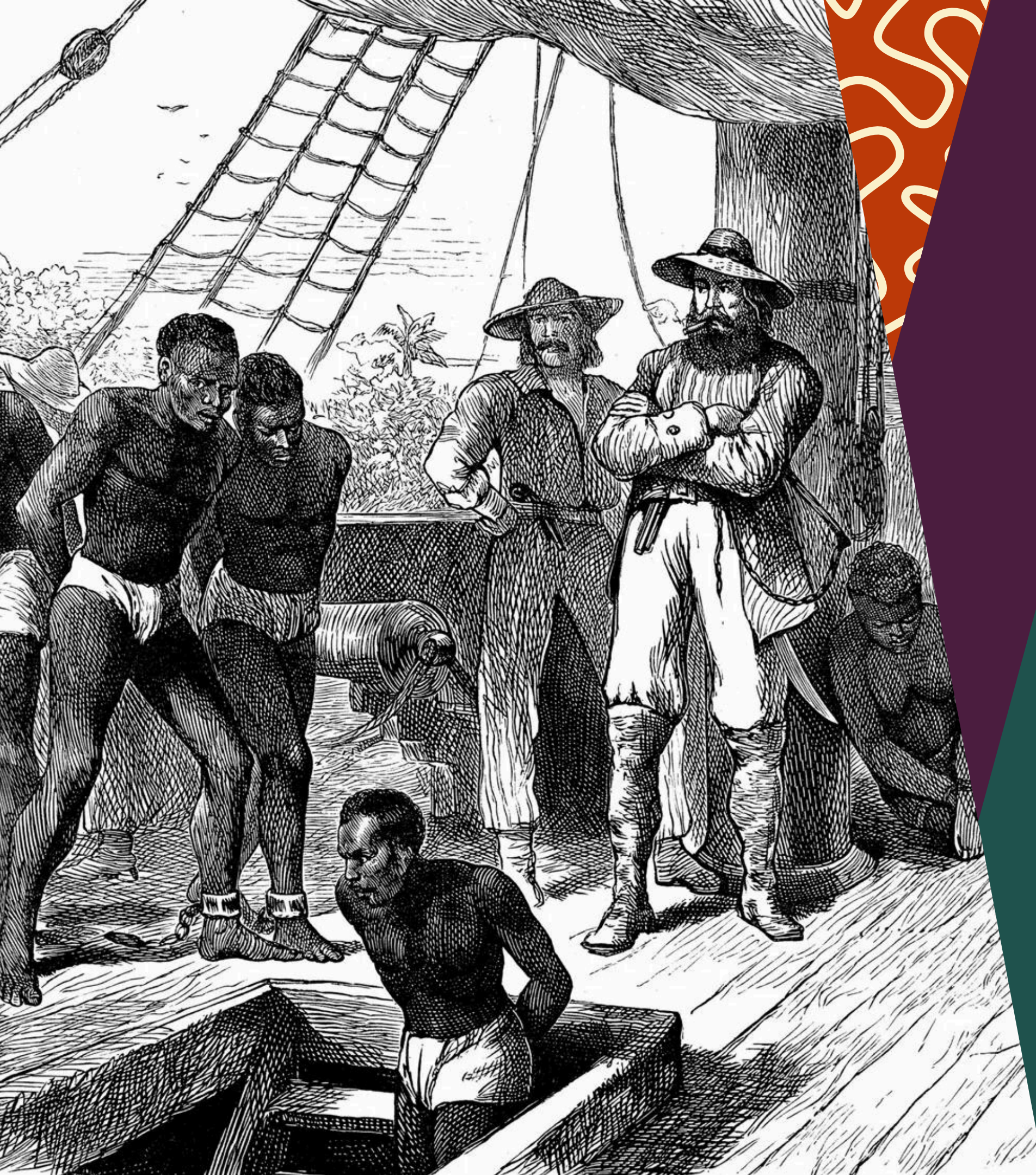


RESISTING CHAINS: THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

AFRICANA STUDIES





AGENDA

REVIEW: TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

16th to the 19th centuries

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

early 19th century



REVIEWING THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

The transatlantic slave trade was a brutal system that forcibly transported millions of Africans to the Americas from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Enslaved individuals were subjected to inhumane conditions and stripped of their rights, laboring on plantations and in households.

As resistance to slavery grew, the Underground Railroad emerged in the early 19th century, providing a network of safe houses and routes for enslaved people seeking freedom. The Underground Railroad began around the 1830s, nearly two centuries after the transatlantic slave trade was established, representing a crucial effort to combat the injustices of slavery and assist runaways on their journey to freedom.

DIGITAL NOTEBOOK EXAMPLE NOTES

Transatlantic Slave Trade

Overview

- Definition: The transatlantic slave trade involved the forced transportation of enslaved Africans to the Americas.
- Duration: 1518 - early 19th century

Key Dates

- 1518: First direct shipment of enslaved Africans to the Americas.
- 1808: The United States banned the importation of enslaved people, but smuggling continued.
- 1865: **Thirteenth Amendment** ratified, abolishing slavery in the U.S.

Major Routes

- Leg 1: Ships left Europe for Africa, carrying goods (e.g., textiles, rum)
- Leg 2: Enslaved Africans transported to the Americas (Middle Passage)
- Leg 3: Raw materials (e.g., sugar, tobacco) shipped back to Europe



THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

a secret network that helped enslaved African Americans escape to freedom, driven by the courage of abolitionists and those who defied the system of slavery.



THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad was a secret network of routes and safe houses that helped enslaved people escape to freedom during the 19th century, mostly heading north to free states or Canada. It wasn't an actual railroad but rather a collection of people, places, and secret codes designed to help guide those escaping.

Many people involved in the Underground Railroad used secret phrases to communicate without being caught. For example, "The river is deep" could mean it was dangerous to travel at that time, while "Follow the North Star" was advice for escaping slaves to use the star to guide them north toward freedom. People helping along the way were called "conductors," and Harriet Tubman is one of the most famous conductors.

