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Abolitionist Movement

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Facts, information and articles about Abolitionist Movement, one of the causes of the civil war

Abolitionist Movement summary: The Abolitionist movement in the United States of America was an effort to end slavery in a nation that valued personal freedom and believed "all men are created equal." Over time, abolitionists grew more strident in their demands, and slave owners entrenched in response, fueling regional divisiveness that ultimately led to the American Civil War.

Slavery Comes To The New World

African slavery began in North America in 1619 at Jamestown, Virginia. The first American-built slave ship, Desire, launched from Massachusetts in 1636, beginning the slave trade between Britain's American colonies and Africa. From the beginning, some white colonists were uncomfortable with the notion of slavery. At the time of the American Revolution against the English Crown, Delaware (1776) and Virginia (1778) prohibited importation of African slaves; Vermont became the first of the 13 colonies to abolish slavery (1777); Rhode Island prohibited taking slaves from the colony (1778); and Pennsylvania began gradual emancipation in 1780.

The Maryland Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the Relief of Free Negroes and Others Unlawfully Held in Bondage was founded in 1789, the same year the former colonies replaced their Articles of Confederation with the new Constitution, "in order to form a more perfect union."

When the U.S. Constitution was written, it made no specific mention of slavery, but it provided for the return of fugitives (which encompassed criminals, indentured servants and slaves). It allowed each slave within a state to be counted as three-fifths of a person for the purpose of determining population and representation in the House of Representatives (Article I, Section 3, says representation and direct taxation will be determined based on the number of "free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.")

The Constitution prohibited importation of slaves, to begin in 1808, but again managed to do so without using the words "slave" or "slavery." Slave trading became a capital offense in 1819. There existed a general feeling that slavery would gradually pass away. Improvements in technology—the cotton gin and sewing machine—increased the demand for slave labor, however, in order to produce more cotton in Southern states. By the 1830s, many Southerners had shifted from, "Slavery is a necessary evil," to "Slavery is a positive good." The institution existed because it was "God's will," a Christian duty to lift the African out of barbarism while still exerting control over his "animal passions."

Learn More About [Slavery In America](#)

The Missouri Compromise And Dred Scott

Missouri's appeal for statehood brought a confrontation between free and slave states in Congress in 1820; each feared the other would gain the upper hand. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 set a policy of admitting states in pairs, one slave, one free. (Maine came in at the same time as Missouri.) The compromise prohibited slavery above parallel 36 degrees, 30 minutes in the lands of the Louisiana Purchase, and it included a national Fugitive Slave Law requiring all Americans to return runaway slaves to their owners. The Fugitive Slave Law was upheld in *Prigg v. Pennsylvania*, 1842, but the Missouri Compromise's prohibitions on the spread of slavery would be found unconstitutional in the 1857 Dred Scott decision.

Learn more about [Dred Scott](#)

The Abolitionism Movement Spreads

Although many New Englanders had grown wealthy in the slave trade before the importation of slaves was outlawed, that area of the country became the hotbed of abolitionist sentiment. Abolitionist newspapers and pamphlets sprang into existence. These were numerous enough by 1820 that South Carolina instituted penalties for anyone bringing written anti-slavery material into the state.

These publications argued against slavery as a social and moral evil and often used examples of African American writings and other achievements to demonstrate that Africans and their descendents were as capable of learning as were Europeans and their descendents in America, given the

freedom to do so. To prove their case that one person owning another one was morally wrong, they first had to convince many, in all sections of the country, that Negroes, the term used for the race at the time, were human. Yet, even many people among the abolitionists did not believe the two races were equal.

In 1829, David Walker, a freeman of color originally from the South, published *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* in Boston, Massachusetts. It was a new benchmark, pushing abolitionists toward extreme militancy. He called for slaves to rise up against their masters and to defend themselves: "It is no more harm for you to kill a man who is trying to kill you, than it is for you to take a drink of water when thirsty." As early as 1800, a Virginia slave known as Gabriel Prosser had attempted an uprising there, but it failed when two slaves betrayed the plan to their masters.

