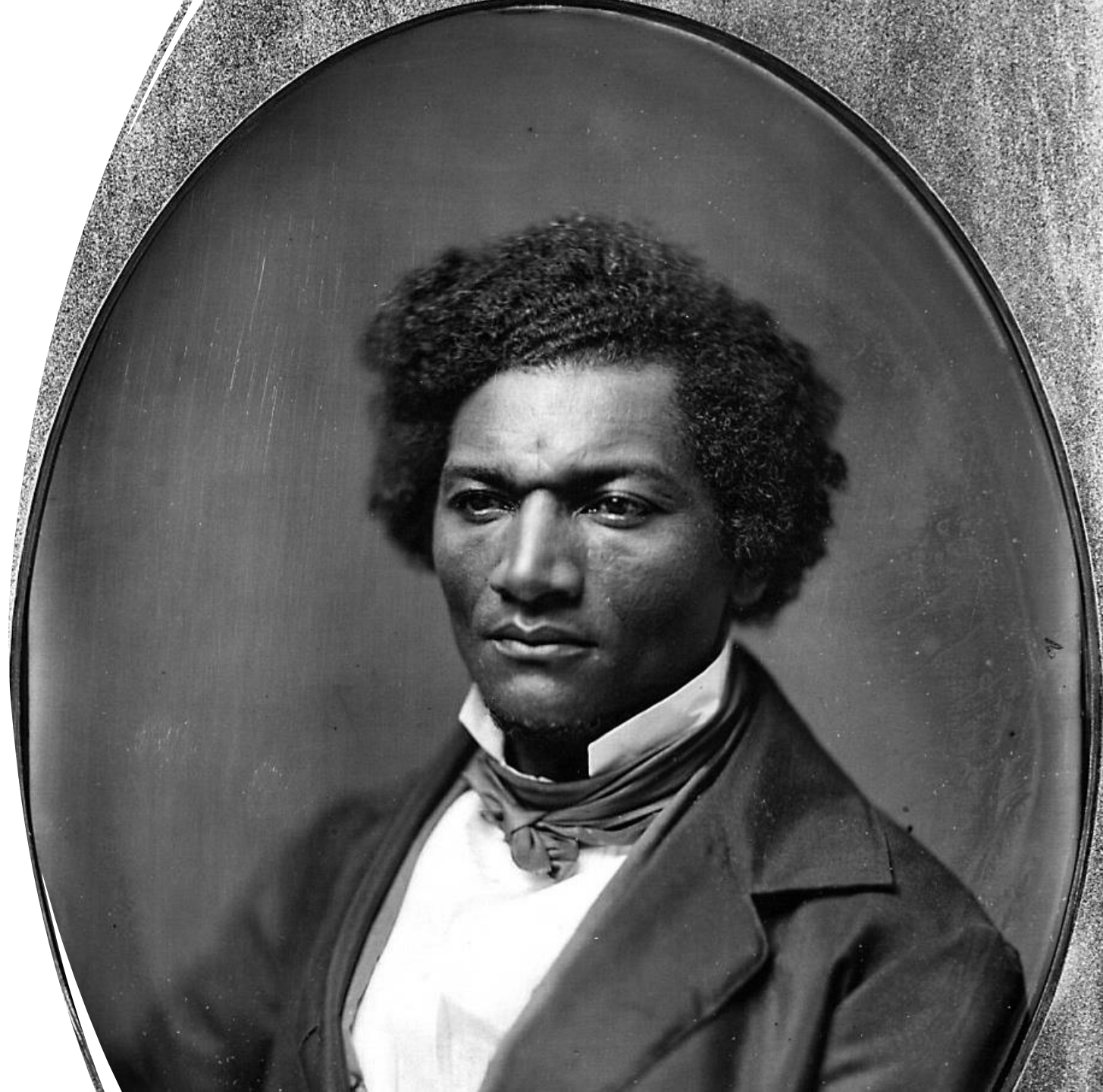


8. Frederick
Douglas in
Belfast, 1845-
1846



Contents

- Life as a slave in the USA
- Compare and contrast: slavery in USA/West Indies
- Who was Frederick Douglass?
- His life and times
- Douglass in Belfast
- What impact did Ireland/Belfast make on Douglass?
- What impact did Douglass make on Belfast?



Life as a slave in America



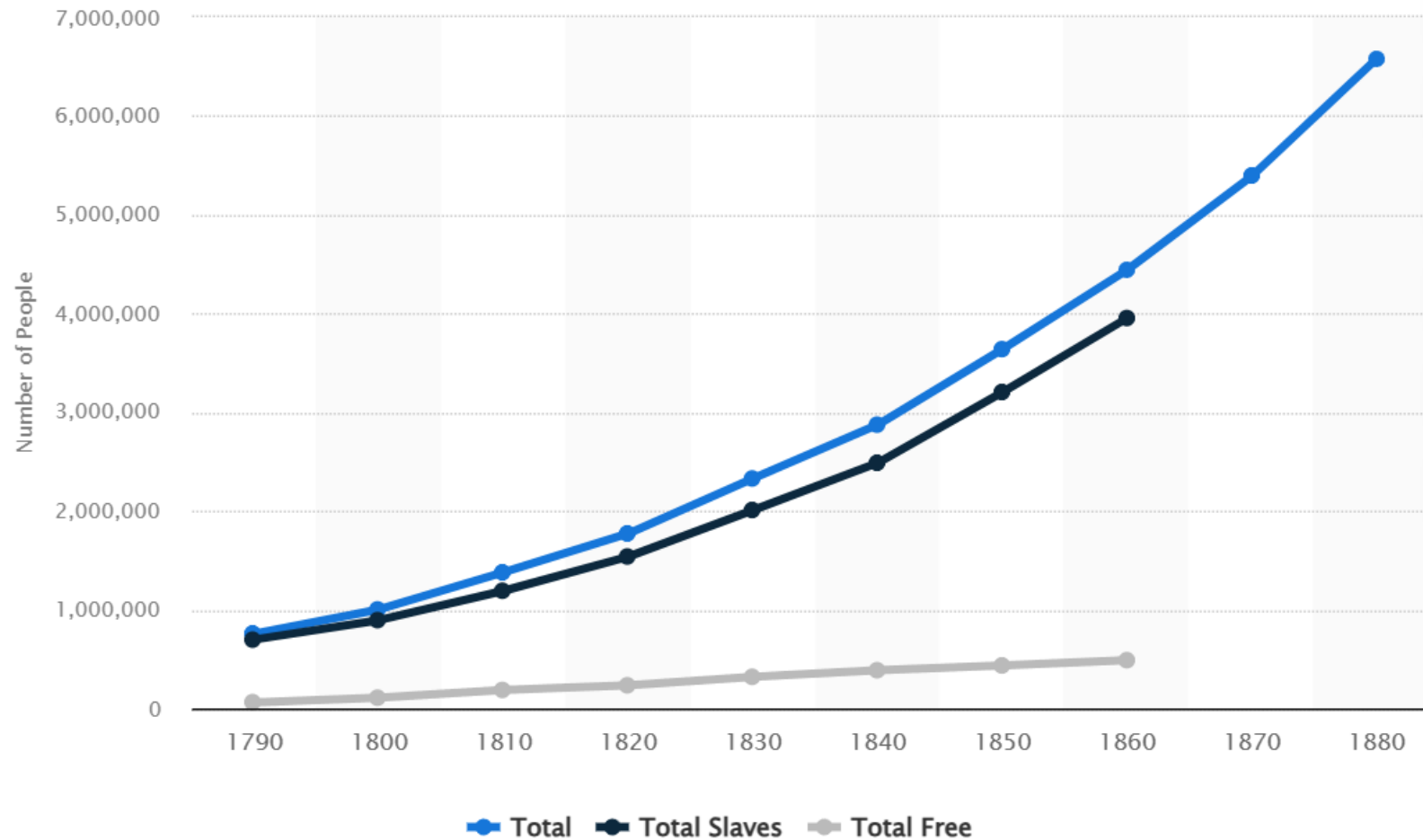
Demography

- 1790: 700k slaves in the USA
- 1808: 1 million slaves had been imported into the USA. International slave trade made illegal
- 1860: 4 million slaves in the south, 0.5m 'free' black people in the USA

Census of 1860.

States.	Free Population.	Slave Population.	Total
South Carolina	301,271	402,541	703,812
Mississippi	354,700	436,696	791,396
Louisiana	376,280	333,070	709,350
Alabama	529,161	435,132	964,293
Florida	78,686	61,753	140,439
Georgia	595,097	462,232	1,057,329
North Carolina	661,586	331,081	992,667
Virginia	1,105,192	490,887	1,596,079
Delaware	121,750	180,682	302,432
Arkansas	324,323	111,104	435,427
Tennessee	834,063	275,784	1,109,847
Kentucky	930,223	225,190	1,155,413
Maryland	509,846	87,188	597,034
Missouri	1,067,352	114,965	1,182,317
District of Columbia	110,420	1,798	112,218
	8,289,953	3,950,343	12,240,296

Black and slave population of the United States from 1790 to 1880



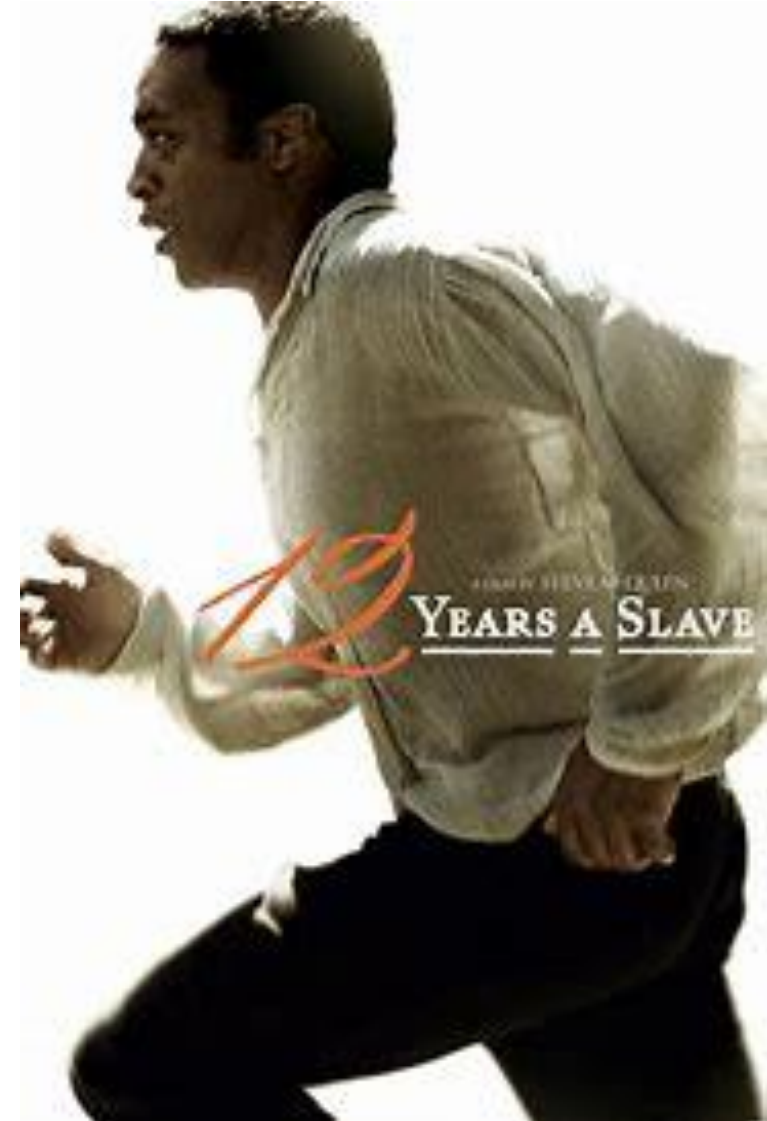
12 Years a Slave

Autobiographical memoir of Solomon Northup, a free black man kidnapped into slavery.