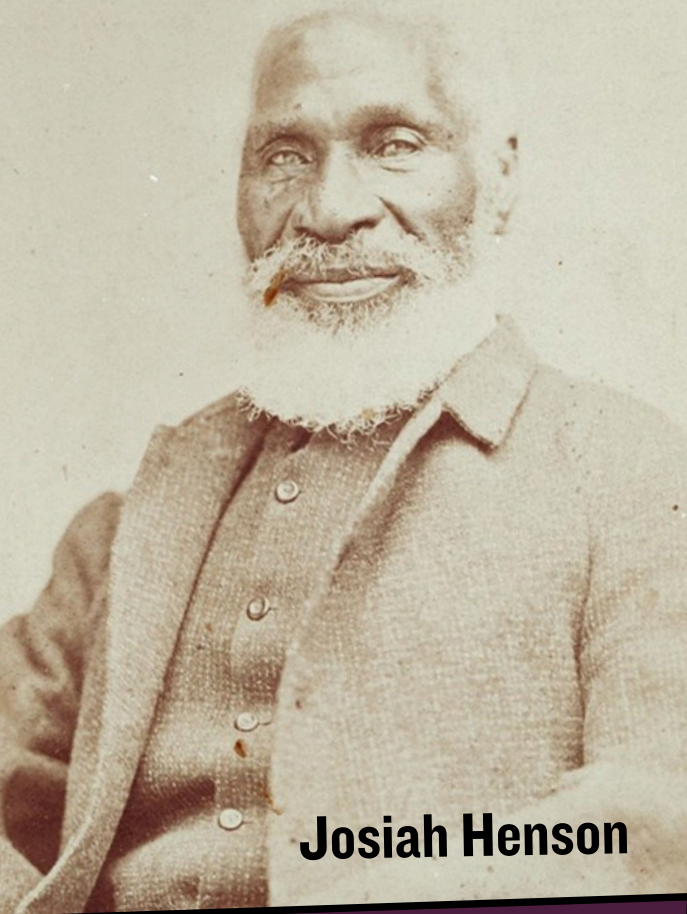
The places where escapees could rest and hide were called "safe houses." These were homes, barns, or even churches where the people escaping slavery could hide from patrols. The owners of these houses were taking huge risks, as it was illegal to help runaway slaves. To keep things safe, the houses had codewords. For example, a "station" was a safe place, and the person in charge might be called the "stationmaster."

One big danger along the way was the "paddyrollers." These were groups of people hired to catch runaway slaves and return them to their owners. The paddyrollers patrolled roads and towns, always on the lookout for anyone trying to escape. This is why it was so important to move carefully, use the secret codes, and find safe houses.



Dr. Nathan M. Thomas House

613 East Cass Street in Schoolcraft, Michigan



Josiah Henson



Levi Coffin

CONDUCTORS VS. PADDYROLLERS

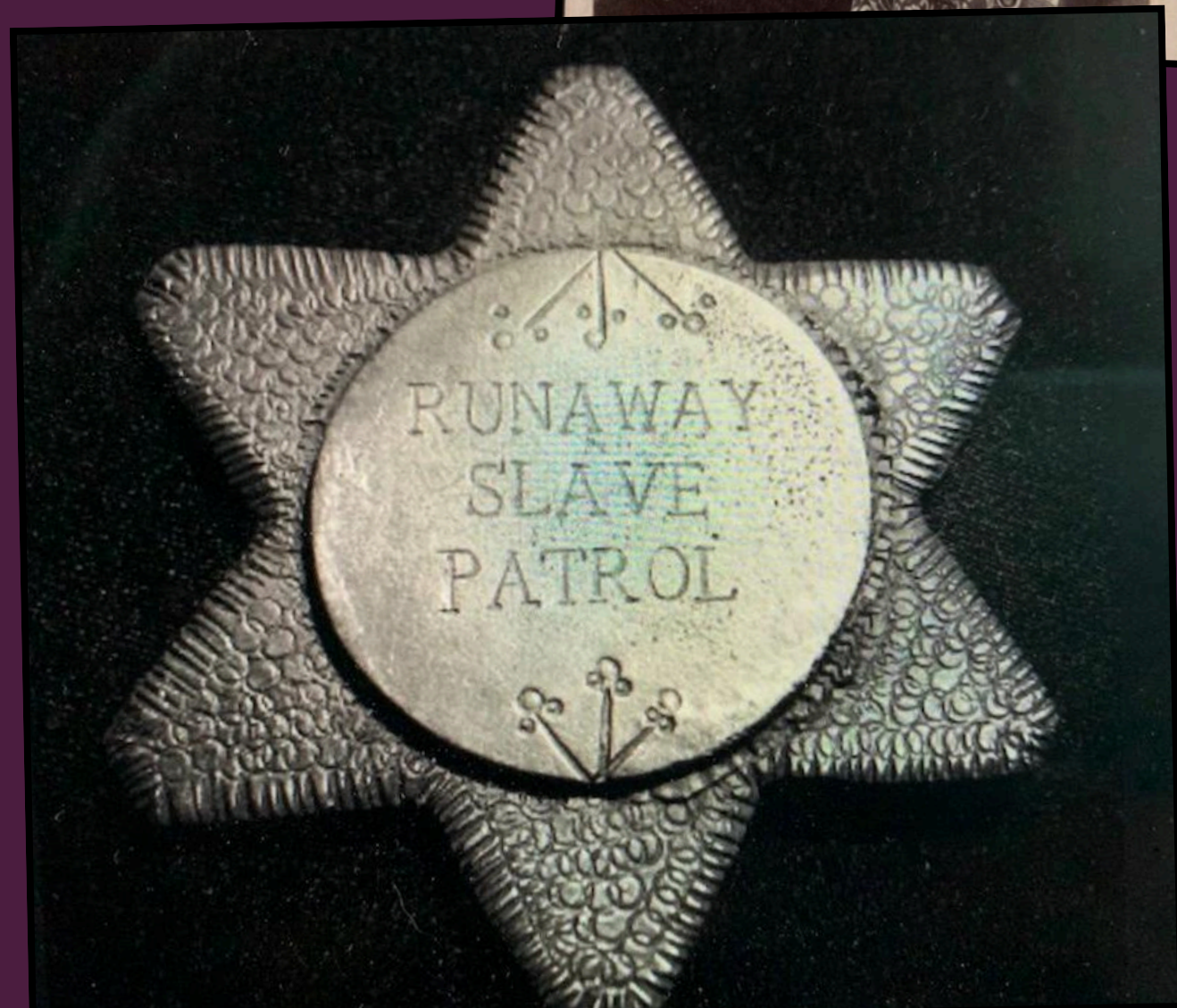
As enslaved people sought their freedom, they relied on a network of individuals known as conductors. Conductors were brave souls—many of whom were free Black individuals—who guided runaways along the Underground Railroad. They provided shelter, food, and critical information, often risking their lives to help others escape.