Walker's publication was too extreme even for most abolition leaders, including one of the most renowned, William Lloyd Garrison. In 1831, Garrison founded *The Liberator*, which would become the most famous and influential of abolitionist newspapers. That same year, Virginia debated emancipation, marking the last movement for abolition in the South prior to the Civil War. Instead, that year the Southampton Slave Riot, also called Nat Turner's Rebellion, resulted in Virginia passing new regulations against slaves. Fears of slave revolts like the bloody Haitian Revolution of 1791–1803 were never far from Southerners' minds. Publications like *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* led white Southerners to conclude Northern abolitionists intended to commit genocide against them.

In 1833 in Philadelphia, the first American Anti-Slavery Society Convention convened. In a backlash, anti-abolition riots broke out in many northeastern cities, including New York and Philadelphia, during 1834-35. Several Southern states, beginning with the Carolinas, made formal requests to other states to suppress abolition groups and their literature. In Illinois, the legislature voted to condemn abolition societies and their agitation; Delegate Abraham Lincoln voted with the majority, then immediately co-sponsored a bill to mitigate some of the language of the earlier one. The U.S. House of Representatives adopted a gag rule, automatically tabling abolitionist proposals.



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The first national Anti-Slavery Convention was held in New York City in 1837, and the following year the second Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women met in Philadelphia; the latter resulted in pro-slavery riots. The Liberty Party, a political action group, held its first national convention, at Albany, N.Y., in 1839. That same year, Africans mutinied aboard the Spanish slave ship *Amistad* and asked New York courts to grant them freedom. Their plea was answered affirmatively by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1841.

Frederick Douglass: A Black Abolitionist

Frederick Douglass—a former slave who had been known as

Frederick Bailey while in slavery and who was the most famous black man among the abolitionists—broke with William Lloyd Garrison's newspaper, *The Liberator*, after returning from a visit to Great Britain, and founded a black abolitionist paper, *The North Star*. The title was a reference to the directions given to runaway slaves trying to reach the Northern states and Canada: Follow the North Star. Garrison had earlier convinced the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society to hire Douglass as an agent, touring with Garrison and telling audiences about his experiences in slavery. In England, however, Douglass had experienced a level of independence he'd never known in America and likely wanted greater independence for his actions here.

Working with Douglass on *The North Star* was another black man, Martin R. Delaney, who gave up publishing his own paper, *The Mystery*, to join with Douglass. Born to a free mother in Virginia (in what is now the eastern panhandle of West Virginia), Delaney had never been a slave, but he had traveled extensively in the South. After *Uncle Tom's Cabin* became a bestseller, he attempted to achieve similar success for himself by penning a semi-fictional account of his travels, *Blake: The Huts of America*. In 1850, he was one of three black men accepted into Harvard Medical School, but white students successfully petitioned to have them removed. No longer believing that merit and reason could allow members of his race to have an equal opportunity in white society, he became an ardent black nationalist. In 1859, he traveled to Africa and negotiated with eight tribal chiefs in Abbeokuta for land, on which he planned to establish a colony for skilled and educated African Americans. The agreement fell apart, and he returned to America where, near the end of the Civil War, he

became the first black officer on a general's staff in the history of the U.S. Army.

The Seneca Falls Convention

In 1848, the first Women's Rights convention was held, in Seneca Falls, N.Y. Outside of the Society of Friends ("Quakers"), women were often denied the opportunity to speak at abolitionist meetings. The women's rights movement produced many outspoken opponents of slavery, including Elizabeth Cody Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. In fact, women's equality and abolition became inextricably linked in the minds of many Southerners. In the 20th century, that lingering animosity nearly defeated the constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote.

Although Delaney's planned African colony failed, in 1849 Great Britain recognized the African colony of Liberia as a sovereign state. It had been founded in 1822 as a colony for free-born blacks, freed slaves and mulattoes (mixed race) from the United States. A number of Americans who opposed slavery (including Abraham Lincoln for a time and the aforementioned Delany) felt that the two races could never live successfully together, and the best hope for Negroes was to return them to freedom in Africa. However, the slave trade between Africa and the Western Hemisphere (the Caribbean and South America) had never ended, and many American ship owners and captains were enjoying something of a golden era of slave-trading while the U.S. and Europe looked the other way. Even if freed slaves had been sent to Africa, many would have wound up back in slavery south of the United States. Only in the late 1850s did Britain step up its anti-slavery enforcement on the high seas, leading America to

increase its efforts somewhat.