Details Northup's 12-year experience of bondage in Louisiana.

Offers in-depth look at slave markets in Washington, D.C., and New Orleans.

Describes cotton and sugar cultivation, and slave treatment on Louisiana plantations.



Synopsis

- Solomon Northup, a skilled carpenter and violinist, is lured away under the guise of a job offer.
- Kidnapped in Washington, D.C., and sold into slavery in New Orleans.
- Endures 12 years of hardship under several owners, including the cruel Edwin Epps.
- Secretly sends word to New York, eventually leading to his rescue and return to freedom.



CAUTION!

COLORED PEOPLE

OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,

You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the

**Watchmen and Police Officers
of Boston,**

For since the recent **ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN**, they are empowered to act as

KIDNAPPERS

AND

Slave Catchers,

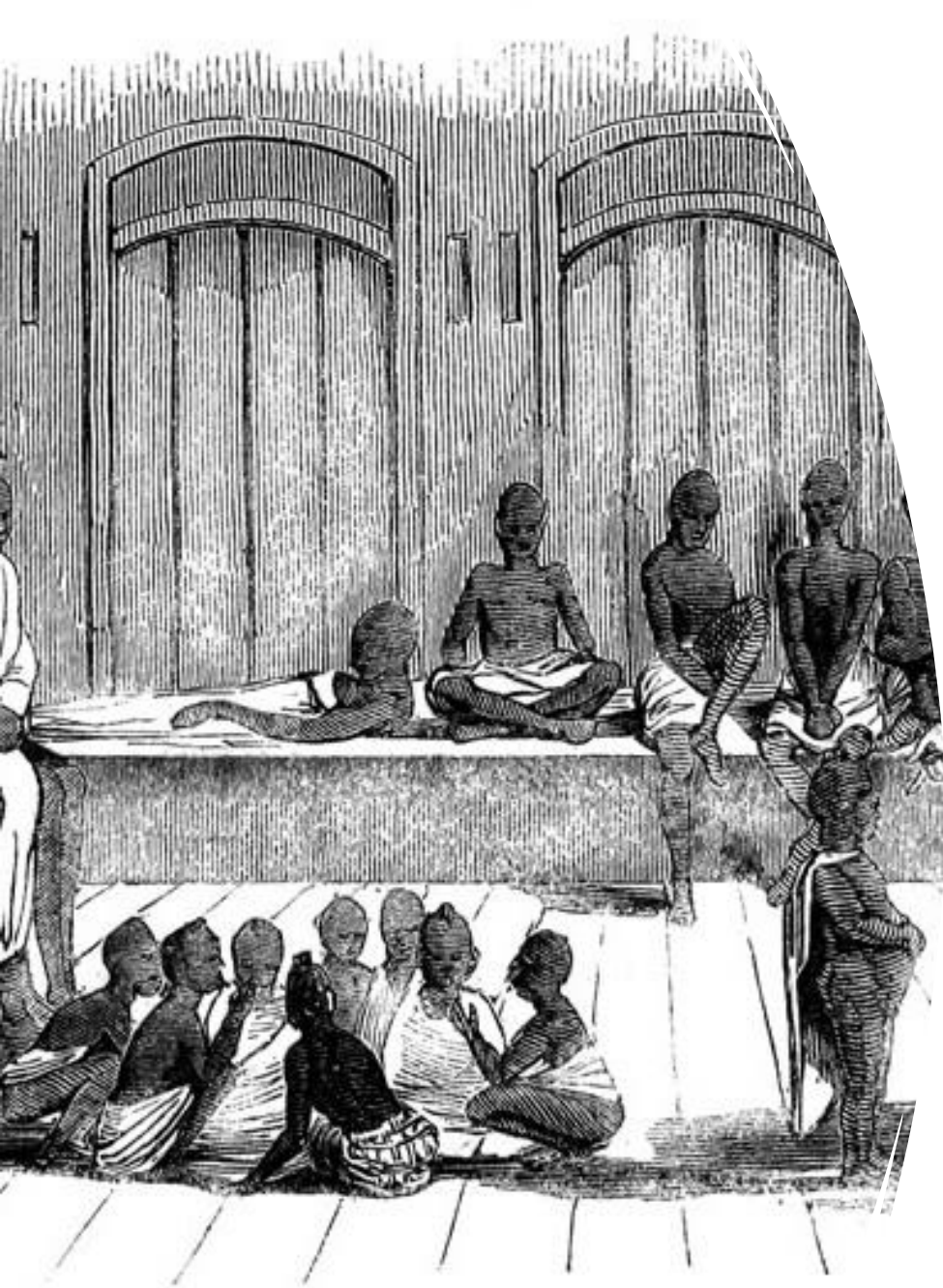
And they have already been actually employed in **KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES.** Therefore, if you value your **LIBERTY**, and the *Welfare of the Fugitives* among you, *Shun* them in every possible manner, as so many **HOUNDS** on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.

**Keep a Sharp Look Out for
KIDNAPPERS, and have
TOP EYE open.**

APRIL 24, 1851.

The Deception

- **Encounter:** Approached by two circus promoters, Brown and Hamilton, with a job offer as a musician.
- **Journey Begins:** Travels to New York and Washington, D.C., for the promised job.
- **Betrayal:** Drugged and kidnapped in Washington, D.C., waking up in chains.



SLAVE MART

Sold into Slavery

- **Slave Pen:** Finds himself in a slave pen, owned by James H. Birch.
- **New Identity:** Stripped of his freedom, Northup is transported to New Orleans.
- **First Owner:** Sold to William Prince Ford, a relatively humane owner.

Life on the Plantation



Tasks: Works on Ford's plantation, showcasing his carpentry skills.



Transfer: Due to economic pressures, Ford sells Northup to John Tibbeats, a much less humane owner.



Struggle for Survival: Faces extreme cruelty and violence from Tibbeats.



Years of Hardship

- **Further Sold:** Northup is sold again to Edwin Epps, known for his brutality.
- **Daily Life:** Assigned roles ranging from cotton picker to overseer of slaves.
- **Patsey:** Forms a bond with Patsey, a fellow slave, highlighting the human aspect amidst suffering.

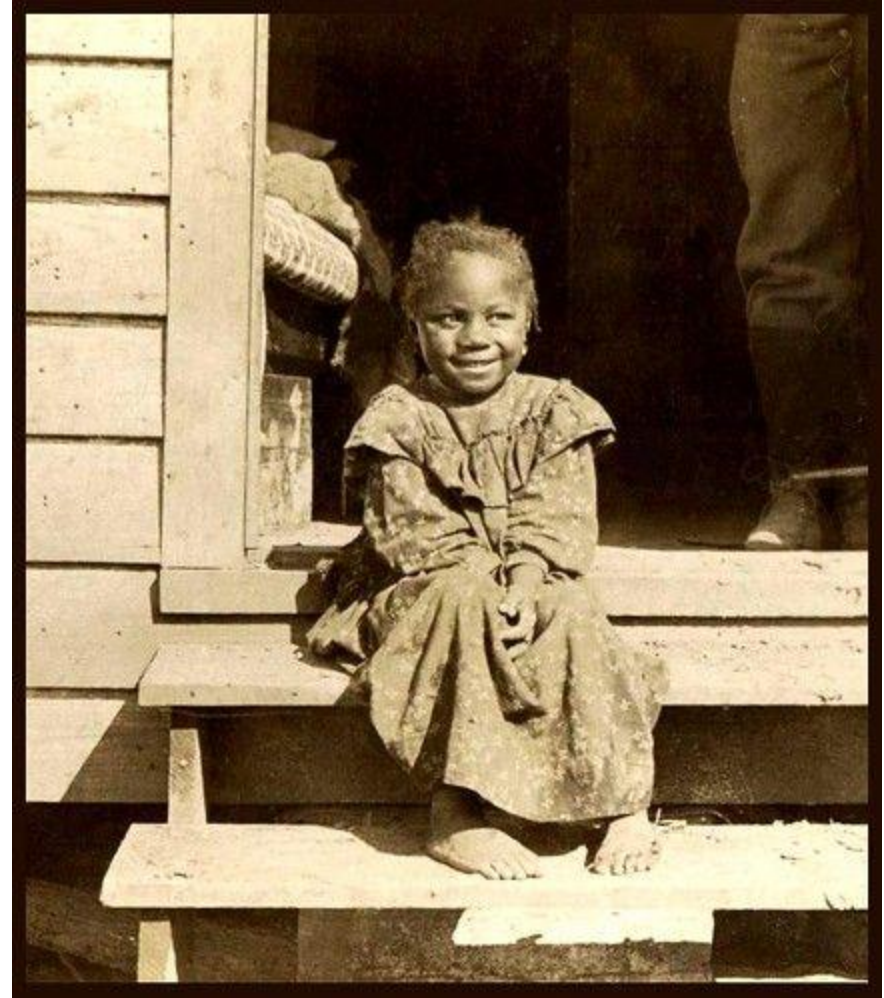


The Turning Point

Samuel Bass: Meets an abolitionist carpenter from Canada who works on the plantation.

Hope Restored: Northup confides his true identity and history to Bass.

Letters for Help: Bass secretly sends letters to Northup's family and friends in New York.



The Path to Freedom

- **Legal Intervention:** Henry B. Northup, a white attorney and family friend, receives the letter.
- **Rescue Mission:** Travels to Louisiana with official support to rescue Solomon.
- **Legal Challenges:** Faces bureaucratic and legal hurdles in proving Solomon's free status.





Freedom Regained

- **Liberation:** Solomon Northup is finally freed from slavery after 12 years.
- **Return to New York:** Reunites with his family in Saratoga Springs.
- **Legal Attempts:** Unsuccessfully tries to prosecute those responsible for his kidnapping.

Legacy

Published eight years before the American Civil War.

Provided factual support to Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Sold 30,000 copies, becoming a bestseller of its time.

Sold three times as many copies as Douglass' narrative in first two years.



Twelve Years a Slave Solomon Northup Odyssey



Book to film

- Fell into obscurity for nearly 100 years.
- Rediscovered in the 1960s by historians Sue Eakin and Joseph Logsdon.
- Adapted into two films: 1984's "Solomon Northup's Odyssey" and 2013's Oscar-winning "12 Years a Slave."

Life in Caribbean vs America



Geographical Conditions and Work Environment

- In the continental United States, slaves primarily worked on large plantations that grew crops such as tobacco, cotton, and rice. These plantations were often spread out over vast areas, and slaves typically worked long hours under the supervision of overseers.
- In the Caribbean islands, the plantation system was also prevalent, but the climate and geography differed. Caribbean plantations cultivated crops like sugar, coffee, and tobacco. The tropical climate and terrain were often harsher, with intense heat and challenging working conditions in the fields.



