

Significant Events Timeline of the Underground Railroad_1501 – Current _Handout 1

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1501—African Slaves in the New World Spanish bring slaves from Africa > Santo Domingo. Other African tribes captured & sold for \$ & power

1500s> Europeans different countries influenced attitudes of American regions they settled.

1619 –Slaves in Virginia: Africans brought to Jamestown are first slaves imported into Britain's North American colonies. Like indentured servants, they were probably freed after a fixed period of service.

1619 - Rhode Island constitution banned slavery.

1693 - Second edict of Spain granted sanctuary & freedom to escaped slaves from British colonies (North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia) who reach Spanish territory of Florida.

1700—First Antislavery Publication Samuel Seawell, MA, published the first North American antislavery tract, The Selling of Joseph.

1705 - Slaves as Property Virginia lawmakers allow owners to bequeath their slaves as real estate & "kill and destroy" runaways.

1719-1723 French shipped 500 Guinea slaves to Louisiana; Philip Francis Renault brought 200 miners, stopping at San Domingo for 500 slaves > N to "Illinois Country", La Louisiane Colony.

1738 - Black Seminoles fled S. > Spanish colonial FL; 1st settlement of free blacks America.

1746 - Green Bay, WI French garrison commander brought a Black enslaved man with him.

1763 - French surrendered Wisconsin/Illinois region to English - peace provisions allowed western Great Lakes 5,000 settlers to retain their 500 "negro and Pawnee" enslaved people.

1763 - Some Wisconsin African American fur-traders were free.

1775- Abolitionist Societies Philadelphia - world's first. Benjamin Franklin its president 1787

1776 - Declaration of Independence; Continental Congress "these United Colonies are, & of Right ought to be Free & Independent States"; "All men are created equal"; Rights - Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness "

1776 – 1783 War for Independence - African Americans served on both sides hoping for freedom.

1777 – Articles of Confederation: 13 States union & sovereignty.

1787 – Northwest Territory (Northwest of Ohio River) > "Ordinance of Freedom": First outright ban on slavery / but owners could recapture runaways who escaped into the Territory.

> When Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, & Wisconsin became states – their constitutions prohibited slavery.

1787 – Constitutional Convention > Electoral College to elect President; Not 1 vote for 1 person BUT # of electors = each state gets at least 3 regardless of size. States with smaller populations have more voting power than those of larger size. Slaves = 3/5ths of a person. Compromises that were resolved by Civil War.

1789 - United States Constitution: Enlightenment; “advancement of personal liberties.”

1790 - First U.S. Census - approximately 700,000 enslaved people in a nation of 3.9 million.

1791 - Bill of Rights, 10 Amendments – “Freedom Of”. Including Separation of religion.

1791-1804 Haitian Slave Revolution. Free (whaling) sailors spread the news to US slaves.

1793 - Fugitive Slave Act - US outlaws any efforts to impede the capture of runaway slaves; fines. Some N. states enacted **Personal Liberty Laws** > struck down by the Supreme Court in 1842.

1794 - Eli Whitney Cotton Gin Invention Patent (cheaper) > increased cotton acres/slaves.

Late 1700s - 1850s Spiritual Revivals - Methodist John Wesley, Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, etc.

1803 -Louisiana Purchase, US bought 828,000 sq miles West of Mississippi River from France.

1807 - Britain banned Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

1808 - United States Bans Slave Trade - Importing African slaves outlawed; smuggling continues.

1809 Ninian Edwards, first and only governor of Illinois Territory, had slaves.

1812 - War of > UGRR Until end of Civil War. African Americans served on both sides of Wars

1816 The African Methodist Episcopal Church, established. Helped black freedom seekers.

1817 - American Colonization Society: President Madison’s gradual emancipation > Liberia, Africa.

1817 - U.S. Federal troops waged a war against Seminole Indians and freedom seekers in Florida

1818 – Illinois becomes a Free state after Mississippi became a Slave state in 1817. Many in S. IL from KY, TN & MO = slavery supporters. IL border moved 50 miles N into WI so Lake Michigan port would connect to Free NE settler growth. **1845** – N IL Voters tried to vote to secede to WI (state) **1848**.

1819 - Citizens of Bond County, Illinois harbored runaway slaves.

