

The Journey of Harriet Tubman

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Harriet Tubman spent about a decade helping enslaved people escape across the United States through what people called the "Underground Railroads." The Underground Railroads is a confidential name for abolitionist and fugitive slaves that is a series of secret trails they traveled through at night with various amounts of undercover codes and symbols they communicated with each other, so they wouldn't get caught by bounty hunters. She did not save every slave, but she did what she could by going back and forth to Maryland to take slaves out of the slave states to freedom in the North. By doing that she had risked her life along with others to try to get as many people to safety no matter the cost. With the sight of Harriet Tubman in people's eyes, she gives them the hope that they will one day be free and that others could one day do the good she had done. All the events of Harriet's childhood and how she pursued the outlook of how people reacted to slavery led up to the person she was before, during, and after the Civil War. Both sides of the Caucasians and African Americans were perceived, for her was confusing, and she didn't understand why she was held captive. Other than that she still had that curiosity and ambition to help others that looked like they needed her assist even though she didn't really know at the time what she was doing by guiding them.

How Harriet's Life Came To Be

The life Harriet went through had a lot of leadership skills and helping. She had more than one job during the war, she worked as a cook, a nurse, along with voluntarily being an undercover spy for the Union Army.¹ When she was leading the army to enemy parties the respect of the army grew for her in large amounts of ways. She had loved and cared about her family, friends, and many others that she didn't know in a personal way. She loved them all so much that it didn't matter whether or not she was ill or if she was afraid at times where the chances of her getting caught was very high since the slave catchers were close enough to see her. She always found a way to fight through it and do whatever she could to protect them. The amount of times she has risked her life when she was in danger or critical health to help others is still incredibly remarkable to this day. Even the process of her having the passion to do good is an interesting story.

During Harriet's adolescent years there was one day when she had to harvest crops out on a plantation but then all of a sudden another slave ran past her in the plantation. She looked up to see who it was, and when she did she saw one of the people that supervise over the slaves for security of the slave owners chase after the runaway slave. Without even thinking of the consequences she would have to go through, she ran into Bucktown following

¹ Guiseppi , Robert. "American Civil War." *The American Civil War, Tubman, Harriet* , 2002, history-world.org/tubman.htm.

the slave and the overseer. She didn't know whether she ran after them because she wanted to help the other slave in her escape or just simply wanted to see what was going on. In a small store there held the runaway slave, Harriet, and the overseer. Harriet would sacrifice herself even if she didn't know it where she stopped when the slave ran out in the back affected the rest of her life. When the overseer tried stopping the runaway slave he had thrown it into the head of Harriet which fractured her skull which would breach an entrance into her skull. Forever the dent in her head after it healed will hold a story told as the first act in her many adventures.

Born in Porchester, Maryland Harriet tried escaping her owner's family after they tried selling all of their slaves since the father died. The original plan for her was to try to escape with her two brothers, but when night came the plan had to come together and they had to risk it all. Soon before Harriet and her brothers were leaving her brothers wanted to back out since they were frightened about the thought of them getting caught and what their consequences would be. Harriet decided to leave by herself since she was determined to get out before she could be sold again. Harriet was all over the place arriving from Philadelphia, soon moving to Canada, and then moving to New York. A year later the start of her traveling adventure started when she went back to Maryland in Baltimore,

1850 to help her niece escape. After that trip, Harriet decided to continue going through the path of rescuing people for 10 years.

Difficulties That Built Her Up Over Time

When Harriet was just a little girl she got abused, and that lead her to many seizures. During the time Harriet was still a slave, her owner had died so they had to sell her. She was ill, but she was still strongly determined to escape before they could sell her to another family. After all that happened between the Underground Railroad year and the Civil War Harriet definitely knew she wanted to achieve more dreams even if they would be hard to complete. The tasks she had to go through was abuse which caused her to develop many seizures. Her owners at the time wanted to sell her since she became ill from all the head injuries, but they couldn't find a seller and they had died.²

In 1849 it was very strenuous on the way to Pennsylvania since she had to think of how she was supposed to hide away from bounty hunters, how she was going to provide the basic necessities of food and how to keep herself alive. Most importantly what would she would do after she arrives in Pennsylvania since she traveled alone which meant she didn't have anyone to share the happiness with her or help her. She had to find someplace that will hire her, so she could earn

² Civil War, Trust. "Harriet Tubman." *Civil War Trust*, Civil War Trust, www.civilwar.org/learn/biographies/harriet-tubman.