Slave Population and Treatment:

- The slave population in the continental United States was significant but generally smaller than in the Caribbean. Slaves in the U.S. were often subjected to harsh treatment and harsh living conditions, but the scale of plantation operations tended to be smaller compared to some Caribbean islands.

- In the Caribbean, particularly in places like Jamaica, Cuba, and Haiti, large-scale sugar plantations dominated the landscape. The slave populations on these islands were massive, and conditions for slaves were often extremely brutal. The mortality rate among Caribbean slaves was notoriously high due to overwork, disease, and harsh treatment.



\$100 Reward!

Ranaway from my farm in Stafford
County, Va., on or about the 25th
Inst., my Negro Man

GEORGE DAGGS.

Said Negro is about 20 years of age,
rather stoutly made, about 5 feet 6
inches high, and quite black.

I will give \$25 Reward if taken in the County of Stafford,
\$50, if taken in any other County in the State, \$100 if taken out
of the State and secured so that I get him. As he was employed
several years on my Long Boat, he has no doubt many acquaintances
about Alexandria and Washington, and may be lurking
about those Cities.

WITHERS WALLER.

Aquila P. O., Stafford Co., Va.

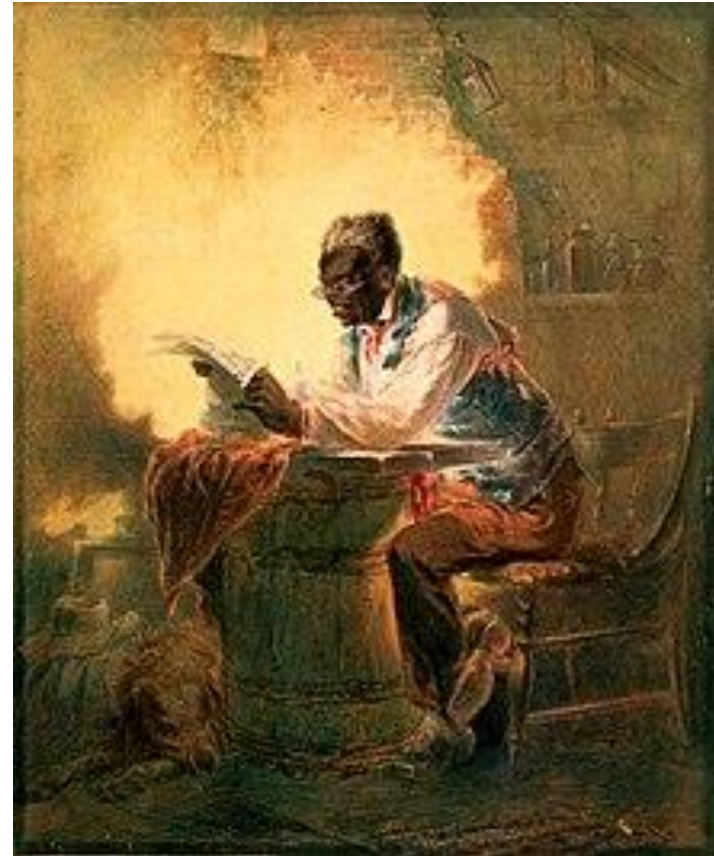
Legal and Social Context

- Slavery in the continental United States was deeply entrenched in the legal and social systems, with laws regulating the institution and severely limiting the rights of slaves. However, the legal status and treatment of slaves varied from state to state.

- In the Caribbean, slavery was also legally sanctioned and deeply ingrained in the colonial social structure. The harshness of the plantation system, combined with the constant importation of new slaves due to high mortality rates, led to a more rigid and oppressive system of control over the slave population.

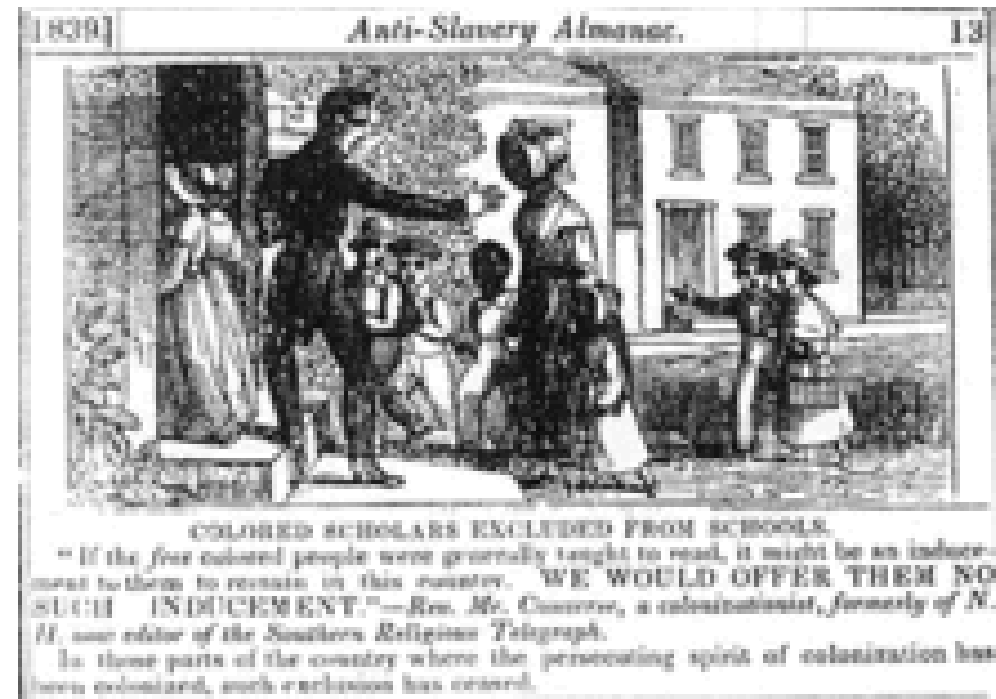
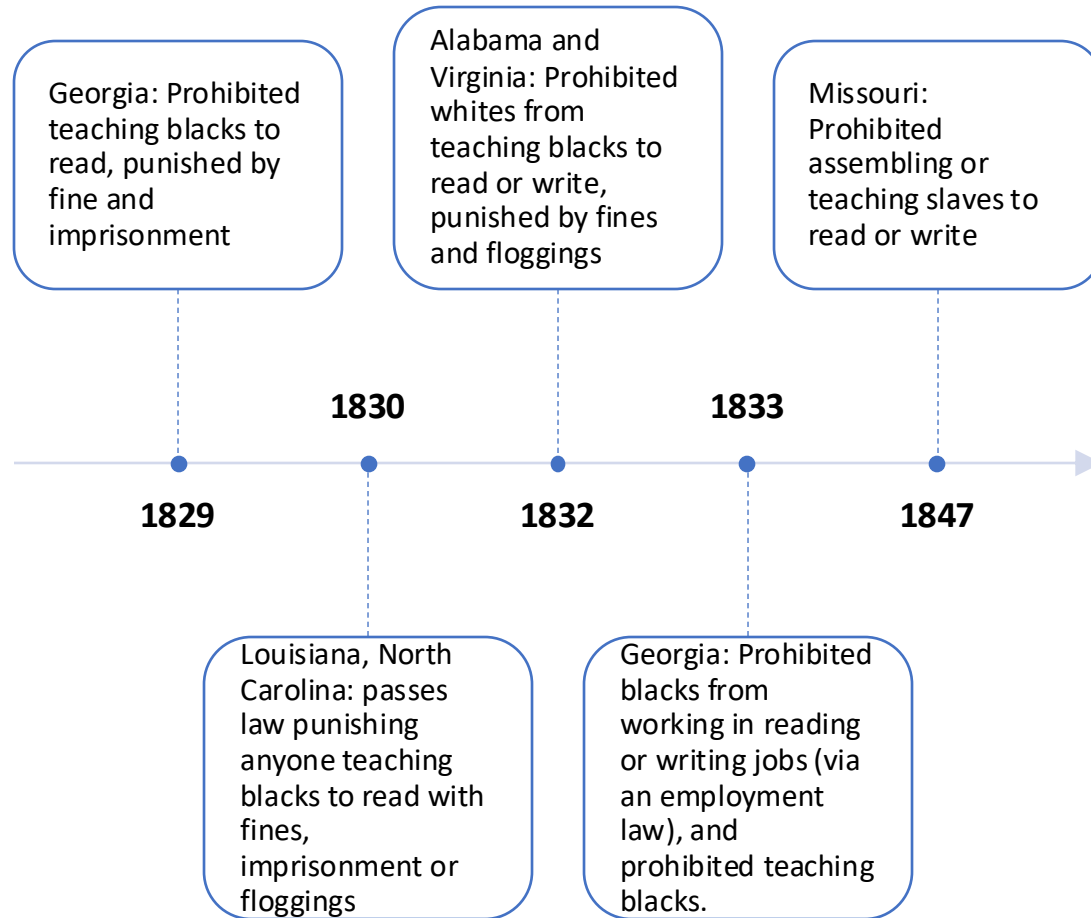
Prohibiting literacy against slaves

- Between 1740 and 1834 Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Virginia all passed anti-literacy laws.
- South Carolina passed the first law which prohibited teaching slaves to read and write, punishable by a fine of 100 pounds and six months in prison, via an amendment to its 1739 Negro Act.



1863 painting of a man reading the [Emancipation Proclamation](#).