-1819 IL Black Codes: discourage immigration: Need certificate of freedom & bond \$1,000 entering IL. Jail/Flogging if assemble 3+; no voting, testify in court, serve militia.

1820 - Missouri Compromise - Missouri admitted as slave state, Maine as free state. Slavery forbidden in rest of Louisiana Territory N. of 36 degrees 30' latitude line. Equal slave/non-slave states.

1820s - Slaves escaped Carolinas > Bahamas (Atlantic); & Florida > Caribbean Sea Islands.

1820s and 1830s – WI white settlers came from southern states to mine lead; often brought enslaved people with them. Some were freed in Wisconsin.

1823: Attempt to amend IL state constitution to legalize slavery sparks widespread resistance

1826 - Levi & Catharine Coffin move > Newport, Indiana. Their house becomes a station on UGRR.

1827- (WI Terr Gov 1839) Henry Dodge moved w many slaves from MO > Freed them in WI.

1828 Abolitionist John Rankin built Ripley OH house, as an UGRR “station/safe house” stop.

Early 1830s > America’s first railroads. UGRR coded language.

1831- The Liberator begins publication, William Lloyd Garrison, newspaper publisher.

1831- Nat Turner leads a slave revolt in Virginia killing 55 white people.

1831- George Washington complained about Quakers helping his slave escape.

1832 – end of Blackhawk Indian War in IL & WI > 1836 Feds surveyed WI Territory > Settlers.

1833 - Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society established.

1833 - William L Garrison, Boston, founded Liberator Newspaper & American Anti-Slavery Society.

1833-1838- Slavery Abolished in English West Indian Colonies - Jamaica, Barbados, etc.

1835 – UGRR starts in Illinois.

1836 - Texas won independence from Mexico; (later joined the U.S. as a slave state).

1836 - WI territory surveyed by US > many settlers from NY, New England, & Germany > Especially S.E. WI. Formed abolitionist groups and helped UGRR thru WI to Canada.

1837, The Panic of > 7- year depression, banks failed, record-high unemployment. Tension.

1837 - Mexico abolished slavery > Slaves from Texas, Arkansas, & Mississippi escaped to Mexico.

1837 - First Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women held in New York.

1837 - Illinois Anti-Slavery Society founded by Elijah Lovejoy at Alton > Convention.

1837 - Galesburg IL & Knox College founded by NY anti-slavery advocates - UGRR leader in down-state West-Central IL, overwhelming majority of its citizens.

1837 - St. Louis MO slaveholders formed secret **Copperhead societies** to return runaways.

1837 – Alton IL, pro-slavery mob murdered Rev Elijah Lovejoy & his 3rd Abolitionist press destroyed.

1838 - Second Anti-Slavery of American Women in Philadelphia. Hall site burned by a mob.

1838 - Frederick Douglass runs away from slavery > major AA Abolitionist speaker & politician.

1839 – First “UGRR” published mention: Washington newspaper - young slave, hoping to escape bondage via railroad that 'went underground all the way to Boston.

1839 - First known case of a fugitive sent from Chicago to Canada.

1839 Joseph Goodrich founds Milton Rock Co WI & **1844** > built Milton Inn for UGRR stop.

1840 - World Anti-Slavery Convention (London) refuses to seat American female delegates.

1840 - Anti-slavery societies schism due to women leaders also wanting white feminism & suffrage.

1840 - American & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Black male leaders / Frederick Douglas.

1841 – WI Church Convention at Beloit – “American slavery is a sin.”

1842 – Northern states Personal Liberty Laws were struck down by the US Supreme Court.

1842 - WI Territory first recorded UGRR escape in WI - Caroline Quarlls, 16, from St. Louis to Alton, IL to Milwaukee to Prairieville to Spring Prairie in Walworth County to Gardner's Prairie to Waukesha to Illinois to Detroit River to Canada. **1842-1861 WI > 100+ escaped.**

1842 - Morgan County, Ohio citizens assisted 16 fugitive slaves to escape slave-catchers.

1842-1861 Morgan County, Ohio assisted 285 "Negros" to gain freedom!

1843 – 300 men with guns stopped a Missouri auction to sell slaves including Mark Firman.