When the federal government passed a second, even more stringent fugitive slave act in 1850, several states responded by passing personal liberty laws. The following year, Sojourner Truth (Isabella Baumfree) gave a now-famous speech, "Ain't I a Woman," at the Women's Rights convention in Akron, Ohio. Born a slave in New York, she walked away from her owner after she felt she had contributed enough to him. In the late 1840s, she dictated a memoir, *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Northern Slave*, published by Garrison in 1850. She began to tour, speaking against slavery and in favor of women's rights.

Learn more about the [Seneca Falls Convention](#)

Harriet Tubman and The Underground Railroad

While Sojourner Truth, Douglass, Delaney and others wrote and spoke to end slavery, a former slave named Harriet Tubman, nee Harriet Ross, was actively leading slaves to freedom. After escaping from bondage herself, she made repeated trips into Dixie to help others. Believed to have helped some 300 slaves to escape, she was noted for warning those she was assisting that she would shoot any of them who turned back, because they would endanger herself and others she was assisting.

Tubman was an agent of the Underground Railroad, a system of "safe houses" and way stations that secretly helped runaways. The trip might begin by hiding in the home, barn or other location owned by a Southerner opposed to slavery, and

continuing from place to place until reaching safe haven in a free state or Canada. Those who reached Canada did not have to fear being returned under the Fugitive Slave Act. Several communities and individuals claim to have created the term "Underground Railroad." In the southern section of states on the north bank of the Ohio River, a "reverse underground railroad" operated; blacks in those states were kidnapped, whether they had ever been slaves or not, and taken South to sell through a series of clandestine locations.

Learn more about [Harriet Tubman](#)

Learn more about the [Underground Railroad](#)

Harriet Beecher Stowe: Abolitionist and Author

In 1852, what may have been the seminal event of the abolition movement occurred. Harriet Beecher Stowe, an abolitionist who had come to know a number of escaped slaves while she was living in Cincinnati, authored the novel Uncle Tom's Cabin. It presented a scathing view of Southern slavery, filled with melodramatic scenes such as that of the slave Eliza escaping with her baby across the icy Ohio River:



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The huge green fragment of ice on which she alighted pitched and creaked as her weight came on it but she stayed there not a moment. With wild cries and desperate energy she leaped to another and still another cake;— stumbling,—leaping,—slipping—springing upwards again! Her

shoes are—gone her stockings cut from her feet—while blood marked every step; but she saw nothing, felt nothing, till dimly, as in a dream, she saw the Ohio side and a man helping her up the bank.

Critics pointed out that Stowe had never been to the South, but her novel became a bestseller in the North (banned in the South) and the most effective bit of propaganda to come out of the abolitionist movement. It galvanized many who had been sitting on the sidelines. Reportedly, when President Abraham Lincoln met Stowe during the Civil War he said to her, "So you're the little woman who started this big war."

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Abolitionists Invoke A Higher Law

Abolitionists became increasingly strident in their condemnations of slave owners and "the peculiar institution of slavery." Often, at Fourth of July gatherings of abolition societies, they reportedly used the occasion to denounce the U.S. Constitution as a "covenant with death, and an agreement with hell." Many of them came to believe in "higher law," that a moral commitment to ending slavery took precedent over observing those parts of the Constitution that protected slavery and, in particular, they refused to obey the Fugitive Slave Act. Slave owners or their representatives traveling north to reclaim captured runaways were sometimes set upon on abolitionists mobs; even local lawmen were sometimes attacked. In the South, this fueled the belief that the North expected the South to obey all federal laws but the North could pick and choose, further driving the two regions apart.

Abolitionism, Politics and the Election

Of Abraham Lincoln

The abolition movement became an important element of political parties. Although the Native American Party (derisively called the Know-Nothing Party because when member were asked about the secretive group they claimed to "know nothing") opposed immigrants, they also opposed slavery. So did many Whigs and the Free Soil Party. In 1856, these coalesced into the Republican Party. Four years later, its candidate, Abraham Lincoln, captured the presidency of the United States.

John Brown: Abolitionism's Fiery Crusader

The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 allowed the citizens of those territories to determine for themselves whether the state would be slave or free. Proponents of both factions poured into the Kansas Territory, with each side trying to gain supremacy, often through violence. After pro-slavery groups attacked the town of Lawrence in 1856, a radical abolitionist named John Brown led his followers in retaliation, killing five pro-slavery settlers. The territory became known as "Bleeding Kansas."