State level anti-literacy laws



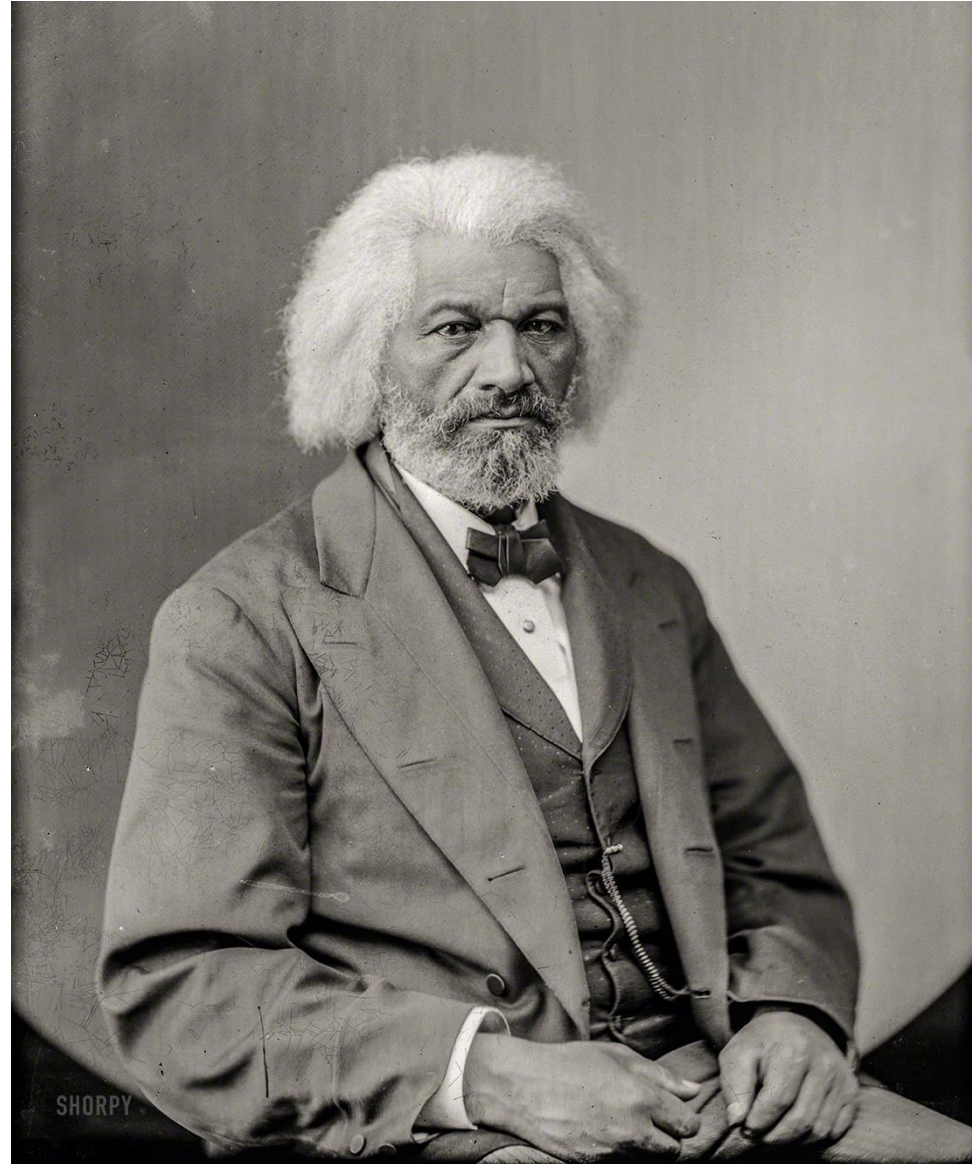
1839 Illustration in the Anti-Slavery Almanac of Black students excluded from school, with quote from Reverend Mr. Converse: "If the free colored people were taught to read, it would be an inducement for them to stay in the country. We would offer them no such inducement."

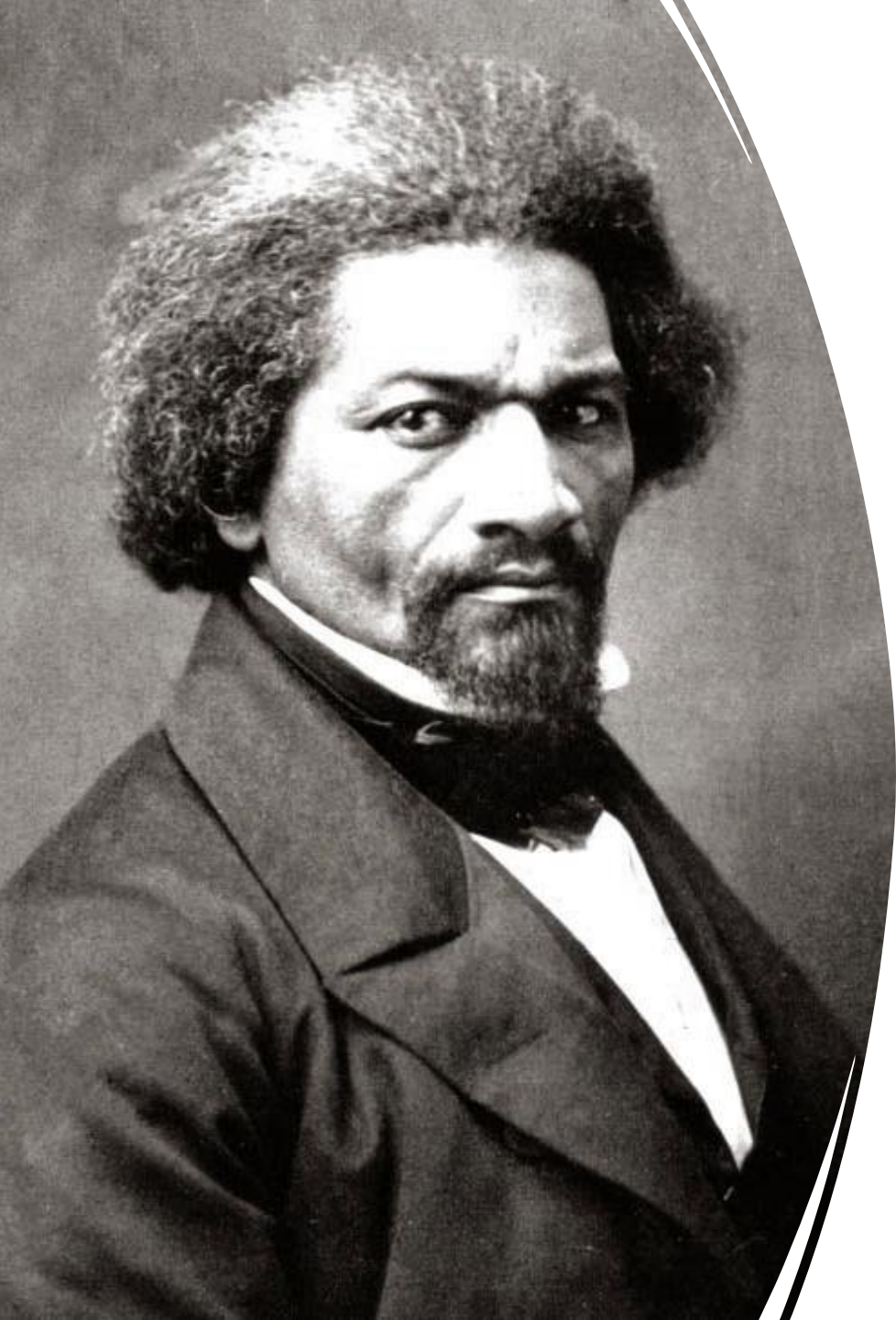


Resistance and Revolts

- Slaves in both regions resisted their enslavement through various means, including acts of sabotage, escape, and rebellion.
- Notable slave revolts occurred in both the continental United States (such as Nat Turner's rebellion in Virginia) and the Caribbean (such as the Haitian Revolution, which led to the establishment of Haiti as the first independent black republic in the Western Hemisphere).

Frederick Douglass





Who was Frederick Douglass?

- Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey born into slavery on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland.
- Born between Hillsboro and Cordova, likely in his grandmother's cabin near Tappers Corner and Tuckahoe Creek.
- Uncertain birth date; Douglass celebrated February 14 as his birthday.



Early Life

- Douglass's birth year estimated as 1817 or 1818 by different sources.
- Separation from his mother, Harriet Bailey, during infancy, common in that part of Maryland.
- Raised by maternal grandmother, Betsy Bailey, and grandfather, Isaac, while his mother remained on the plantation, visiting him a few times before her death when he was 7 years old.

Birth Family

- Douglass's mother was of African descent, and his father, possibly her master, was of European descent.
- Uncertainty about his father's identity; Douglass stated, "My father was a white man."
- Douglass's genetic heritage likely included Native American.
- Mother named him Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey; Douglass adopted the surname Douglass after escaping.
- Separation from mother during infancy; limited contact until her death when he was 7.



Anna Murray Douglass

Early Learning and Experience

- At 6, Douglass moved to the Wye House plantation (left), then to Thomas Auld's household in Baltimore after Auld's death.
- Sophia Auld, wife of Thomas Auld, taught Douglass the alphabet around age 12.
- Hugh Auld opposed literacy for slaves, believing it would encourage desires for freedom.



Douglass becomes self educated

- Sophia Auld's change of heart; she stopped teaching Douglass but he continued self-education.
- Douglass learned to read from white children, writings of men he worked with, and continued self-teaching.
- Acknowledged the role of literacy in his path to freedom: "knowledge is the pathway from slavery to freedom."



Discovering literature and newspapers

- The Auld family's influence on Douglass's early education.
- Douglass's exposure to books and newspapers fueled his questioning of slavery.
- The Columbian Orator, discovered at age 12, clarified his views on freedom and human rights.
- Acknowledgment of his literate mother's influence on his love for letters.
- Out of 3,428 slaves interviewed by the WPA only 179 stated that they had learnt to read as slaves.
- The WPA Slave Narratives are interviews with formerly enslaved people conducted from 1936 through 1938 by the Federal Writers' Project (FWP), a unit of the Works Progress Administration (WPA).



William Freeland and Edward Covey

- Hired out to William Freeland, Douglass organized a Sabbath literacy school for fellow slaves.
- In 1833, sent to work for Edward Covey, known as a "slave-breaker"; endured frequent whippings.
- Douglass rebelled at 16, engaging in a physical confrontation with Covey.
- Covey never tried to beat him again after Douglass's victory.
- Recounted the beatings at Covey's farm in "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass."



Escape from Slavery



First escape attempt from Freeland unsuccessful.



Met Anna Murray in 1837, a free black woman who supported his efforts to gain freedom.



Successfully escaped on September 3, 1838, boarding a northbound train in Baltimore.



Journey to freedom took less than 24 hours, reaching New York City.

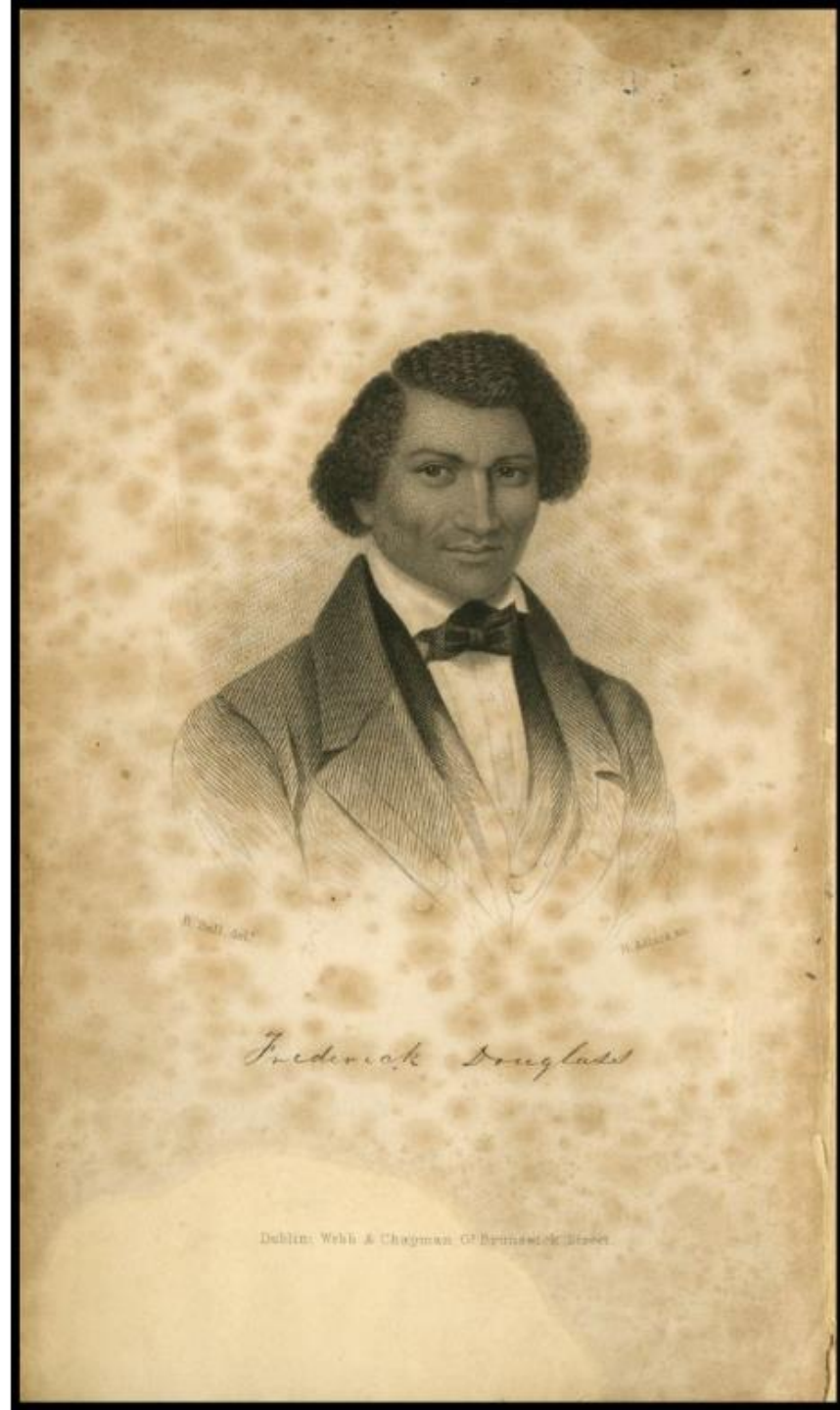


Douglass's feelings upon reaching free soil and the joyous excitement of liberation.



