mass revolt. But they did resist in other ways. The slave song "You May Think I'm Working/But I'm Not" described the most common form of resistance. Faking illness or ignorance was another way to lighten one's load. Slaves also practiced sabotage. They broke tools, destroyed livestock, and set fires. Some slaves also poisoned their masters.

Running away was another form of resistance. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, escaped slaves often found refuge with nearby Native American tribes. Since it was difficult and dangerous, and meant leaving behind family members, most runaways were young, single men. Most came from such border states as Virginia and Kentucky, where the escape route of safe houses and abolitionist sympathizers known as "the Underground Railroad" began.

The most famous "conductor" on the Underground Railroad was Harriet Tubman. After fleeing her Maryland master in 1849, Tubman returned twice to lead her two children, sister, mother, and brother and his family to freedom. In later trips, she helped as many as 300 African Americans to escape slavery.



Escape.

In the 1830s, this icon, or symbol, appeared on notices about fugitive slaves in the classified section of the Mobile, Alabama, *Commercial Register*.

Richard Brough, *Commercial Advertiser*, June 16, 1832
Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

CAUTION!!

COLORED PEOPLE
OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,
You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the
Watchmen and Police Officers
of Boston,
For since the recent **ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN**, they are empowered to act as
KIDNAPPERS
AND
Slave Catchers,
And they have already been actually employed in **KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES.** Therefore, if you value your **LIBERTY,** and the *Welfare of the Fugitives* among you, *Shun* them in every possible manner, as so many **HOUNDS** on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.

Keep a Sharp Look Out for
KIDNAPPERS, and have
TOP EYE open.

APRIL 24, 1851.

Successful runaways faced new hardships in the North. Black men and women such as Harriet Jacobs (the runaway whose story served as the basis for much of *Doing As They Can*) found that jobs and housing were segregated in the North. In 1850, the Fugitive Slave Law empowered the federal government to seize runaway slaves in the North and return them to their southern masters, and to punish northerners who aided escaped slaves.

Sounding the Alarm.

Recapture in the North because of the Fugitive Slave Law was a dreadful end to the ordeal of escaping from slavery, and northern African-American communities were as vigilant as possible.

Boston Public Library

LET MY PEOPLE GO!

Conflict over Abolition.

Abolitionists were the targets of violence, such as this attack on an anti-slavery meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, in December 1860.

Harper's Weekly, December 15, 1860



Escaped slaves and other free northern African Americans knew they would not be safe until slavery was abolished. Among the many black men and women who devoted their lives to abolition were Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass. Black abolitionists were joined by a group of white northerners with deep religious and humanitarian objections to slavery.

At first abolitionists were seen as radicals, and only a few whites took this brave stand. Gradually, however, more white northerners, especially working men and women, came to view the slave system as a threat to their own futures.

Free wage laborers had long expressed the fear of

being themselves reduced to slavery. This fear deepened after 1840, as slave plantations appeared in the new territories in the West. Whether new states would be free or slave became the dominant political issue of these decades. By 1860, many northerners no longer believed that slavery and free labor could exist in the same country.

On the eve of the Civil War, America was a deeply divided nation. On one side stood slaveowners who profited from the expansion of slavery and cotton cultivation. On the other were slaves who wanted to be free. And beside them stood those northerners who felt their own freedom threatened by the slave system. The lines of an irrepressible conflict had been drawn.