money to keep her lifestyle stable enough so she could survive. Around the time she had finally reached freedom she changed her name to Harriet Tubman. It was originally Araminta Ross or most would call her “Minty” as a nickname.³ She changed it because after the news spread around about her escape out of the southern states and it stated a reward for the people that bring her in. It also specifically said that she was “about 27 years old, by the name of Minty.”⁴

The Acceptance After Conflicts

Since it wasn't easy traveling across the country along, Harriet had to find a few ways to keep herself healthy since she needed the energy to walk. She had some help from some Quakers. Since Quakers were so against slavery they would help many slaves but in secret to keep both them and the slave safe. The first one Harriet had traded a quilt she had made from hand herself for help. When the Quaker was handed the quilt she gave directions to a different house that was owned by another Quaker. Harriet had arrived at the house of Hannah Leverton. To keep their cover she had given Harriet a broom to make it look like she was working for Hannah.⁵ The night of the arrival she was helped into a

³ Stearns, Dan. *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad*. World Almanac Library, 2006. 22

⁴ Civil War, Trust. “Harriet Tubman.” *Civil War Trust*, Civil War Trust, www.civilwar.org/learn/biographies/harriet-tubman.

⁵ Cosson, M. J. *Harriet Tubman*. (ABDO Pub. Co., 2008) 23-24

wagon along with a piece of paper that Hannah gave her to another destination and even though Harriet was illiterate she was able to put it to use.⁶ During when she was leading people to freedom she used many ways to keep everyone safe. A way to keep her people safe was that she carried a pistol for protection in case bounty hunters found her, but she wouldn't just use the pistol on slave catchers she would use it on people who wanted to retreat and turn back. It has said that there isn't any confirmation about her using it on any of her "passengers" but there was a person who wanted to stop for a while, Henry Carrol. He was exhausted but it was at the worst time since the slave catchers were ganging up on the runaway slave group. When Henry told Harriet that he wanted to rest Harriet's words were threatening, "Go on or die." Scared to face the torturing consequence if he got caught Henry decided to keep on running away from the slave catchers. Another way was that when she was gathering up new slaves to travel she would always sneak them out on a Saturday night because newspapers would go out on Sundays so there would be zero news about new slaves disappearing. She along, with mostly everyone else would love when Winter came because the nights were prolonged, so there would be a lot more time to travel even if the weather was wretched.

⁶ Stearns, Dan. *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad*. (World Almanac Library, 2006.) 21

After 10 years of constant worry and protecting others Harriet decided to help in the Civil War by being part of the Union Army. Harriet had parts during the Civil War that were very helpful, but the paramount was that she lead the Union Army to the Confederate territory which lead to everyone in the army to gain full respect for her. In 1896 when the war ended she still made it her goal to help out in any way that she could. For example, she had always had a soft spot for people like African Americans and of old age that was mentally and physically disabled, so she wanted to create a building that would help and take care of those types of people. Harriet bided on 25 acres of land for the building and since others supported her so much they wanted to help out with the money she was putting in. The ones who had helped Harriet out was the AME Zion Church and the local bank they didn't only put in money for her bidding, but they also helped raise even more. The amount of money that won her the land was around 1450 dollars.⁷ In 1911 Harriet did not have enough money to support herself, so the building she owned forced her to move into it to take care of her so she would not have to make such a huge effort to keep herself alive. Harriet lived exceptionally close to the building so she was fine with move since it did not make a huge difference in where she lived.⁸ Harriet knew she was going to past away very near. She had told her family and friends that she was not

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Premium, WordPress. "Life after the Civil War." *Harriet Tubman*, www.harriet-tubman.org/after-the-civil-war/.