In contrast, patrollers, known as “paddyrollers,” were white individuals tasked with capturing runaway slaves. They patrolled the countryside and towns, using violence and intimidation to maintain control over enslaved populations. Understanding this dynamic is crucial for recognizing the bravery of those who chose to assist enslaved individuals despite the dangers they faced.

Enslaved individuals, former slaves, free Blacks, and non-Black allies worked tirelessly as conductors on the Underground Railroad, risking their lives to help others escape to freedom. Among the most notable conductors were Levi Coffin and Josiah Henson.

Levi Coffin, often referred to as the “President of the Underground Railroad,” was a Quaker abolitionist who dedicated his life to assisting runaway slaves. He and his wife, Catherine, operated a safe house in Indiana, where they provided shelter, food, and guidance to countless escaping slaves. Coffin’s network extended across several states, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to the cause of freedom.

Josiah Henson, a former slave himself, became an influential conductor after escaping to Canada. Henson’s firsthand experiences of the brutal realities of slavery inspired him to help others find their way to freedom. He played a crucial role in guiding many enslaved individuals northward and advocating for their rights, ultimately becoming an important figure in the abolitionist movement.




\$30 REWARD

RANAWAY from the subscriber on Monday the 12th inst. a negro man named

DANIEL.

He is about twenty-two old, his particular height is not known, supposed to be about five feet ten or eleven inches, is of slim build and very black color, has a scar all over his face, a burn upon one arm, which was not recollected; had on when he ran away a dark colored jacket and new pantaloons of tow cloth. Above reward of thirty dollars given for delivering him, or scribe, or twenty-five dollars for curing him if out of this state, and



\$500 REWARD

Ran away, or decoyed from the subscriber, living near Beltsville, Prince George's County, Md. on

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1857,

MULATTO WOMAN, MARIA!

From 30 to 35 years of age, and very stout.

NEGRO BOY, DALL!

Dark Mulatto, 13 years of age, stout and well grown.

Negro Boy, Lem

11 years of age, Black, has a scar on the side of his breast, caused by a burn.

NEGRO BOY, BILL

Generally called "Shag," 8 years of age.

NEGRO BOY, BEN,

2 years of age. Also,

NEGRO MAN, ADAM


About 30 years of age, 5 feet 4 or 5 inches high, stoutly built, full suit of hair. He ran away on Saturday, the 22d of August, and I think has returned and induced his Wife and Children off. I will give \$500 reward for them, no matter where taken, if lodged in Jail, or secured so that I may get them again, or I will give

\$300 REWARD for ADAM

I reward for either of the others, if taken separate, I may get them again.

ISAAC SCAGGS.

20 DOLLARS REWARD!



Ranaway in the month of June last, from the subscriber residing in Alexandria, Va., **NEGRO WOMAN, LUCY,** called

LUCY PAYNE,

Aged about 50 years, well set and fleshy; full breast, front teeth decayed, greyish hair, the nail on one of her four-fingers injured, a small red mark on one of her cheeks, about 5 feet 2 or 3 inches high, wears a handkerchief generally on her head. I will give the above reward if delivered to me, or \$10 if secured in jail.

It is believed that she is harbored in, or near Washington or Tenny Town; she has a husband residing in Washington City, called George Payne.

JOHN HOOFF.

Alexandria, Va., February 19, 1851.

(PRINTED AT THE ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE OFFICE)

WANTED: THE DARK REALITY OF ESCAPE AND CAPTURE IN THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD ERA

During the era of the Underground Railroad, "wanted" posters and signs were a common sight, reflecting the desperate efforts of slaveholders to reclaim their escaped enslaved individuals. These posters often featured detailed descriptions of the runaways, including their names, physical appearance, clothing, and any distinguishing marks or features. The language used was typically formal and impersonal, emphasizing the monetary value placed on the enslaved people rather than their humanity.

These advertisements frequently offered significant rewards for the capture and return of the fugitives, sometimes ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars, depending on the skills or perceived value of the individual. In addition to printed posters, handwritten notes and flyers were also distributed in towns and communities, urging local citizens to assist in the hunt.

The posters served as a stark reminder of the harsh realities of slavery and the lengths to which slaveholders would go to maintain control over their property. Conversely, they also galvanized the abolitionist movement, as many individuals and groups worked to assist the escapees, often tearing down these posters as acts of defiance. Ultimately, these "wanted" signs symbolized both the oppression faced by enslaved individuals and the courageous efforts of those who sought to help them attain freedom.