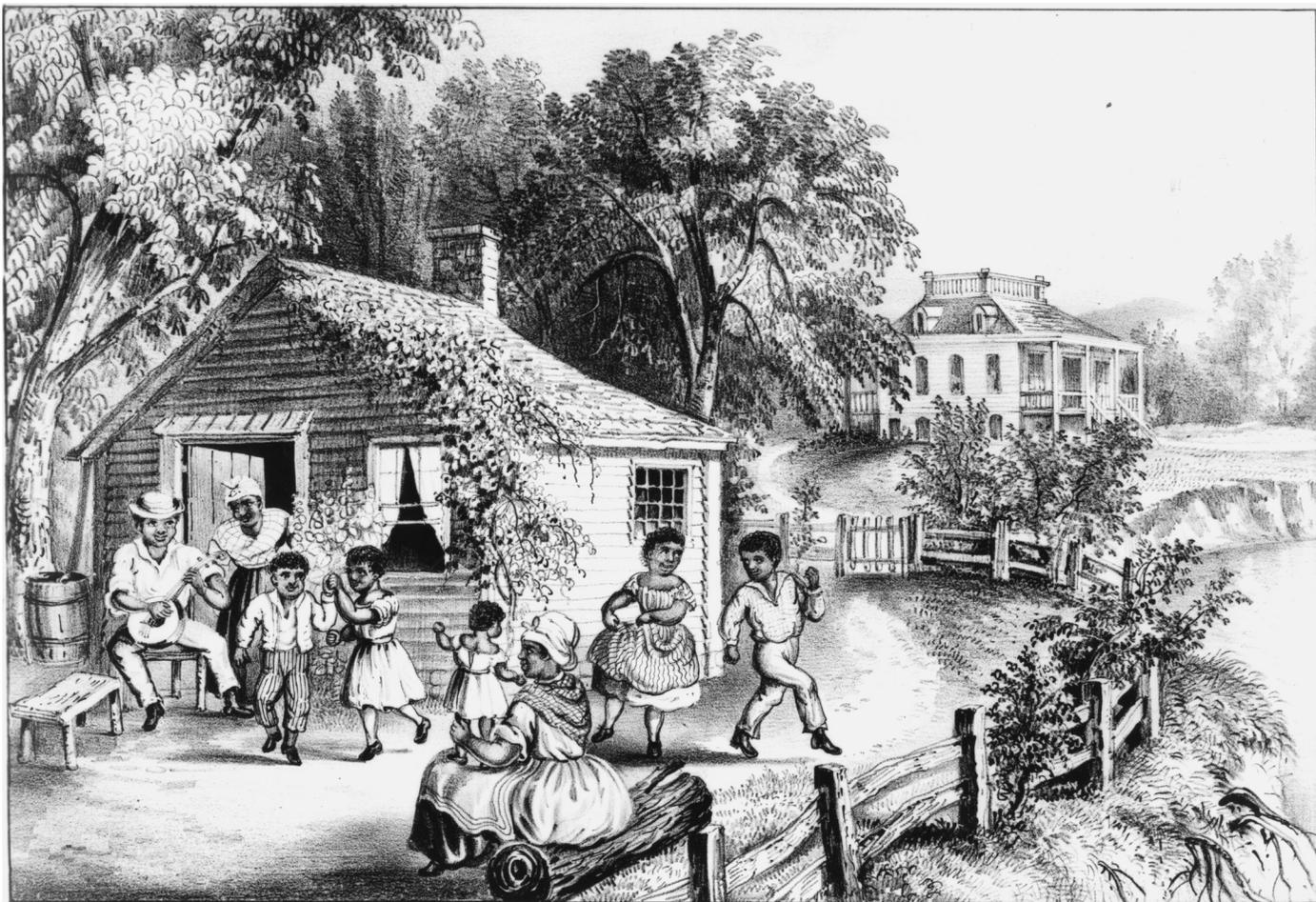


"Assault of the Second Louisiana (Colored) Regiment on the Confederate works at Port Hudson, May 27, 1863."

After initial resistance to their inclusion, African-American soldiers fought bravely for the Union forces, as depicted in this 1863 illustration from a weekly newspaper.

Detail of wood engraving based on a sketch by Frank H. Schell, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 27, 1863

SEEING IS BELIEVING?



Many illustrations represented the master's view of slavery. Such pictures often portrayed slaves' lives as carefree. Slaves were shown as children, while masters were depicted as the loving adults of the plantation family.

"The Old Plantation Home," *Currier and Ives*, 1872, lithograph, 9 x 12 1/2 inches—Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Though photographs of slaves are rare, many paintings and drawings of slaves have survived. These illustrations, including those used in *Doing As They Can*, can help us envision slave life. But we must treat such pictures with care. None of the surviving illustrations was created by slaves themselves.

What's missing from most of these visual interpre-

tations of slavery? Contemporary pictures rarely depicted life in the slave quarters, slaves' family life, or slaves' day-to-day resistance to white control. Perhaps slaves drew such pictures, but if they did, their pictures have not survived. When we look at pictures of slave life we have to think carefully about who drew them, what they were trying to show, and what they left out.



Abolitionists criticized slavery, yet the graphics printed in their publications often distorted the slave experience. Their pictures showed slaves as brutalized victims and focused on whippings, slave sales, and other extreme forms of exploitation.

Illustrations of the American Anti-Slavery Almanac for 1840 (New York, 1839)
Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

LEARN MORE ABOUT *DOING AS THEY CAN*

Ira Berlin et al., eds., *Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk about Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Freedom* (The New Press, 1998). This book and tape set present powerful personal stories about slavery taken from interviews with former slaves conducted in the 1930s. These interviews are also available online at *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938* (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>)

American Social History Project, *Freedom's Unfinished Revolution: An Inquiry into the Civil War and Reconstruction* (The New Press, 1996). Designed for high school students and teachers, this textbook includes pre-reading exercises, short narrative sections, large numbers of primary documents and images, and suggestions for classroom activities.

Freedmen and Southern Society Project, eds., *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War* (The New Press, 1992). These documents reveal the active role of slaves and former slaves in escaping slavery, aiding the Union cause as laborers and soldiers, transforming the war for the Union into a war against slavery, and giving meaning to their newly won freedom in a nation wracked by warfare and political upheaval.

Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Harvard University Press, 1998).

This comprehensive book traces the story of slavery from the original colonies in the years before cotton production predominated to its end in the 1860s and demonstrates the ways in which the meaning of slavery and of race itself were continually renegotiated and redefined.

Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Gomez traces the process (largely complete by 1830) by which enslaved Africans began to see themselves as a different people entirely — part of a homogenous group bound by slavery rather than separated by language or culture in Africa.

Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I A Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (revised edition, W.W. Norton and Company, 1999; first ed. 1985). This book refutes common stereotypes about African-American female slaves and delves into female slave networks, family life, reproduction, and the specific and unique difficulties and pressures experienced by enslaved black women.

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