Learn more about [John Brown](#)

Dred Scott V. Sanford

The 1857 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in Dred Scott v. Sanford denied citizenship to anyone of African blood and held the Missouri Compromise of 1820 to be unconstitutional. While Southern states had been passing laws prohibiting "Negro citizenship" and further restricting the rights even of freemen of color (Virginia in 1857 prohibited slaves from

smoking and from standing on sidewalks, among other restrictions), one Northern state after another had been passing laws granting citizenship to their black residents. The Court's findings upended that, and the ruling outraged many Northerners. Abraham Lincoln revived his personal political career, coming out of a self-imposed semi-retirement to speak out against the Dred Scott decision.

The year 1859 saw two events that were milestones in the history of slavery and abolition in America. The ship Clotilde landed in Mobile, Alabama. Though the importation of slaves had been illegal in America since 1808, Clotilde carried 110 to 160 African slaves. The last slave ship ever to land in the United States, it clearly demonstrated how lax the enforcement of the anti-importation laws was.

Learn more about the [Dred Scott Decision](#)

John Brown's Raid On Harpers Ferry

Nearly 1,000 miles northeast of Mobile, on the night of October 16, 1859, John Brown—the radical abolitionist who had killed proslavery settlers in Kansas—led 21 men in a raid to capture the U.S. arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia). Though Brown denied it, his plan was to use the arsenal's weapons to arm a slave uprising. He and his followers, 16 white men and five black ones, holed up in the arsenal after they were discovered, and were captured there by a group of U.S. Marines commanded by an Army lieutenant colonel, Robert E. Lee. Convicted of treason against Virginia, Brown was hanged December 2.

Initial reaction in the South was that this was the work of a

small group of fanatics, but when Northern newspapers, authors and legislators began praising him as a martyr—a poem by John Greenleaf Whittier eulogizing Brown was published in the New York Herald Tribune less than a month after the execution—their actions were taken as further proof that Northern abolitionists wished to carry out genocide of white Southerners. The flames were fanned higher as information came out that Brown had talked other abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass, about his plans and received financial assistance from some of them. Learn more about John Brown's [Raid On Harpers Ferry](#)

Abraham Lincoln: Abolitionist President

Following Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency in 1860, Southern states began seceding from the Union. Though personally opposed to slavery and convinced the United States was going to have to be all free or all slave states—"a house divided against itself cannot stand"—he repeatedly said he would not interfere with slavery where it existed. But he adamantly opposed its expansion into territories where it did not exist, and slave owners were determined that they had to be free to take their human property with them if they chose to move into those territories.

Less than two years into the civil war that began over Southern secession, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. It freed all slaves residing in areas of the nation currently in rebellion. Often ridiculed, both then and now, because it only freed slaves in areas that did not recognize Lincoln's authority, it meant that Union Army officers no longer had to return runaway slaves to their owners because, as the

armies advanced, slaves in the newly captured areas were considered free. It also effectively prohibited European nations that had long since renounced slavery from entering the war on the side of the South.

Learn more about [Abraham Lincoln](#)

Learn more about the [Emancipation Proclamation](#)

The 13th Amendment: The Abolitionism Movement Triumphs

The 13th Amendment to the Constitution, declared ratified on December 18, 1865, ended slavery in the United States—at least in name. During the Reconstruction Era, Southern states found ways to "hire" black workers under terms that were slavery in all but name, even pursuing any who ran off, just as they had in the days of the Underground Railroad.

Abolition had been achieved, but the lessons learned by those in the abolition movement would be applied to other social concerns in the decades to come, notably the temperance and woman's suffrage movements.

Articles Featuring The Abolitionist Movement From History Net Magazines

Featured Article

Crusaders against slavery

Abolitionism, the reform movement to end slavery, always remained small and on the fringes of antebellum American society, and most people in the North and South saw abolitionists as extremists. But this vocal minority managed to keep racial issues in the foreground until at least some of their views were accepted by mainstream Northern society. Southerners, on the other hand, always saw them as a direct threat to their way of life.

Efforts to end slavery had been present since the Colonial era, when Quakers were the primary torchbearers of the movement. Even though they were disappointed when the U.S. Constitution of 1787 did not end slavery but only the overseas importation of slaves in 1808, their efforts, combined with the more diverse economy of the Northern states, succeeded in outlawing the practice above the Mason-Dixon Line by the first decade of the 19th century.