SONGS AND SECRETS: THE CODED LANGUAGE OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

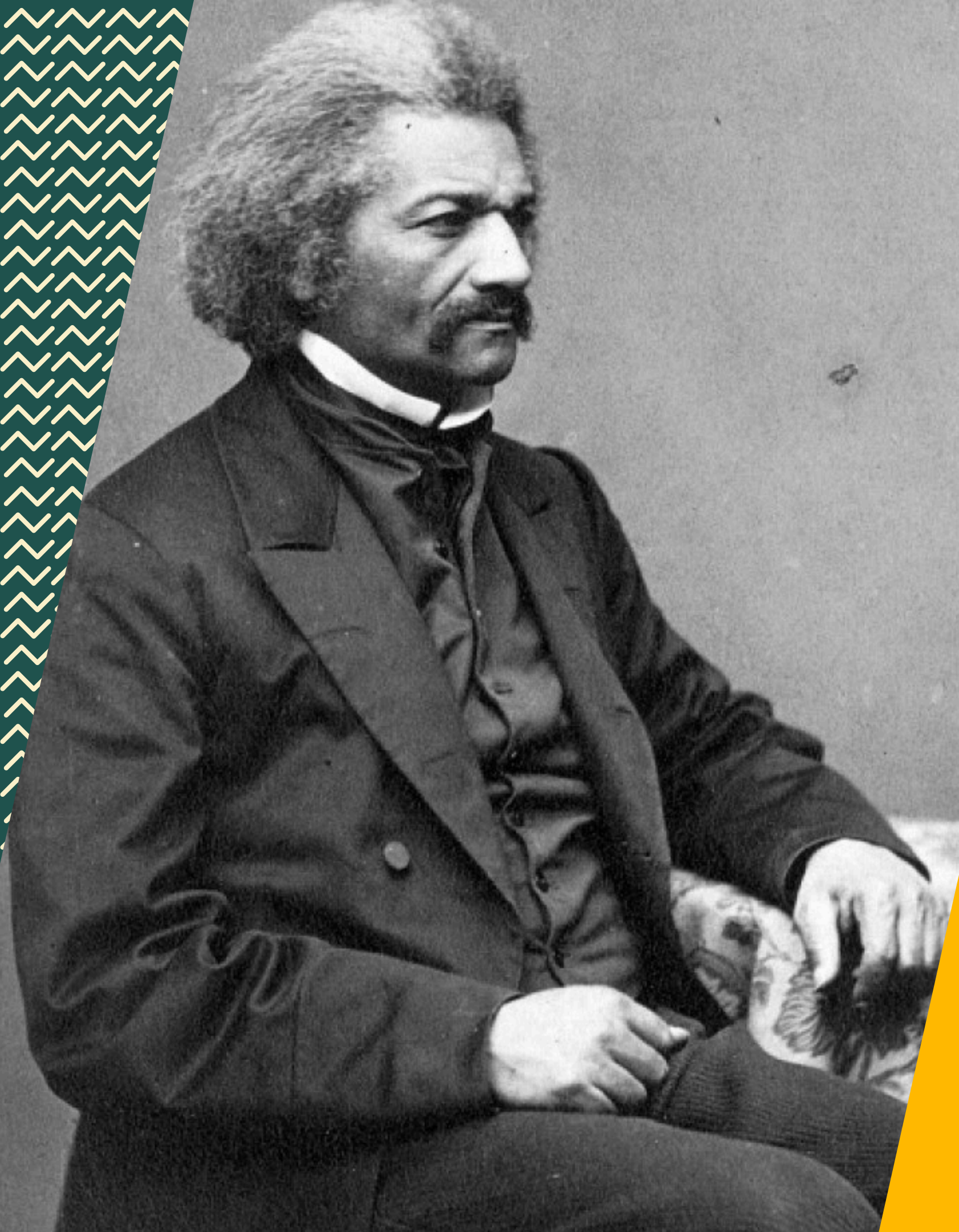
Enslaved individuals on the run often relied on secret code words, phrases, and symbols to navigate their perilous journey to freedom. These coded messages were essential for gaining access to safe houses and communicating with fellow escapees. For example, phrases like "Follow the North Star" guided runaways toward the direction of freedom, while "The river is deep" indicated the need to traverse a river for safety.

Songs also played a critical role in this covert communication. The "Drinking Gourd," a reference to the Big Dipper constellation, was sung to encourage escaping slaves to follow the stars northward. Another powerful song, "Wade in the Water," was used to alert fellow runaways to enter the water, helping them evade tracking dogs used by slave catchers. These secret codes and songs not only provided practical guidance but also fostered a sense of unity and hope among those striving for freedom.



ABOLITIONISM

An abolitionist is a person who actively works to end a practice, especially slavery. Abolitionists advocate for the rights and freedoms of enslaved people and seek to abolish the institution of slavery through various means, such as writing, speaking, organizing, and sometimes participating in direct action. The term is most commonly associated with those who fought against slavery in the 18th and 19th centuries, particularly in the United States and the British Empire.