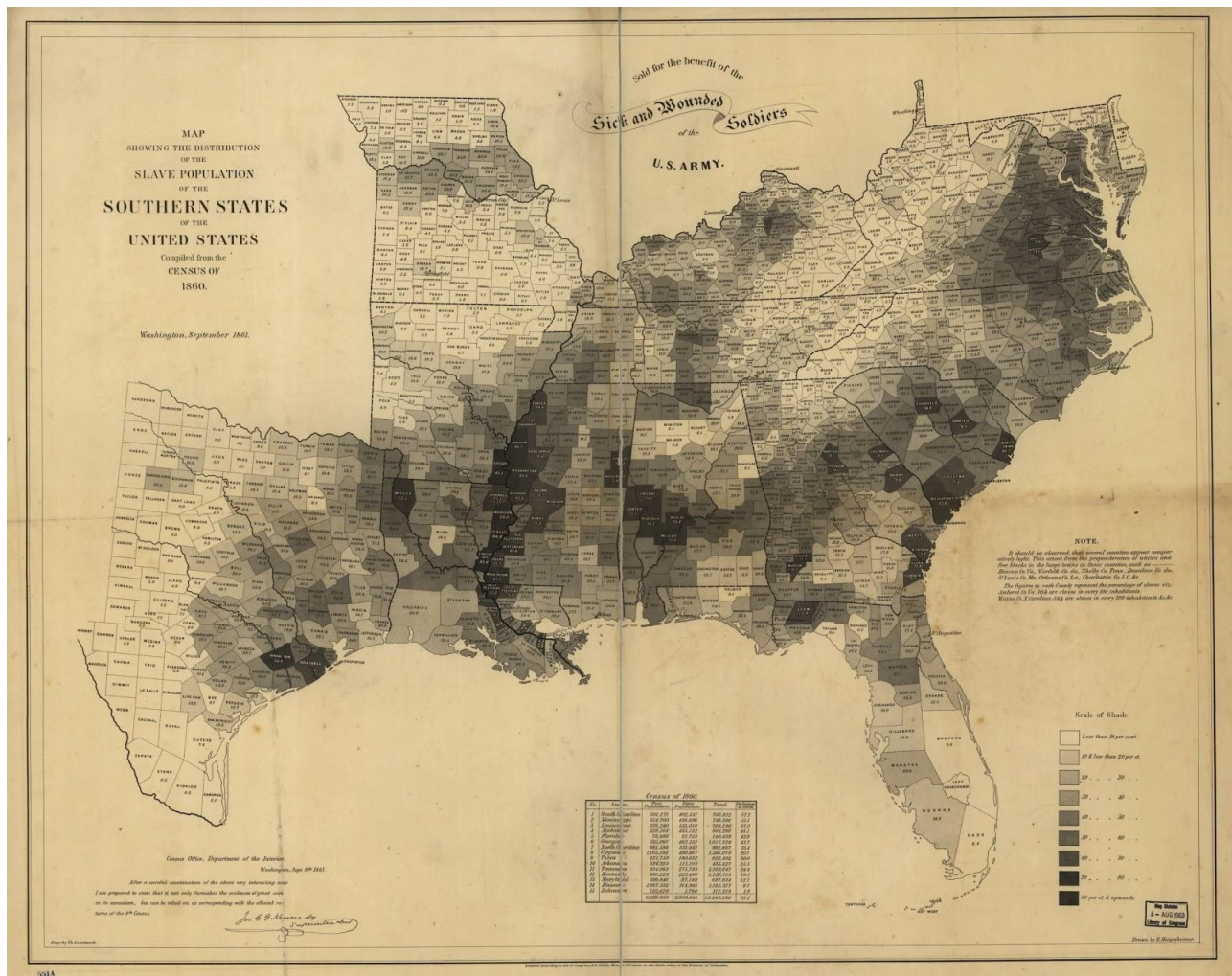
⁸ Civil War, Trust. "Harriet Tubman." *Civil War Trust*, Civil War Trust, www.civilwar.org/learn/biographies/harriet-tubman.

going to live any much longer, but she was very tranquil about the situation. On March 10 of 1913 nearly ninety-three years old Harriet Tubman past away. Harriet was buried in the Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York with the honors of the military.⁹

Harriet Tubman did not only spend half her life saving or assisting anyone in need of help, but she left behind a legacy for one of the most well known people that impacted the way African Americans lived. There were problems that could not be solved with just one person alone and Harriet Tubman did have help with a few collaborations with other abolitionist. They helped her with her escapes using songs and secret language that no one else could understand. The way where Harriet saw conflicts in how her kind of people were treated did something to her ambition side. It grew stronger and every time it did it only made her want to become more involved even if that meant having a large percentage of her dying. That's what it took to be a hero, it didn't matter the cost it only mattered if the people you care about is safe and happy with their other loved ones. There will always be discrimination in the world, but to see that someone as common as Harriet Tubman before her Underground Railroad years could make herself push through all of the laborious obstacles, is so inspiring that it makes slaves hopeful for what is coming to them in the future because they believed that one day they would be saved by the one and only Harriet Tubman.

⁹ Stearns, Dan. *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad*. (World Almanac Library, 2006.) 53

Appendix



“Primary Source Set The Underground Railroad.”

library.mtsu.edu/tps/sets/Primary_Source_Set--Underground_Railroad.pdf.