Abolitionists began to advocate a gradual form of emancipation in the 1820s whereby slaves would be purchased from their owners and sent back, or recolonized, to their African "homeland." The concept, pushed by the American Colonization Society, was always hampered by the lack of funds and the opposition of many blacks, who rightly viewed America, not Africa, as their native country.

A diligent member of the colonization movement was William Lloyd Garrison, who had been born into a working-class family in Massachusetts. Increasingly frustrated with the slow pace of abolition, Garrison would forever radicalize the movement in the 1830s by forming the American Anti-Slavery Society. Through its publication *The Liberator*, he called for immediate and universal emancipation.

That view shocked the nation, as both Northerners and Southerners dreaded the wholesale freeing of slaves. Yankees feared the competition for labor, Southerners the collapse of their economy, and both were anxious about race-mixing, or “amalgamation.” Violence began to escalate against abolitionists. In 1835 Garrison was nearly lynched as a Boston mob chased him from an antislavery rally. Two years later, a crowd dragged Elijah Lovejoy, an Illinois abolitionist, from his printing press and killed him.

Garrison and his followers continued to push for their goals and provoke controversy despite such threats. “The Constitution,” Garrison said, was “a covenant with death and an agreement with Hell,” because it did not outlaw slavery. He even publicly burned copies of the document.

Garrison’s beliefs and tactics began to unsettle many of his fellow abolitionists. He considered blacks to be equal to whites, while some members of the movement opposed slavery but still saw blacks as inferiors. In some abolitionist meetings, in fact, blacks were forced to sit in segregated sections. Garrison caused additional furor when he also began to speak out for women’s rights, considered even more radical than ending slavery, and urged they become equal partners in the abolitionist movement. Those alienated by such beliefs split off in 1839 to join Arthur and Lewis Tappan’s American and Foreign Anti–Slavery Society, which had a male-only membership.

Despite the rift, Garrison, the Tappans, Quaker women like Sarah and Angelina Grimke, black leaders such as Frederick Douglass and their followers managed to keep slavery a controversial and topical issue. Shrewdly realizing that pure

opposition to slavery was not enough to gain them large-scale support, they began to argue that a “Slave Power” conspiracy was trying to rob Northern whites of their rights and economic structure.



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For example, during territorial expansion issues, abolitionists argued that the so-called Slave Power was trying to take land from white farmers. During the Gag Rule period of 1835-1844, which forbade the discussion of slavery in Congress, abolitionists contended that the Slave Power was suppressing freedom of speech. The Compromise of 1850 included the Fugitive Slave Act, which allowed federal officials to hunt down escaped slaves even if they had made it into a free state. Abolitionists contended that the Slave Power had made dangerous inroads into the federal government, and was able to subvert state laws.

Northerners began to wonder if there wasn't something to the “Slave Power” theory. In Boston, where Garrison was almost lynched, a mob actually helped to free and spirit away a black man who had been caught because of the Fugitive Slave Act.

After 1861 abolitionists kept pressuring the Lincoln administration to end slavery, and celebrated the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation. Garrison, who had refused to vote because he believed it validated a corrupt system that supported slavery, cast his first ballot for Lincoln in the 1864 election.

The abolitionist movement never gained a truly large following, and it took the 13th Amendment to finally end involuntary servitude in 1865. But Garrison, Douglass and their colleagues kept the issue of race and slavery in the fore, helping to develop the tensions that led to war.

More Abolitionism Articles

American Experience: The Abolitionists"American Experience:

The Abolitionists" is a compelling, 3-part series on the rise, fracturing, decline, resurgence and ultimate triumph of the movement to make all Americans free.

America's second declaration of independenceAbraham

Lincoln writes the Emancipation Proclamation. Image courtesy of Library of Congress. Lincoln's famous flair for words couldn't compete with the gravity of emancipation. When it was first issued, even Northerners who recognized it as a second Declaration of Independence lamented its uninspiring prose. When autographed reprints were offered for sale at a Philadelphia charity ...

A Killer's MetamorphosisFrank James, Jesse James' older brother, renounced the outlaw life after Jesse's death and slipped quietly into old age.

'John Brown's Body' – Stephen Vincent Benet and Civil War

Memory'John Brown's Body' by Stephen Vincent Benet, published in 1928, remains a vibrant tapestry of America's diversity and its unity, its 15,000 lines re-imagining the Civil War as Lincoln understood it.