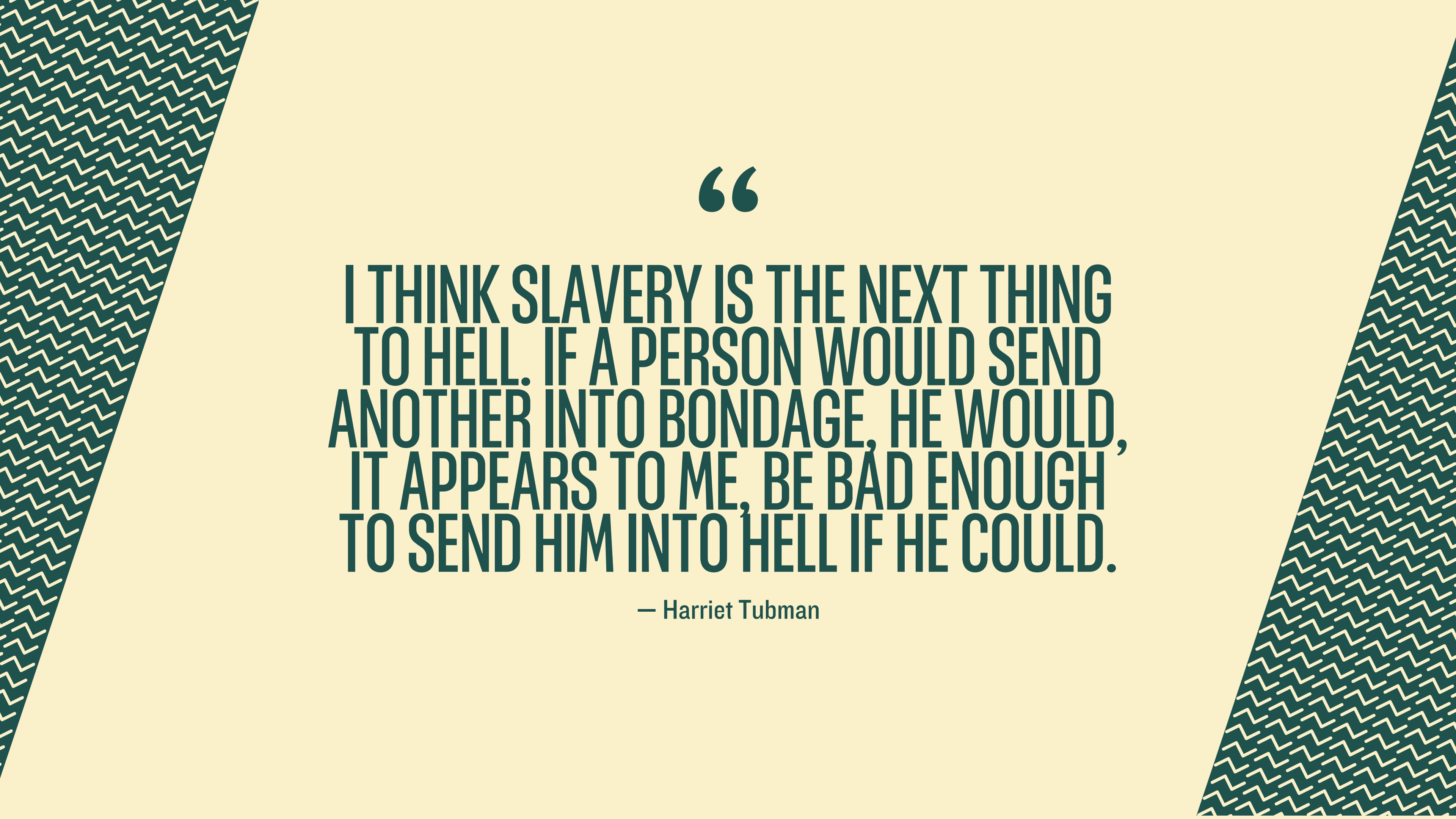


FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Frederick Douglass (c. 1818–1895) was a prominent African American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. Born into slavery in Maryland, Douglass escaped to freedom in 1838, eventually settling in Massachusetts. His eloquence and powerful speeches made him a leading figure in the abolitionist movement.

Douglass was a gifted writer, authoring several autobiographies, including *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, which detailed his experiences as a slave and highlighted the injustices of slavery. He advocated for equality, women's rights, and education for all, believing that knowledge was essential for liberation.

His life was marked by a relentless pursuit of justice and equality, making him a symbol of the struggle for civil rights in America. Douglass's legacy continues to inspire generations in the ongoing fight against oppression and inequality.



“

**I PRAYED FOR FREEDOM FOR
20 YEARS, BUT RECEIVED NO
ANSWER UNTIL I PRAYED
WITH MY LEGS.**

— Frederick Douglass

HARRIETT TUBMAN

Harriet Tubman (c. 1822–1913) was an extraordinary African American abolitionist, humanitarian, and activist known for her relentless fight for freedom. Born into slavery in Maryland, Tubman escaped to freedom in 1849. Rather than resting, she dedicated her life to rescuing others from the bonds of slavery.

