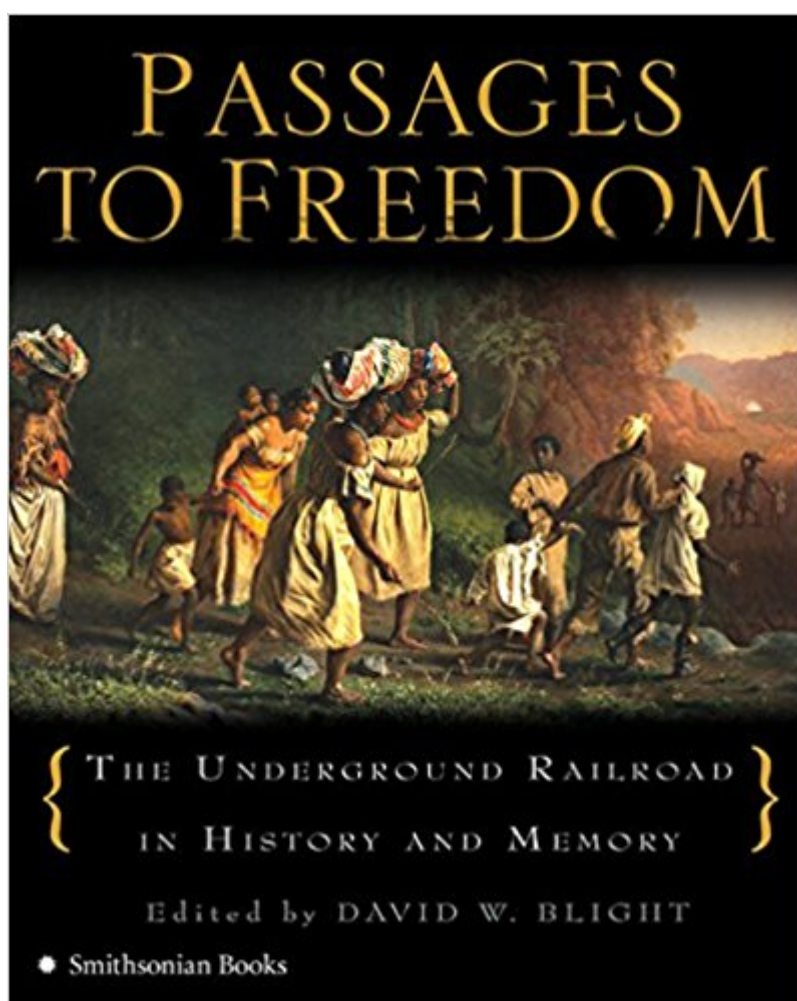


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# Passages To Freedom: The Underground Railroad In History And Memory



## Synopsis

Few things have defined America as much as slavery. In the wake of emancipation the story of the Underground Railroad has become a seemingly irresistible part of American historical consciousness. This stirring drama is one Americans have needed to tell and retell and pass on to their children. But just how much of the Underground Railroad is real, how much legend and mythology, how much invention? *Passages to Freedom* sets out to answer this question and place it within the context of slavery, emancipation, and its aftermath. Published on the occasion of the opening of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, *Passages to Freedom* brings home the reality of slavery's destructiveness. This distinguished yet accessible volume offers a galvanizing look at how the brave journey out of slavery both haunts and inspires us today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Myth and metaphor, the Underground Railroad was also real in the lives of escaping slaves, in the activities (legal and illegal) of black and white people, free and slave, who aided and abetted them and in the structures in which they found refuge. Bountifully illustrated with 78 color and 174 b&w photos and other images, this collection also comprises highly readable essays by 15 distinguished historians. The first section, "Slavery and Abolition," lays a historical foundation with cogent accounts of slavery in the colonial years and in the 19th century and of the antislavery movement. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the Civil War, William Still and Harriet Tubman are all carefully treated. Short-term stay escapes and long-term fugitive communities within slave territory, escape