John Brown's Blood OathAn excerpt from Tony Horwitz's new book, "Midnight Rising," about the militant abolitionist.

The Day New York Tried to SecedeA bird's-eye view of pre-war New York displays the shipping commerce that made the city rich. Image courtesy of Library of Congress. A NOTE FROM

THE EDITOR: Because of a production problem, a portion of this article was omitted from the January 2012 issue of America's Civil War. It follows here in full. During the ...

Eric Foner on Lincoln and SlaveryThe evolution of Father Abraham Respected historian Eric Foner's new book, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery*, examines what the president truly believed about human bondageAuthor Eric Foner. Courtesy of Eric Foner. Q Why another book on Lincoln? A Even though there's a voluminous literature on Lincoln, this particular angle is looking at ...

Union Cavalry Escapes from Besieged Harpers FerryIn September 1862 some 1,600 Union cavalrymen seemingly trapped at Harpers Ferry carried out one of the Civil War's most successful missions of stealth and deception.

Pre Civil War Peace ConferenceAs secession fever spreads through the South, political patriarchs try to avert war—but at what price?

True Causes of the Civil WarIrreconcilable Differences Simmering animosities between North and South signaled an American apocalypse Any man who takes it upon himself to explain the causes of the Civil War deserves whatever grief comes his way, regardless of his good intentions. Having acknowledged that, let me also say I have long believed there is no more concise or ...

Causes of the Civil WarAmericans who lived through the Civil War established four great interpretive traditions regarding the conflict. The Union Cause tradition framed the war as preeminently an effort to maintain a viable republic in the face of secessionist actions that threatened both the work of the Founders and, by extension, the future of democracy in the Western ...

Slave to Soldier: Fighting for Freedom'We Must Make Free

Men of Them' Confederate General Patrick Cleburne wanted to enlist slaves to fight for the Rebel cause

Notes from the Underground Railroad Former slave Arnold Gragston tells of how he became involved in the Underground Railroad.

Why Cotton got to be King The South's cash crops buoyed America's trade and industry before the war—but the planter economy could be as volatile as Wall Street

The Madness of John Brown In the 150 years since Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, historians have struggled to come to grips with his mental state.

John Brown's Moonlight March Historynet Image On a chill foggy autumn evening in 1859, abolitionist John Brown and a rough gang of 21 men with guns and pikes and revolt in their hearts quietly hiked five miles from a farm in Western Maryland to the federal armory in Harpers Ferry, Va. Their ambitions were outrageous: surprise the guards at ...

Hanging Captain Gordon Nathaniel Gordon was the only American sent to the gallows for slave trading.

Missouri Compromise exposed the raw nerve of slavery Missouri Compromise: Problem arose when Missouri wanted to join the Union with slavery, threatening the balance between free and slave states.

Nicholas Biddle: The Civil War's First Blood Just days after Fort Sumter, a pro-Confederate mob in Maryland turned ex-slave Nicholas Biddle into the war's first casualty.

Reimagining the South A Southerner learns the skeleton in her family closet wore a coat of Union blue.

Frederick Douglass Reenactor Says He Was Born To Play The Part [Washington Post](#) | 2007-08-19

Timeline: The Abolition of the Slave Trade William Wilberforce

waged a long campaign to convince Britain to abolish the slave trade.

Silas Soule: Massachusetts AbolitionistDedicated

Massachusetts abolitionist Silas Soule ironically gave his life for the red man, not the black.

John Brown's Family: A Living LegacyFor decades after John Brown swung from the gallows in 1859, his family lived in the long shadow of the notoriety he had generated.

"All men & women are created equal" – Cover Page: April '99

American History FeatureAll men & women are created equal

Over one hundred and fifty years ago the people attending the first Women's Rights Convention adopted this radical proposition. by Constance Rynder The announcement of an upcoming "Woman's Rights Convention" in the Seneca County Courier was small, but it attracted Charlotte Woodward's attention. On the morning of July ...

Massachusetts Abolitionist Silas Soule – March '96 America's

Civil War FeatureDedicated Massachusetts abolitionist Silas

Soule ironically gave his life for the red man, not the black. By Bruce M. Lawlor Fate consigns most people to lives of quiet anonymity, choosing only a favored few to shape an era's epochal events. In the case of Silas S. Soule, a young Massachusetts abolitionist, fate was unusually fickle. It ...

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