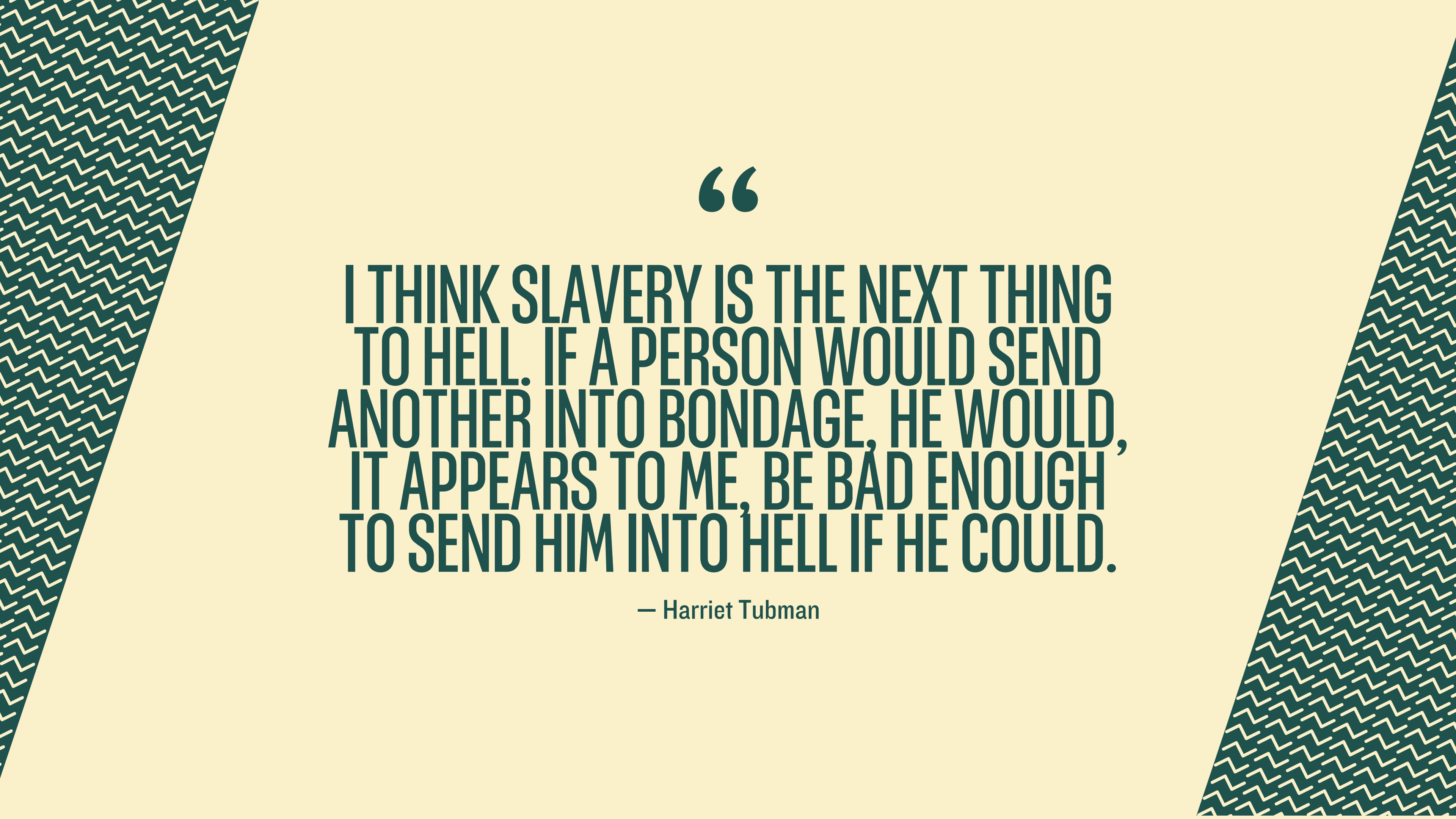
As a “conductor” on the Underground Railroad, Tubman guided hundreds of enslaved people to safety in Canada, using a network of safe houses and secret routes. She often utilized songs like “Wade in the Water” to communicate covertly with runaways. This song served as a warning, signaling them to get off the trail and into the water to evade detection by slave catchers and their dogs.

Her bravery and resourcefulness earned her the nickname “Moses,” after the biblical figure who led his people to freedom.

In addition to her work on the Underground Railroad, Tubman was a fierce advocate for women’s rights and suffrage. During the Civil War, she served as a spy and nurse for the Union Army, further demonstrating her commitment to justice and equality.

Harriet Tubman’s legacy as a symbol of courage and resilience continues to inspire people worldwide in the ongoing fight for freedom and equality.





“

I THINK SLAVERY IS THE NEXT THING
TO HELL. IF A PERSON WOULD SEND
ANOTHER INTO BONDAGE, HE WOULD,
IT APPEARS TO ME, BE BAD ENOUGH
TO SEND HIM INTO HELL IF HE COULD.

— Harriet Tubman

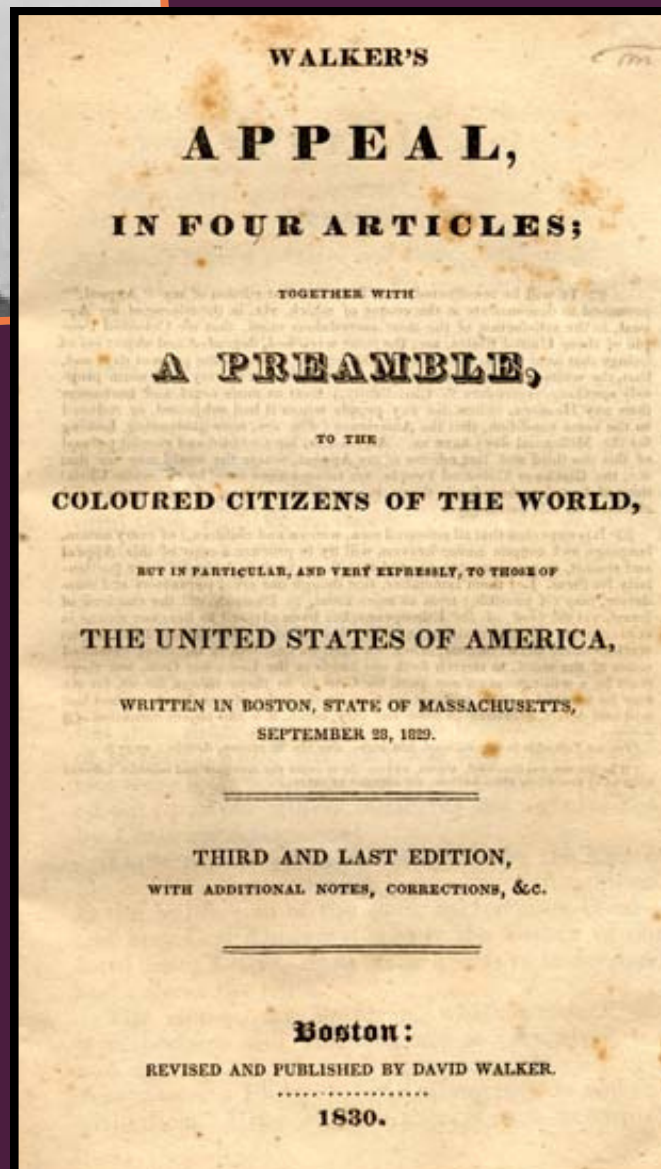
VOICES OF FREEDOM: THE ABOLITIONIST LEGACY OF FREE BLACK LEADERS

1785-1830



DAVID WALKER

Walker was an outspoken abolitionist and author of "Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World" (1829). His work called for immediate emancipation and was significant in the abolitionist movement.