1844 – Congregational Church of Beloit, WI resolved to condemn slavery > Beloit Seminary > Beloit College. 160 acres given to Beloit College on condition that admission not be denied by Color.

1844 – Telegraph first invented.

1845 - Frederick Douglass publishes “Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass”.

1845 Texas became a slave holding state.

1845 – N Illinois Voters tried to vote to secede to Wisconsin (which became a state 1848).

1846 Sewing machine patented

1846 – (white) WI drafted new state constitution that put voting rights of AA to vote > defeated.

1846-1848 Mexican American War > South wanted to stop runaways & secure slavery.

1847 – Frederick Douglass publishes the first issue of “The North Star” newspaper.

1847 - William Still, PA Anti-slavery Society > Hid Diary of 900+ escapees at his home (publ. 1872).

1847- First Telegraph line connects NY to St. Louis.

1847 - Matson Slave Trial: KY slave-owner skirted IL slavery-ban laws by switching slaves yearly @ Coles Co. Freed Anthony Bryant, foreman > refuge w his slave family @ abolitionists. A. Lincoln defended Matson! Judge ruled in favor of freedom seekers.

1847 to 1857+ - Lewis Coffin & wife, OH Quakers > Indiana - led 3,000 slaves to freedom.

1848 - First Women’s Rights Convention, Seneca Falls, New York.

1848 - Ellen & William Craft escaped slavery disguised as Southern white gentleman & (her) slave.

1848: Illinois's constitution bans slavery, with the exception of punishment for a crime

1848 - WI became a state > 2nd referendum – African American men got voting rights (not told)

1849 - Harriet Tubman escapes from slavery in Maryland to Philadelphia PA.

1849 - James C. Smith, free black, helped Henry “Box” Brown ship himself in crate from VA > PA

1850 - Fugitive Slave Act - Compromise of 1850 - slavery > territories acquired from Mexico. For CA to enter US as free state, N. congressmen accepted a **Fugitive Slave Act** harsher than

1793 Act. Citizens may not assist any slave; must turn them in to Fed agents or get huge fines & imprisonment. Federal Agents paid bigger bounty to turn in (some free) “fugitives”.

1850 > Reverse Underground Railroad - sites where free and escaped blacks were sold into slavery and sent South.

1850-1860 "Reverse Underground Railroad": Crenshaw (Old Slave) House, on KY border > 332/346 free blacks > slavery.

Mid-19th Cent - American Renaissance - technological improvements of **early Industrial Revolution** in printing & transportation increased # of books, newspapers, & magazines available. Widespread dispersion of written word influence on attitudes.

1852 - Harriet Beecher Stowe OH published “Uncle Tom's Cabin”. 300,000 copies sold 1st year. Later Pres. Abe Lincoln said, “this is the little book that started the (Civil) War.

1853 – Illegal for a black to enter the State of IL. The Illinois Black Code, which prohibits free Black people from staying in the state for more than 10 days, is passed.

1854 - Singer home sewing machine patented > more clothes made; more cotton needed.

1854 – Joshua Glover ran away from Missouri to Racine WI captured by owner & locked in Milwaukee, WI jail. A sympathetic mob of 5,000 broke Glover out & helped him to freedom > UURR Waukesha > Racine > Toronto, Canada. Ringleader Sherman Miller Booth arrested > **Wisconsin Supreme Court declared the federal Fugitive Slave Law unconstitutional**.

Mid 1850s – Voting is not secret. Had to declare your choices to recording clerk in public.

1854—Kansas-Nebraska Act - Repealed Missouri Compromise of 1820, Congress permits these 2 new territories to choose whether to allow slavery. Violent clashes erupt - “Bleeding” Kansas”. NE church groups & villages moved there to sway votes. Spurred the formation of the Republican Party – to keep southern slave states from uniting with western slave states.

1854 - Republican Party founded in Ripon, Wisconsin.

1855 – It took 133 votes/2 months > to elect Speaker of House.

1855 - Photo & Sen. Charles Sumner’s Abolitionist tours of Mary Mildred Williams – “white” slave girl.

1856 – Lincoln gave speech as a new Republican Party member.