The picture represents the states that had slavery and the population by shade from lightest to darkest of how many slaves were in the state in 1860. Lightest for the lower amounts of slaves in the state and darkest for higher amounts of slavery in the state.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Cosson, M. J. *Harriet Tubman*. ABDO Pub. Co., 2008

This book explains the use of the Underground Railroad and how the many conductors that built it and passed through it, helped to remove slavery everywhere with the illegal act of escaping enslaved people. The author tells us about how even before Harriet Tubman became a legacy for us and a symbol of hope she still had that personality trait in her when she didn't even know how to rebel against slave owners. It really explains what she did in her life during and after the Underground Railroad years along with the Civil War and how she helped people even if it didn't involve a major change in a big part of a state/states.

"Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Act ." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2951.html.

This website states the reasoning of the Compromise of 1850 including the states who were involved with it. It also gives information about the Fugitive Slave Act of how it was created, who the Act affected the most, and what it did for the people that brought in fugitive slaves in. This part of the website mainly talks about a couple of the fugitive slaves and about how abolitionist used the Underground Railroad exceptionally more in this time (1850-1860). Abolitionist more determined than ever to end slavery.

"Harriet, The Moses of Her People." *Summary of Harriet, the Moses of Her People*, Sarah Bradford , 10 Dec. 2017, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/harriet/summary.html>

The website is a summary of the book *Harriet, The Moses of Her People* written by Sarah Bradford. It states information about what the book was based on and who Harriet communicated with throughout the Underground Railroad years and the Women's Right Movement. How books and biographies were made about her and how she collaborated with people that went along the journey with her that supported her, and publishers like William J. Moses.

"Harriet Tubman Facts and Quotes." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, www.pbs.org/black-culture/explore/harriet-tubman/#.Wf4MGbaZNmB.

The Website has information about what Harriet's life when she was a child and it also explains injuries she had because the causes were how she was abused as a little girl, so that affected the rest of her life as she grew up since she had major headaches and had physical post traumatic syndrome.

National History Standards. "The Moses of Her People: Harriet Tubman." *Harriet Tubman: The Moses of Her People*, Maryland, Jan. 1903, <http://teaching.msa.maryland.gov/000001/000000/000063/html/t63.html>

This is an example of a National History Day "standards" examples but it told me about how determined Harriet was, how serious the slave times were about stopping the act of holding African Americans captive.

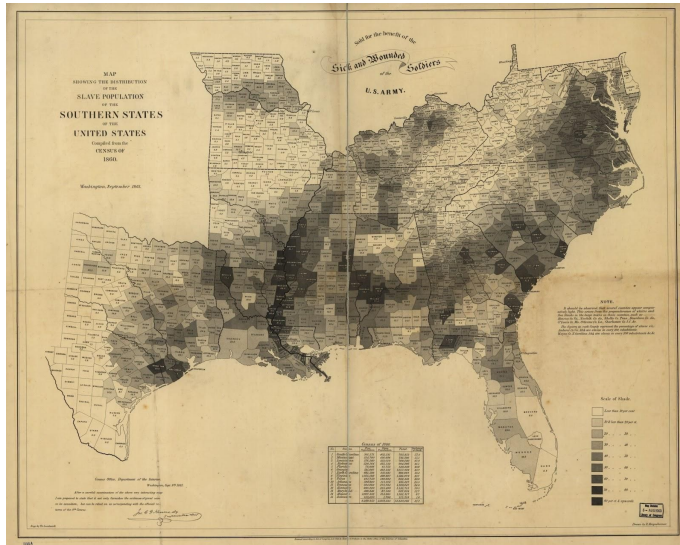
World History Projects. "Harriet Tubman Serves as a Conductor on the Underground Railroad." *World History Project*, 2018, worldhistoryproject.org/1850/harriet-tubman-serves-as-a-conductor-on-the-underground-railroad.

This website could not be found about Harriet Tubman but when it was the information I got from it was what Harriet did to help in the Civil War for the Union Army. After the war she was supposed to be given 1,800 dollars for being in the war but not get rewarded, but then after get paid that after her husband died. Harriet did not collect that money because she was in the war but because she was a widow. It told me about how she helped the colored, mentally and physically disabled people after the war even though she was in a surreal poor condition herself.

Stearns, Dan. *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad*. World Almanac Library, 2006.

The information I used in this book was mainly about how Harriet escaped and what her tactics her to keep herself safe. For example when she went to women quackers for help. When she had changed her name once she got into a safe state where no one that lived there would question her. The way that local slaves would communicate with each other without their owners knowing through the patterns or blocks on quilts. It also explains the songs they would sing while walking on the trails at night since traveling during the day was dangerous and it was too revealing.