Religious Views

- Exposure to religious sermons as a child; conversion to Christianity during his youth.
- Douglass's spiritual mentor, Rev. Charles Lawson, and his early religious experiences.
- Distinction between the "Christianity of Christ" and the "Christianity of America."
- Douglass's criticism of religious hypocrisy, especially among slaveholders.
- Douglass's call for religious people to embrace abolitionism.

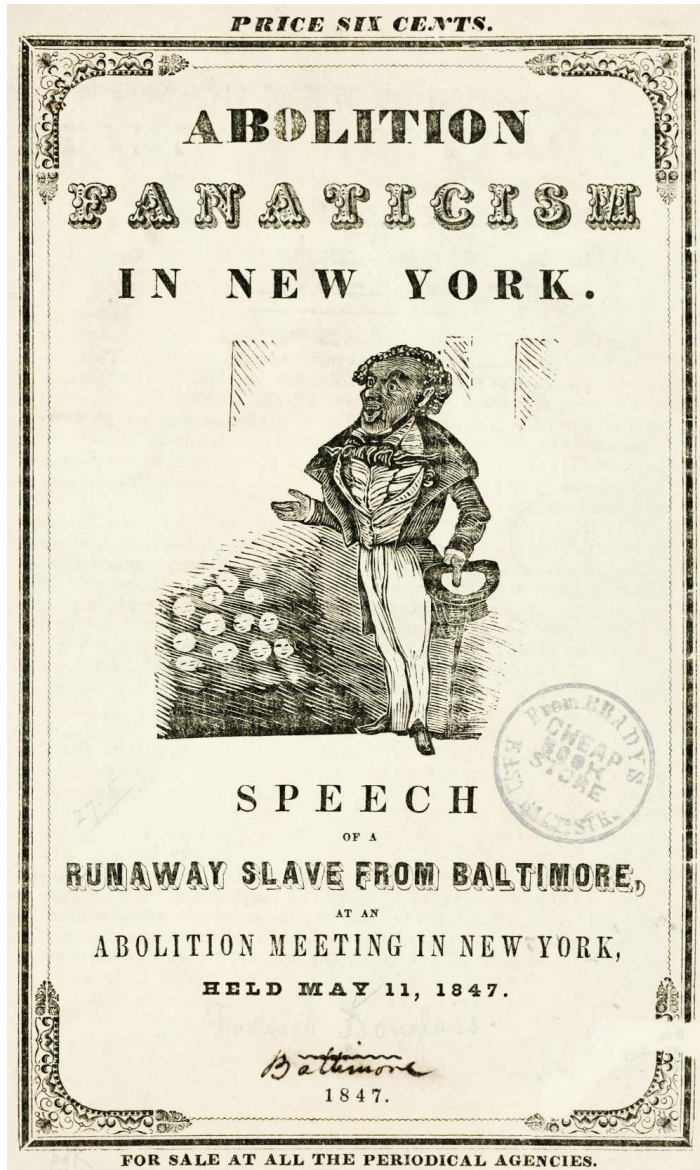


Family Life

- Douglass's first marriage to Anna Murray in 1838, who supported his public work.
- Anna and Douglass had five children: Rosetta, Lewis Henry, Frederick Jr., Charles Remond, and Annie.
- Douglass's second marriage to Helen Pitts in 1884, a white suffragist and abolitionist.
- Controversy surrounding the second marriage due to racial and age differences.
- Douglass's response to criticisms about his marriages based on the color of his parents.



Anna, his first wife.



Abolitionist and Preacher

- Settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1838, and later moved to Lynn in 1841.
- Adoption of the name "Douglass" suggested by Nathan Johnson for its distinctiveness.
- Joined African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; became a licensed preacher in 1839.
- Involvement in abolitionist activities, subscriptions to William Lloyd Garrison's newspaper, *The Liberator*.
- Early protest against segregated transportation; thrown off a train in 1841 for refusing to sit in the segregated coach.

Autobiography

- Douglass's best-known work, "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave," published in 1845.
- Skepticism about a black man producing such literature; positive reviews and immediate bestseller.
- Douglass published three autobiographies, each expanding on the previous one: 1845, 1855, and 1881.
- Impact of the 1845 Narrative on Douglass's legal freedom; reprinted nine times within three years.
- Translated into French and Dutch, published in Europe; Douglass's literary achievements.



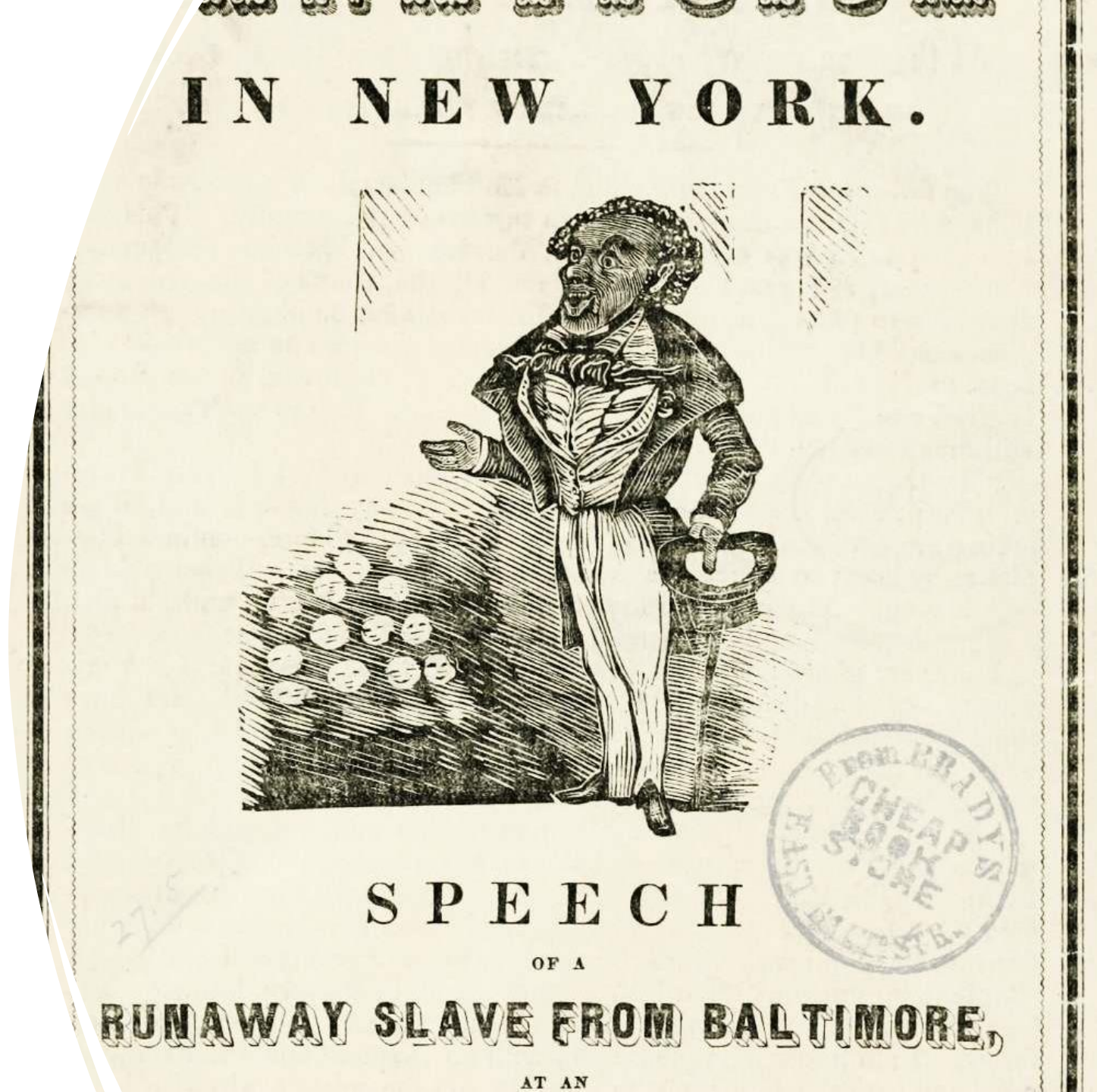
Return to the United States

- Douglass returned to the U.S. in 1847 with £500 (equivalent to \$48,612 in 2021) from English supporters.
- Started the *North Star*, an abolitionist newspaper, in Rochester, New York.
- Motto: "Right is of no Sex – Truth is of no Color – God is the Father of us all, and we are all brethren."



Abolitionist Activities

- Active in the abolitionist movement and Underground Railroad.
- The *North Star* opposed the American Colonization Society, promoting freedom for black people in the U.S.
- Douglass split with William Lloyd Garrison over differing views on the Constitution.
- Garrison believed the Constitution was pro-slavery, but Douglass changed his opinion around 1847.



Constitutional Views and Letter

- Douglass expressed his changed views on the Constitution in a speech in 1851.
- Initially, Douglass, like Garrison, viewed the Constitution as a pro-slavery document. He had changed his views and began advocating for using the Constitution as a tool against slavery. This shift suggests that Douglass came to see the Constitution as a potential weapon for abolition, arguing that it could be interpreted in a way that opposed slavery rather than supported it.
- In September 1848, Douglass published an open letter to his former owner, Thomas Auld.
- Described the grim horrors of slavery and passionately criticized the slave system.