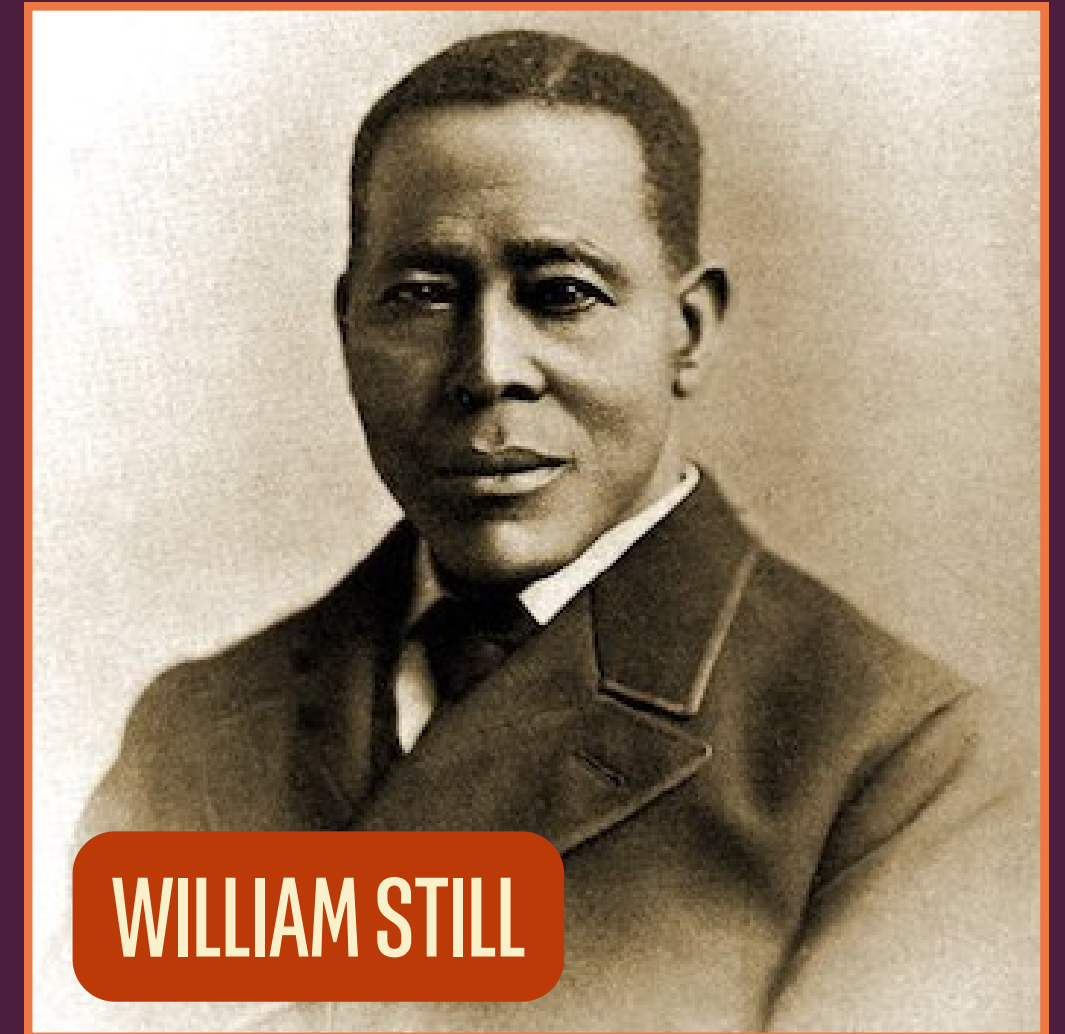
1803-1879



MARIA STEWART

writer, educator and orator, Maria Stewart was one of the first women to speak publicly against slavery. She advocated for both abolition and women's rights.