When Harriet married twice after the both husbands had died the first one John Tubman died after Harriet got back from the war and second one died from bronchial problems. She did had one child a daughter she had adopted named Gertie Davis.



http://library.mtsu.edu/tps/sets/Primary_Source_Set--Underground_Railroad.pdf

The picture represents the states that had slavery and the population by shade from lightest to darkest of how many slaves were in the state in 1860.

Secondary Sources

Brooks, Rebecca Beatrice. "The Life of Harriet Tubman." *Civil War Saga*, Civil War, 22 June 2017, <http://civilwarsaga.com/harriet-tubman/>

The information told me about Harriet's childhood and her marriages. Other things were basic information about what she had to do during her Underground Railroad years. Also what she had part taken into the Civil War and how she helped the Union Army in a few ways.

Civil War, Trust. "Harriet Tubman." *Civil War Trust*, Civil War Trust, www.civilwar.org/learn/biographies/harriet-tubman.

This website told me about how many slaves she rescued and how she did it. The way about when she joined forces with Union Army.

Michaels , Debra. "Harriet Tubman." *National Women's History Museum*, Debra Michals , 2015, www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biographies/harriet-tubman.

This website says that Harriet tubman did not create the Underground Railroads but she was one of the very important main abolition that was a part of the society of the secret trails. It gives information about who she was and what she did to make the African American population "safe." It also gave me information about her personal life like marriages and her daughter.

Guissepi, Robert. "American Civil War ." *American Civil War, Harriet Tubman* , 2002, http://history-world.org/american_civil_war.htm

This website explain what Harriet Tubman did to help out in the Civil War like hte jobs she took over. It explains what Harriet did after the Clvil War and that involved still helping people when they needed it.

Premium, WordPress. "Life after the Civil War." *Harriet Tubman*, www.harriet-tubman.org/after-the-civil-war/.

This website gave me information about Harriets love life. It also gave me information about the Women's Suffrage Movement and what she did during it, who she collaborated with her that also knew her during when she was helping slaves through the Underground Railroads, and where she traveled to help out in the movement.

Rubenstein, Harry R. "The Gentleman's Agreement That Ended the Civil War." *Smithsonian.com*, Smithsonian Institution, 6 Apr. 2015, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/gentlemans-agreement-ended-civil-war-180954810/>

This website gave me the information about what is was like after the civil war and what it looked like. For example it told me how much land was destroyed. How many soldiers along with

citizens died. Lastly how much money was lost by buying weapons, protection, and then the things that needed repairing.

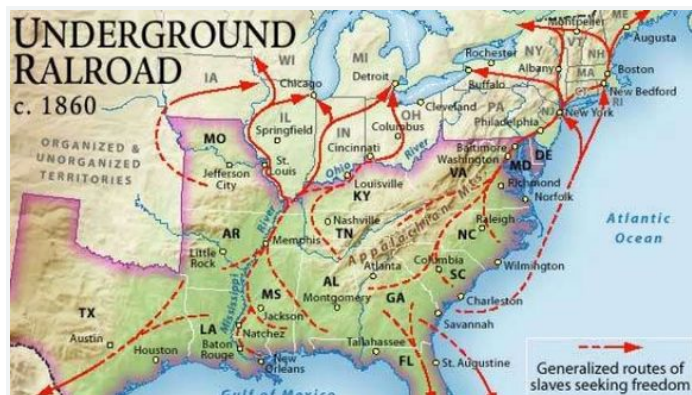
Bordewich , Fergus M. "History of The Underground Railroad: Timeline ." *Civil War and Underground Railroad Timeline and Resources from American Historian Fergus Bordewich*,
www.fergusbordewich.com/underground-railroad-timeline.html.

This website is a timeline of the important dates leading up and a little bit after the war for example how the Fugitive Slave Act was passed and the society of american anti-slavery. It also stated information about the many abolitionist that was included with the Underground Railroads and who they collaborated with.

"The U.S Civil War 1861-1865." *The History Place - U.S. Civil War 1861-1865*,
www.historyplace.com/civilwar/.

This website is about Abraham Lincoln and the decisions he made about the slavery that has been going on. He said what is thinks of the slavery in the southern states and what he is going to do about it.

Mitchell , Jerry. "History: Underground Railroad Flourishes." *The Clarion Ledger*, The Clarion-Ledger, 2 Aug. 2016,
www.clarionledger.com/story/news/local/journeytojustice/2016/08/02/week-in-history-underground-railroad-flourishes/87949580/.



This picture represents the trails that were used to get out of the states that allowed slavery.