Frederick Douglass photo 1880

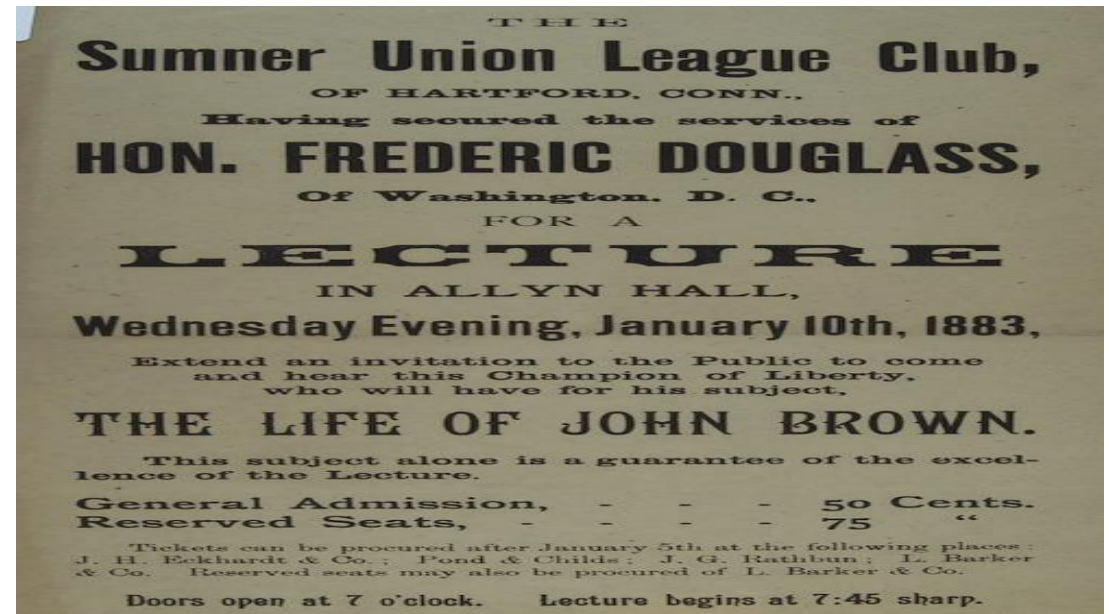
Activities Before and During the Civil War

- Douglass believed in the power of photography to combat racism. Most photographed American of the 19th Century
- Opposed John Brown's Harper's Ferry Raid on 1859
- Supported the recruitment of black soldiers during the Civil War.



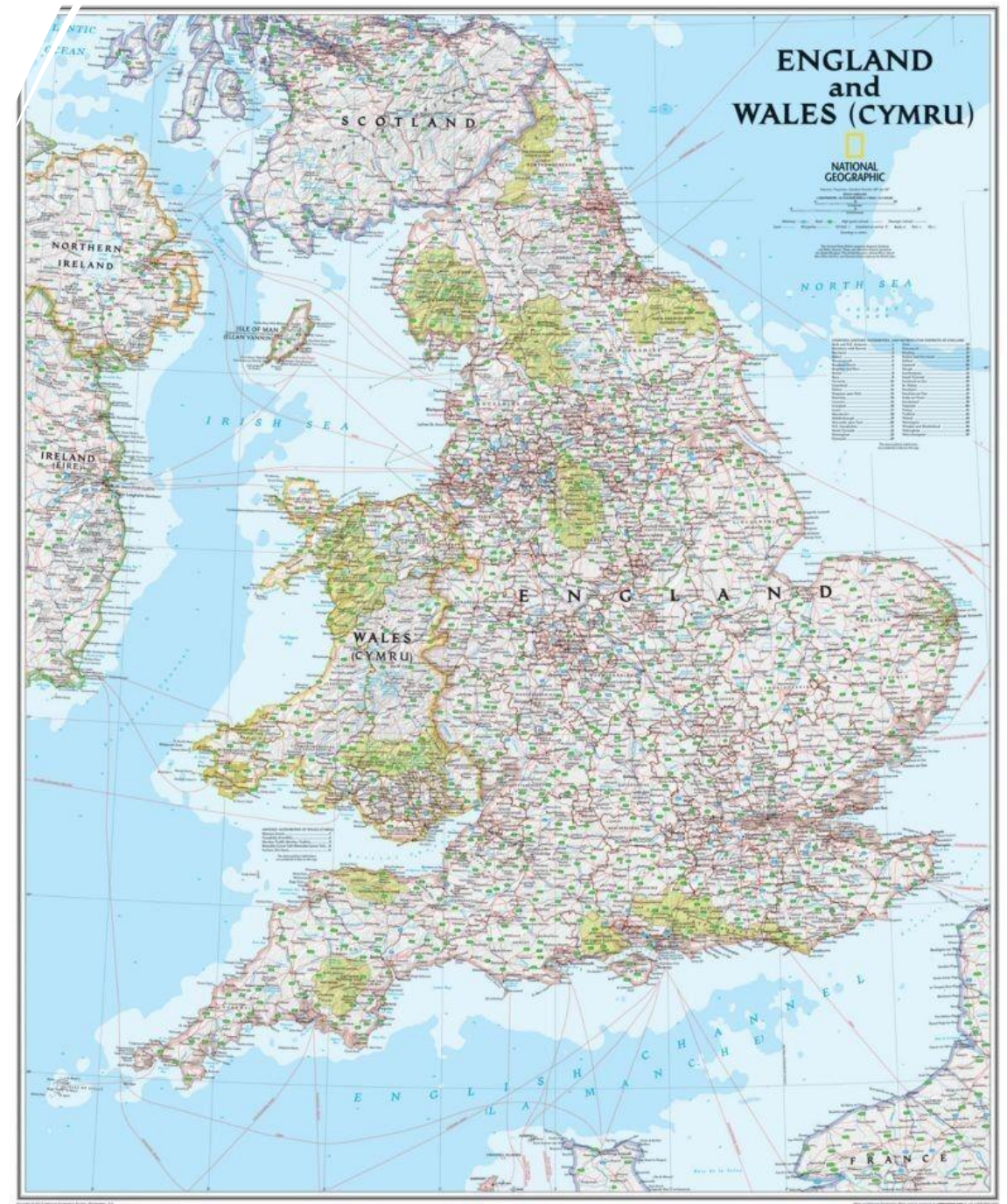
Post US Civil War

- Advocated for African American rights during Reconstruction.
- Political appointments and efforts for equality in post-war America.
- Delivered a keynote speech at the unveiling of the Emancipation Memorial in 1876.
- Criticized Lincoln's delayed embrace of emancipation but acknowledged its significance.
- Supported President Grant's efforts against the Ku Klux Klan.
- Continued activism, emphasizing work, voting rights, and suffrage.
- Nominated for Vice President in 1872 but did not campaign.



Frederick Douglass and Helen Pitts, Dublin, 1886

Douglass' tour of Britain and Ireland



What is Douglass doing in Britain and Ireland?

- Douglass's friends feared that the publicity would draw the attention of his ex-owner, Hugh Auld, who might try to get his "property" back.
- In 1843, Douglass had joined other speakers in the American Anti-Slavery Society's "Hundred Conventions" project, a six-month tour at meeting halls throughout the eastern and midwestern United States.
- Britain was the global imperial, military and industrial power of the world.
- The home of significant abolitionist support for destroying slavery in the USA
- Douglass set sail on the Cambria for Liverpool, England, on August 16, 1845.



Talking across the British Isles

- During his time in Ireland Douglass gave almost 50 lectures
- He visited Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Wexford, Waterford, Celbridge, Belfast, Lisburn, Hollywood and Bangor (County Down).
- He met Daniel O'Connell whose speeches had inspired him.



Douglass' first visit to Belfast, 1845-46



He found an amazing difference...

Eleven days and a half gone, and I have crossed three thousand miles of the perilous deep. Instead of a democratic government, I am under a monarchical government. Instead of the bright, blue sky of America, I am covered with the grey fog of the Emerald Isle [Ireland]. I breathe, and lo! the chattel [slave] becomes a man. I gaze around in vain for who will question my equal humanity, claim me as his slave, or offer me an insult. I employ a cab—I am seated beside white people—I reach the hotel—I enter the same door—I am shown into the same parlor—I dine at the same table and no one is offended.... I find myself regarded and treated at every turn with the kindness and deference paid to white people. When I go to church, I am met by no upturned nose and scornful lip to tell me, 'We don't allow niggers in here!'



MR FREDERICK DOUGLASS,

A Gentleman of Colour,

**FORMERLY A SLAVE IN THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA,**

IS expected, next week, in Belfast; having lectured on American Slavery for several nights in Dublin, Waterford, Cork, and Limerick, to large assemblies, who were delighted with the powerful eloquence displayed by the talented Lecturer.

In a future Advertisement, the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society will announce the night of Mr. Douglass's *First* Lecture, the Hour, and Place of Meeting.

Belfast, 28th November, 1845.

5 December 1845. Independent Meeting House, 77 Donegall Street

His first meeting. It was reported that:

“Mr. Douglass then came forward and was received with loud applause. He said he felt great pleasure in seeing so many kind and respectable people there assembled, in order to hear an account of the system of slavery from one who had experienced what it was to be a slave. He felt a considerable embarrassment in thus standing before intelligent people, for the purpose of instructing them. Slavery was a poor school for acquiring moral, religious, or intellectual improvement.”

MEMBERS are received by the Rev. R. J. BRYCE,
Principal of the Academy.
st Academy, Nov. 14. 1845. (153)

IMPORTANT MEETING.

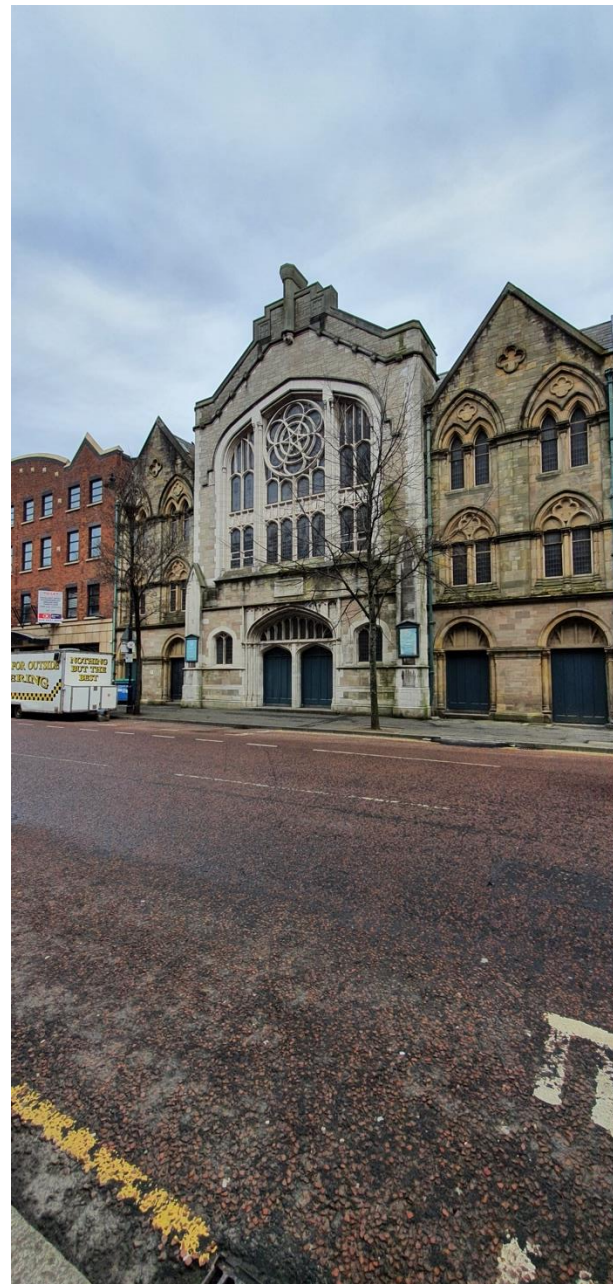
THE MEMBERS and FRIENDS of the BELFAST
ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY will hold a PUBLIC
MEETING, THIS EVENING, in the INDEPENDENT
CHURCH, DONEGALL-STREET, at which the Mayor
ANDREW MULHOLLAND, Esq., will preside. Mr. FREDERICK
DOUGLAS, a Gentleman of Color, formerly a Slave
in America, will address the Assembly, and depict the
horrors of that iniquitous system, under which he suffered
long.