by water, escape into Northern free black communities, escape to South Florida and escape to Western Canada are all freshly covered, as are "current uses of the Underground Railroad in modern thought, tourism, and public history." (Sadly, the work does not list the recognized Underground Railroad sites.) In closing, Eddie S. Glaude Jr. discusses the African-American appropriation of the Exodus story, with the U.S. being Egypt rather than the Promised Land. Although inevitable redundancies occur in the separate essays, Blight (Race and Reunion) brackets this coherently arranged collection with two thought-provoking essays exploring the role of history and memory and probing the current attention to the Underground Railroad that "says much about who we are as well as who we say we want to be." Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** In an effort to provide a more accurate account of what was, by necessity, a clandestine operation, the National Underground Railroad Center in Cincinnati offers a collection of essays, photographs, and illustrations from scholars to document the enterprise in as much detail as possible. Writing with respect for the history and with caution about the mythology, contributors detail the contributions of famous abolitionists, including Harriet Beecher Stowe and Frederick Douglass, and those who are less well known. Scholars examine the origin of the term Underground Railroad, the double meaning of spirituals and other signals used in the secret society, and the operations of at least 150 antislavery societies existing in Ohio (the locus of the movement) at the peak of abolitionist activism. Scholars also examine the passion and courage of abolitionists, and the dilemma of the lasting appeal of the Underground Railroad as an archetypal image of a freedom-seeking, freedom-supporting nation, and, at the same time, the shame of slavery that necessitated such heroic efforts. Among the contributing scholars are Ira Berlin, David Blight, Eddie S. Glaude Jr., and Deborah Gray White. This is a scholarly but thoroughly accessible resource on the Underground Railroad. Vanessa Bush Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have been reading since I was 3 years old and I have never read a book so spellbinding. I finished school in 1970 at that time the only black history I learned was Martin Luther King and Harriet Tubman was mentioned briefly. Well this book changed all of that. I never had heard of Abolitionist William Still and so many others. So many Quakers worked so hard to help runaway slaves. I never heard of slave narratives until about a year ago. I have bought about 20 books or more through

.com and very reasonably priced. I have started my own personal Black History Book Collection. I plan soon to order 15 more books as I am now enthralled in slave narratives and runaway slaves who rode the underground railroad. I started reading this book soon as I got it out the package! I read all night through till the next morning. Every time I tried to put it down I noticed something else that I never knew about slavery and the underground railroad! Buy! Buy! this book.

My ancestors were much involved in the Underground Railroad, so I have always been interested in getting more information about it.

I recently began my ancestry search, I am therefore collecting books about slavery, the underground railroad, emancipation, Lincoln, etc. This is one of the best I have read. I recommend it highly.

The book arrived safely and in good condition. I have not had time to read it yet, so have not formed a real definitive opinion on content.

Great book.

The pictures pre-dating and post-dating the Civil War are an extremely valuable part of the overall presentation. I would purchase the volume for the value of the portraits alone. Famous slave hiding places, way stations, daring routes, Indian assistance and crossings into the Caribbean and Mexico are depicted. The mid-1840s was the time of the famous Underground Railroad. Aunt Lucy is depicted. She was a former slave. There is a 1792 view of the Mulberry Plantation with the manor, surrounding huts and a tree. The 3 generations of slavery are described; namely, - Charter Generation of the 1st arrivals - The Plantation Generation of staple producers and cotton growers - The Revolutionary Generation of the late 18th century. A live slave auction was depicted in the Richmond of the 1850s. Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad was described together with important historical pictures. The Tubman property has survived the centuries in Cayuga County, New York. Overall, the work is a complete description and pictorial presentation for students of American History, Afro-Asian History, the Civil War and famous persons who lived and fought for freedom in the early days of the American Revolution onward. The acquisition would be very valuable for any personal library.

I found this a valuable contribution for understanding this complex history. Not the easiest read in the world, even for those who read lots of nonfiction histories. But excellent. A book I loved because it offers such a personal, rivetting account from the perspective of one heroic African American woman is the fictionalized account of the life of Harriet Tubman, "Home, Miss Moses." It's also not a super easy read but its fictionalized form carries us home. Readers should take a look at both.

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