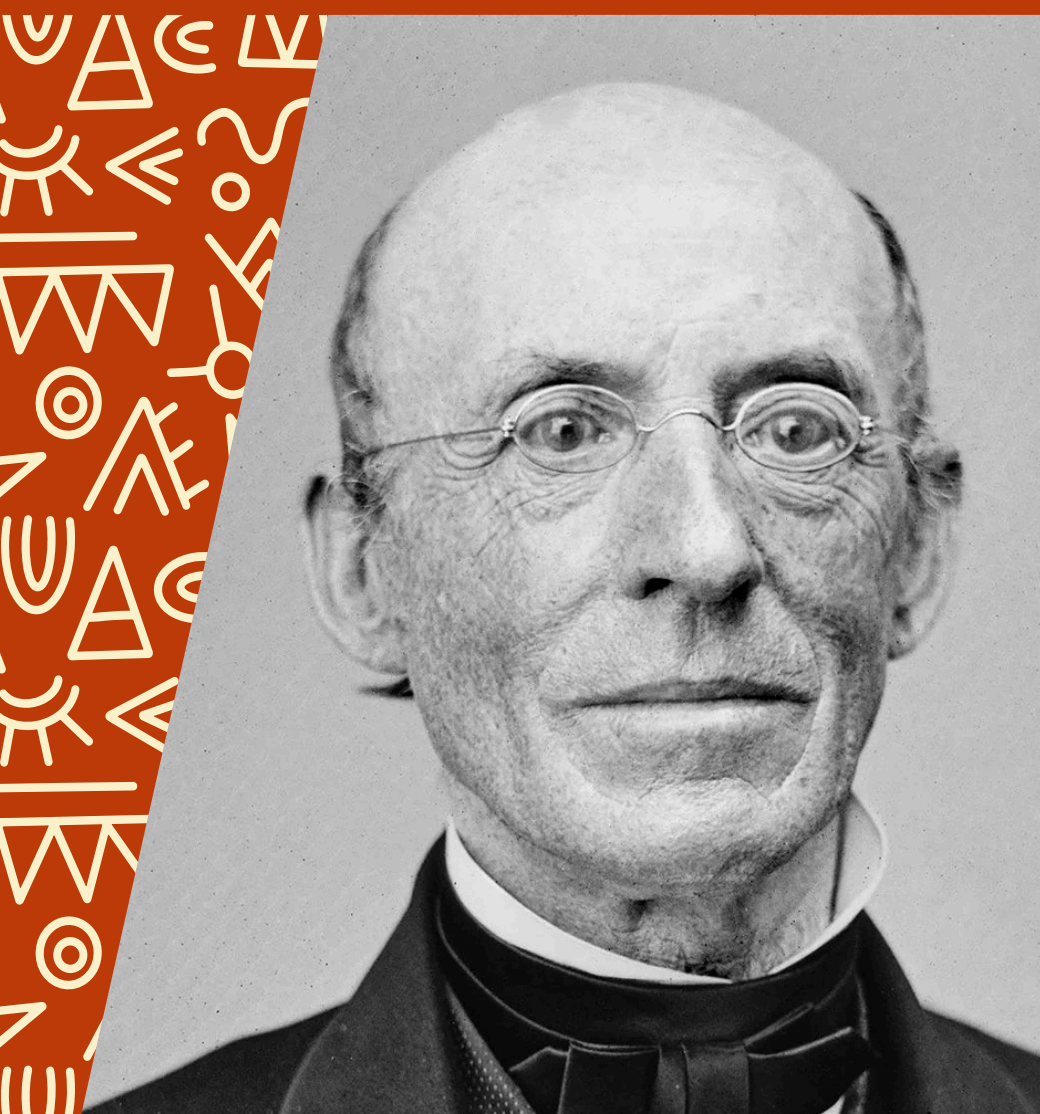
1821-1902



WILLIAM STILL

Often called the "Father of the Underground Railroad," Still was a free Black man who helped many enslaved people escape to freedom and documented their stories.

ALLIES IN FREEDOM: NON-BLACK VOICES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY



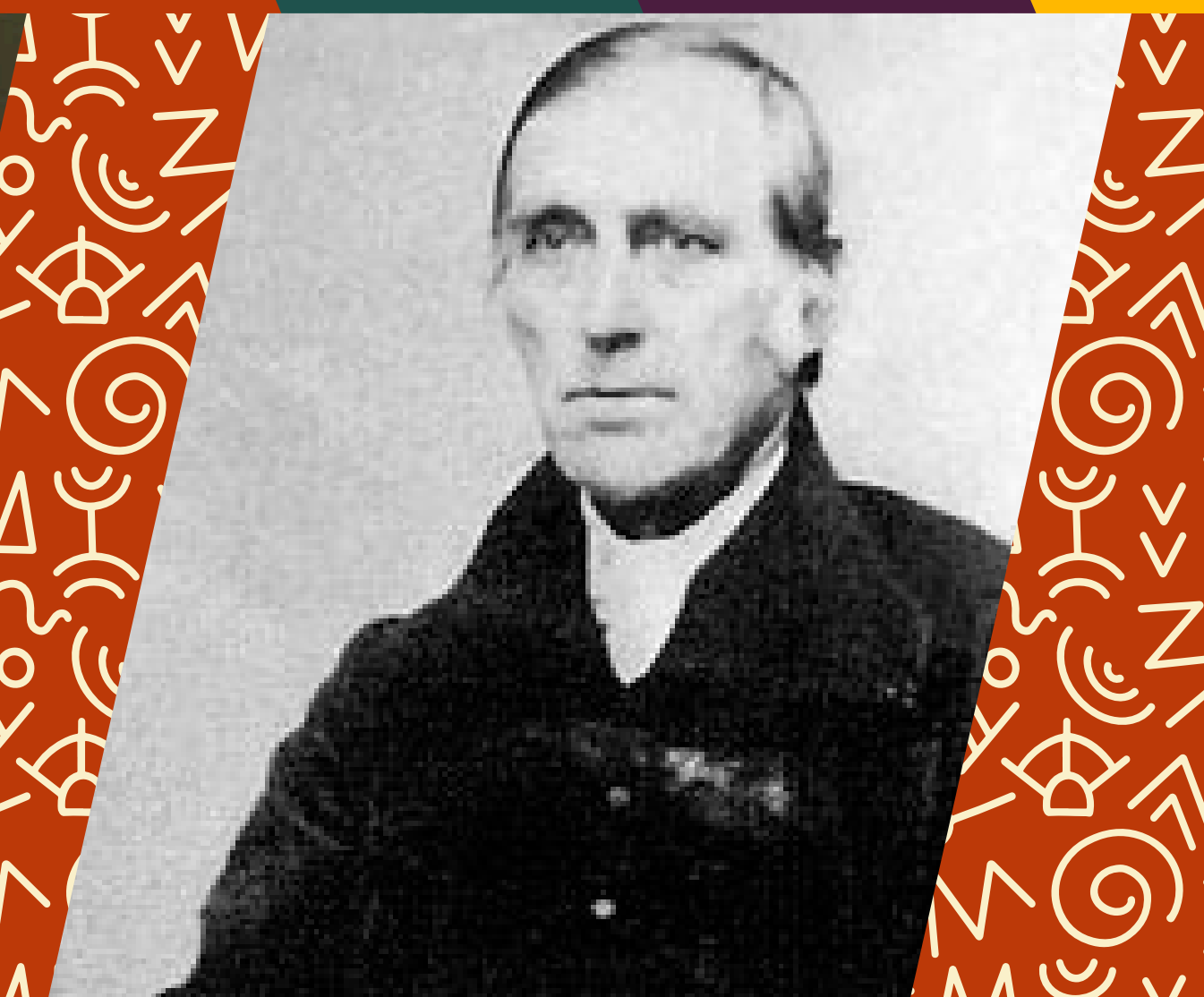
WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

Journalist; Founder of "The Liberator"
1805-1879



YUNG WING

Chinese-American educator and diplomat
1828-1912



LEVI COFFIN

Known as the "President of the
Underground Railroad"
1798-1877