Chair to be taken at half-past Seven o'clock.

Belfast, Friday Morning,

5th December, 1845. (152)

NEW
GENCIA AND MALAGA RAISINS
&c. &c.



Who was there?

- Andrew Mulholland, Mayor of Belfast
- Rev. Thomas Drew
- Mr Standfield, chair of BASS

wiped off from them the foul stain, he concluded by inviting Mr. Douglass to the meeting, who, on rising, was received with a most cordial reception. As the lecture occupied more than an hour and half in delivery, we cannot give more than an outline of it considering the late hour at which it terminated. He commenced by making an apology to the meeting for not being able to address them as he could wish, and said, when it was taken into account that he was for 20 years of his life a slave, and had never been one day at school, he was satisfied that every allowance would be made for him. This apology and confession might, however, have been dispensed with, for he very soon shewed himself to be possessed of talents of a very high order, and a well cultivated mind. After stating that he had escaped from slavery seven years ago, and that for the last four years he had been advocating the cause of his fellow-countrymen who were in bondage, through the whole of the free States, he gave an account of his reasons for coming to this country, and then proceeded to depict slavery as it existed in America, and to point out the evils of it in a manner which could not fail, while it excited the disgust of the audience, to create a lively sympathy for the oppressed slave. He gave a most amusing history of the manner in which he learned to read and write, as he had both, in opposition to the laws of the country, which do not permit a slave being taught even the alphabet.

At the close of the lecture, Mr. Standfield said he was

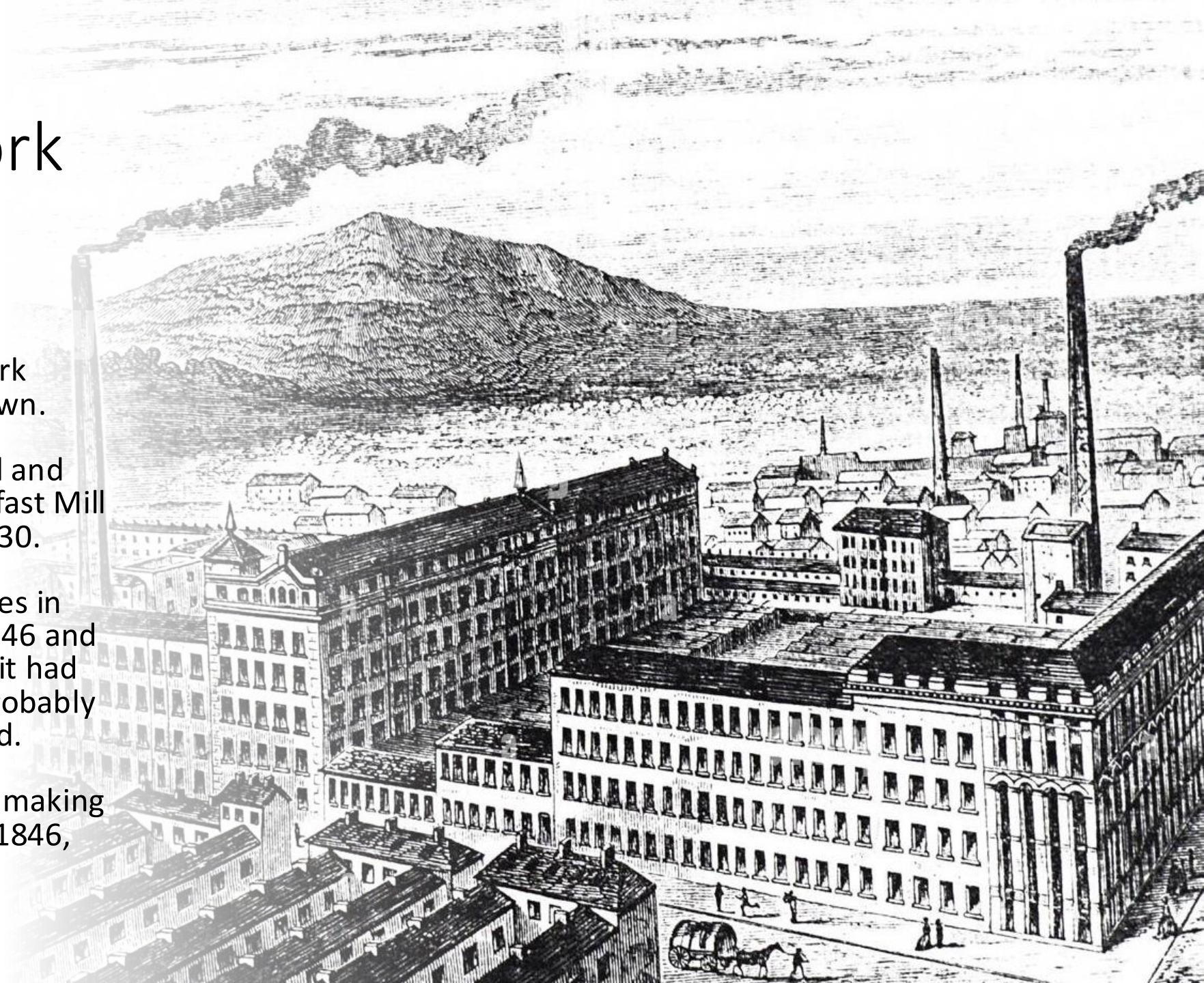
Andrew Mulholland chaired the meeting

- He was born in Belfast in 1791, the son of Thomas Mulholland, a cotton manufacturer who founded the company of Messrs. Thomas Mulholland & Co. of Union Street
- Andrew joined his father's company, renaming the company Messrs. T. & A. Mulholland.
- Mayor in 1845
- He died at Springvale on 24 August 1866, aged 73.



Mulholland York Street

- In 1828, the Mulholland York Street cotton mill burnt down.
- It was rebuilt as a linen mill and the first linen spun in a Belfast Mill by mechanical power in 1830.
- It started with 1,000 spindles in 1830 and had 17,000 by 1846 and 1,000 employees. In 1856, it had 25,000 spindles and was probably the biggest mill in the world.
- In 1830, there were 2 mills making power spun linen yarn, by 1846, there were 24.



Mr Standfield then introduced the meeting...

‘Mr Douglas would enter into a detail of the system, and he (Mr Standfield) trusted that the people here, of every religious demonisation, would avail themselves of the opportunity offered to them’.



Mr Frederick Douglass...addressed the meeting...

- 'He said, that he felt great pleasure in seeing so many of the kind and intelligent people of Belfast before him, for the purpose of hearing the wrongs of his enslaved fellow-countrymen...'
- Slavery was a poor school for morals, or religion, or intellectual improvement...
- 6,000 copies of his book were sold in three months...



Friday, 12 December 1845, Rosemary Street Church

1. "That Christians of every denomination are in duty bound solemnly to protest against the existence of slavery, as repugnant to the Word of God, contained in the Old and New Testaments."

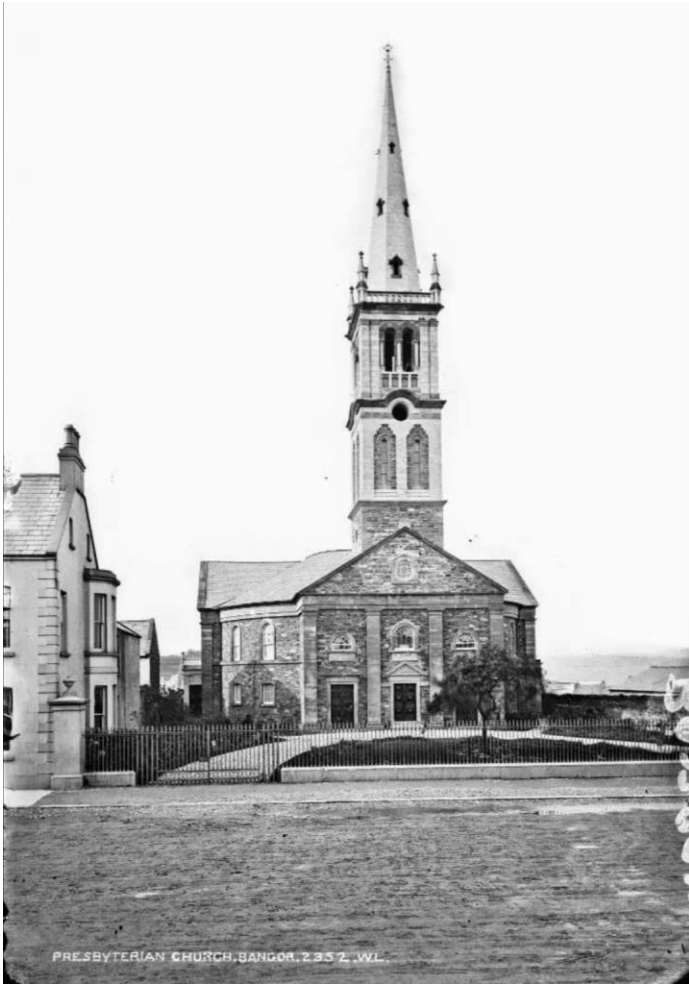
2. "That we trust the various Churches of Great Britain and Ireland will inform those of their own persuasion, in the United States of America, who retain slaveholders in their communion, that, if they continue to tolerate such iniquity, they are unworthy of being enrolled among the followers of Christ, as they act so contrary to the spirit of His Gospel."

3. "That the following gentlemen (with power to add to their number)—F. A. Calder, James B. Ferguson, Robert J. Bell, John Arnold, Samuel Edgar, Edwin Blow, Maxwell Sanders, John Boyd, and James Standfield, Esqrs.—form a deputation, to wait on the several Ministers in Belfast to obtain their assent, by signature, to the Resolutions passed at this Meeting; and report the result of their application to a Meeting to be held on the return of Mr. Frederick Douglass from Birmingham."



Third Presbyterian Church, 1941

Douglass also spoke at...