1857 - Dred Scott Decision Dred Scott, an Illinois Freedom Seeker, sued to overturn the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, but lost. **US Supreme Court 7 to 2 - African Americans can never be citizens and that Congress has no authority to outlaw slavery in any territory!**

1857, the Panic of - Bad economy, Banks & 5,000 businesses failed > heightened political tensions. Telegraph > first financial crisis to spread across US & world. Not full recovery until Civil War.

1857 – Train service Alton to Chicago starts (also stops at St Louis & Springfield) > UGRR option!

1858 - Frederick Douglas (friend of Abolitionist Dexter Knowlton), and Stephen A Douglas > speeches = “**Freeport Doctrine**”, in Freeport IL.

1858 – Seven Senate Debates between A Lincoln (anti-slavery) & Democrat Stephen A Douglas (extend slavery in Territories). Freeport, IL, etc. Lincoln narrowly lost Senate race to Douglas.

1859 - John Brown organizes slaves to take over Armory at **Harper’s Ferry**; & rebellion.

1859 - Waukesha Co, WI (“Abolitionist Hole) > “The Freeman” newspaper founded. > Republican values.

1860 - Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, elected first Republican to win the United States Presidency.

1860s – Sewing Machines in most middle-class homes.

1861 – US population 31 million. 21 million in North. 10 million in South but 4 million are slaves so only 6 million whites. (> Odds in Civil War).

1861 - Feb. Secessions > Confederate States of America. Slave states that stayed: West Virginia, Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, (and Washington District of Columbia.)

1861 Apr 12 – attack on Fort Sumpter > declaration of Civil War.

1861 – Escaped slaves became Union property / “contraband” of war > camp workers.

1861-1865 - United States Civil War - 4 yrs brutal conflict > 750,000 soldiers/sailors died + more wounded

1862 - Compensated Emancipation Act - abolished slavery in Washington DC > Slaves from Virginia and Maryland escaped to the free D.C. 1863 > 10,000 former slaves; DC doubled Black population

1862 – Confiscation Act of 1862 – “Freedman” is the term for a slave given freedom after this act.

1863 Jan 01 - Emancipation Proclamation

President Abraham Lincoln decree - all slaves in Rebel territory are free. Only freed those slaves in states that were in rebellion against US. Did not free slaves in the states that never

left the Union - **West Virginia, Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, (and Washington District of Columbia.)**

1863 - African Americans could sign up to fight in “colored” Troops or USCTs - Union Army & Navy. Substitute soldier for white man \$800. Before other states allowed African American Troops, they joined 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment. IL AA first all-black unit= 29th US Colored Infantry. Only WI Regiment = Co. F of the 29th Infantry, U.S. Colored Troops.

1863 - Harriet Tubman with 150 African American Union Navy sailors > NC raid & freed 700 enslaved.

1863 Nov - A. Lincoln Gettysburg Address 4 ½ months after battle. Gave lives that nation lives.

1865 - Slavery Abolished - The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution outlawed slavery.

1865 Apr 9 - Ulysses S. Grant - Commanding Civil War General led Union Army to victory, winning against Robert E Lee at Appomattox.

1865 Aug 20 - End of the Civil War declared.

1865 Apr 15– President Abraham Lincoln assassinated

1865 -1869 - Andrew Johnson > 17th US President, S Jacksonian Democrat (states’ rights views). Pardoned all taking an oath of allegiance. “Black codes” to regulate S freedmen begin.

1865 – abt 1910: “The Advocate’s” free “**Lost Friends**” newspaper ads to reunite African American families. Read & posted in Black Churches.

1866 - Ezekiel Gillespie, Milwaukee WI AA sued for right to vote, Wisconsin Supreme Court affirmed.

1868 14th Amendment - U.S. Constitution> required states to provide equal protection to protect civil rights of former slaves.

1869 to 1877 - Ulysses S. Grant 18th US President - created Justice Department & worked with Republicans to protect African Americans (from KKK etc.) during Reconstruction. Martial Law in South.

1870 15th Amendment - US. Constitution granted voting rights to all men regardless of race.

1877 Hayes Compromise > To confirm election of President Hayes, Federal troops taken out of Southern States > Jim Crow laws. Citizens tired of \$ spent on Reconstruction.

1882 – WI Constitution dropped “white” from suffrage text.

1930s – UGRR oral interviews written down in Federal Writers Projects.