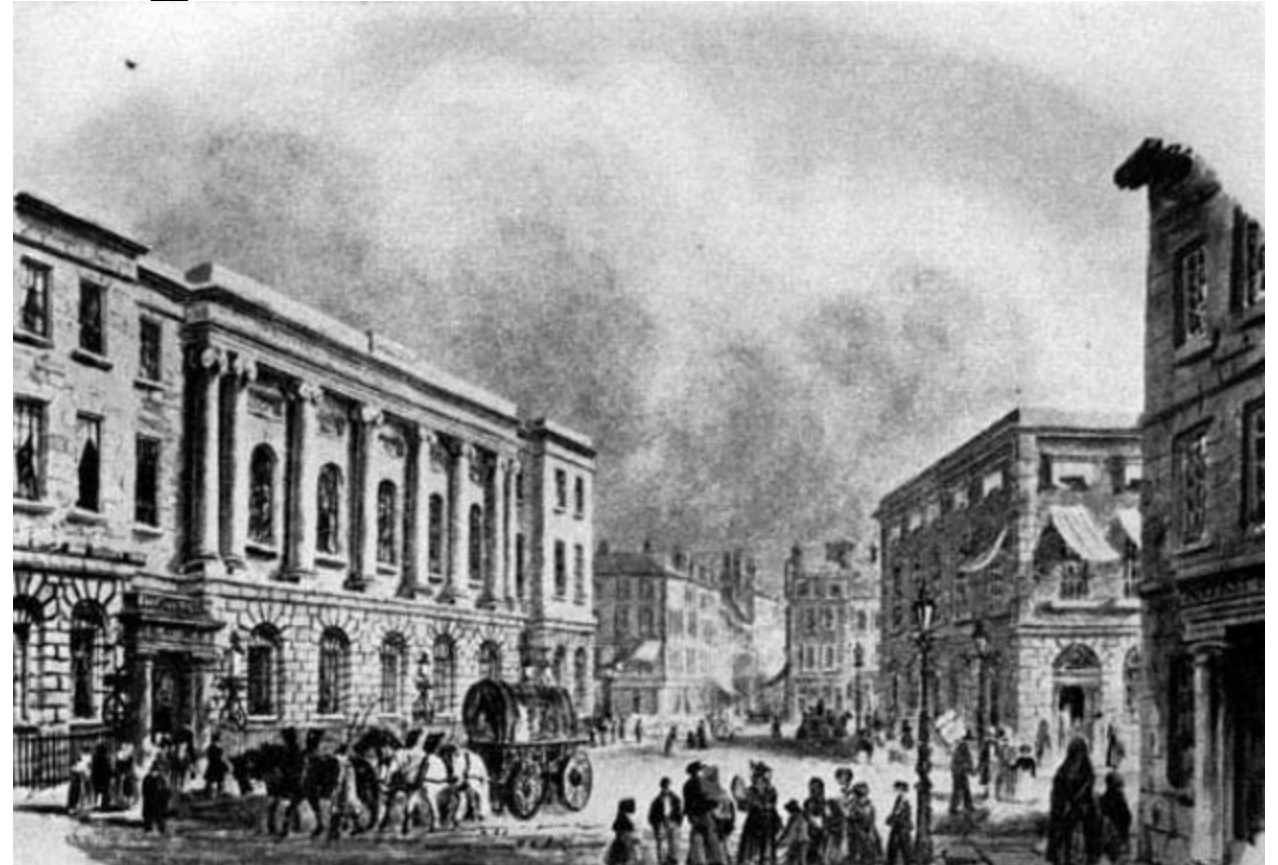
Bangor Presbyterian Church



Donegall Street Presbyterian Church

6 January 1846, Commercial Buildings and Assembly Room, 1 Waring Street

- Breakfast meeting at the Commercial rooms to bid farewell to Douglass
- ‘a little inconvenience arose from more being present than was expected’
- William Crawford MP and Rev. Isaac Nelson were present



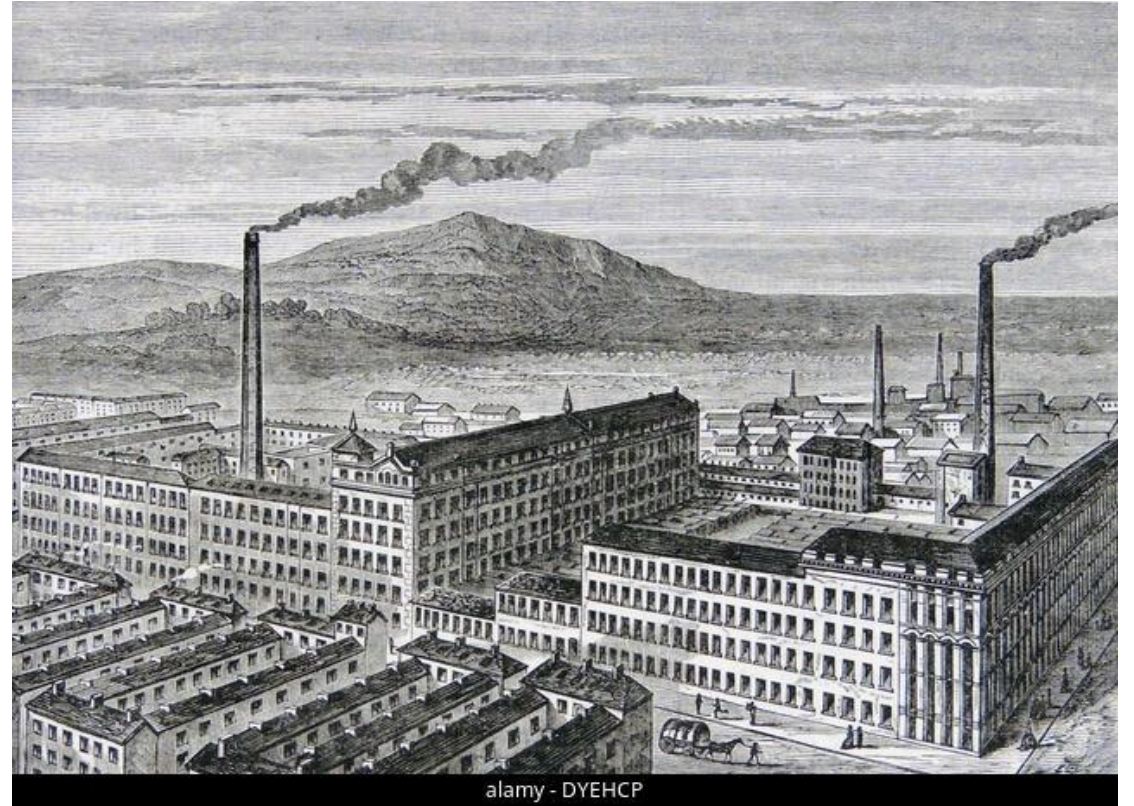


William Sharman Crawford (1780–1861)

- Irish landowner and Radical Member of Parliament.
- Championed democratic franchise, devolved legislature for Ireland, and Irish tenant farmer rights.
- Early life: Born in 1780, sold family estates in 1819, became a patron of the Royal Dublin Society.

Political causes

- Radical MP: Represented Dundalk (1835-1837) and Rochdale (1841–1852)
- Advocated for Catholic relief, parliamentary reform, and devolved self-government for Ireland



alamy - DYEHCPC

Tenant Rights' Activist

- Agrarian reformer:
Recognized and supported
Ulster "tenant right" in
Ireland
- Founded Ulster Tenant's
Right Association in 1848
- Spokesman for the all-
Ireland Tenant Right League,
advocated fair rent and free
sale for tenant farmers





Mr Crawford MP elected to the chair.

- He gave a speech. The meeting had two objects – honour Douglas,
- ‘It was one of the most glorious features of the British Constitution that every man who touched its soil, no matter what was his clime or colour, was a free man...the laws of Britain made the slave free, and secured him his liberty...’

Second part of the meeting...

Second part was to denounce American slavery... Mr Crawford read part of the American Constitution that 'liberty was the inherent right of all men'. Efforts to abo the slave trade would never be successful as long as American slavery existed. 'It was the duty of Christian men, by the reprobation of slavery, to do all in their power to cause those who made a profession of Christianity to abandon it...'



Isaac Nelson concluded the meeting



- He said: 'The burning words of Frederick Douglass had produced their effect, he had made those who had the privilege of hearing him feel for the wrongs of his race...'
- Committee of BASS then presented Douglass with a pocket bible and watch.
- Announcement of the formation of the Belfast Ladies Anti Slavery Society (more later).

Support from the press

During the 1840s the town's press regularly covered the BLASA's agitation, adding its support for the women's actions. :

“Altogether the [anti-slavery] exhibition was most creditable to the fair friends of freedom with whom it originated, and whose hands furnished such a splendid practical proof of their sincerity.”

(see Northern Whig, 29 October 1846; 27 October 1846; Banner of Ulster, 2 April 1847)



Douglass' reply

- FD then replied to the addresses.
- He thanked the audience. Spoke of how his mistress had read the chapter on Job. Then his mistress started to teach him to read but stopped because of the opposition of her husband. He learnt to read. He wrote his history, put himself in danger and left to come to Britain.
- He recalled how 'the chattel becomes a man' (applause).
- He concluded, 'I remember that I have a home in Belfast'.



Letter from Douglass to Garrison, Victoria Hotel, Belfast, 1 January 1846

My Dear Friend Garrison: I am now about to take leave of the Emerald Isle, for Glasgow, Scotland, I have been here a little more than four months ...

I can truly say, I have spent some of the happiest moments of my life since landing in this country. I seem to have undergone a transformation. I live a new life. The warm and generous co-operation extended to me by the friends of my despised race—the prompt and liberal manner with which the press has rendered me its aid—the glorious enthusiasm with which thousands have flocked to hear the cruel wrongs of my down-trodden and long-enslaved fellow-countrymen portrayed—the deep sympathy for the slave, and the strong abhorrence of the slaveholder, everywhere evinced—the cordiality with which members and ministers of various religious bodies, and of various shades of religious opinion, have embraced me, and lent me their aid—the kind hospitality constantly proffered to me by persons of the highest rank in society—the spirit of freedom that seems to animate all with whom I come in contact—and the entire absence of everything that looked like prejudice against me, on account of the color of my skin—contrasted so strongly with my long and bitter experience in the United States, that I look with wonder and amazement on the transition.



ADDRESS

FROM THE

Committee of the Belfast Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association to the Ladies of Ulster.

LADIES.—The late visit to this town of Frederick Douglass, the self-managed American slave, and his fearful revelations of the house of bondage, induced several ladies in Belfast, who felt deeply on the subject, to form an Anti-Slavery Association, last Winter, for the especial object of aiding and sympathising with the abolitionists of North America.

In now coming forward, as the representatives of that Association, we hope, with the Divine blessing, to render the situation of the slave more generally understood, and by this means, to kindle a spirit of greater energy and determination, even among those who have already taken an interest in this matter.

We would beg to remind you, that it is chiefly by a retrospect of the philanthropic labours, which led to the final extinction of Negro slavery throughout the British dominions, that the abolitionists in America are now best to be observed, and laboriously toiling to effect similar freedom for nearly three millions of Americans. We should, besides, never forget, that many of those for whom they plead are the descendants of Africans, who, in days gone by, were dragged, by British soldiers, under the sanction of British law, from their homes in Africa, and consigned to bondage, and that hence they have an especial claim on our sympathy. Christian benevolence is being linked in its aspirations by geographical boundaries, the philanthropists of Great Britain and Ireland have believed it to be their duty to continue their exertions, and sustain the American abolitionists, till they can announce the final overthrow of this scourge of the human race. In their efforts we would earnestly invite you to assist.

Can the pious women of Ulster, who delight in promoting missions, remain inactive, whilst the adopted home of so many of their countrymen presents such a revolting anomaly as slavery, in a country calling itself Christian? Within the circumference of the great American Republic, hundreds of thousands of individuals, speaking our own language, are, by their sad position, and the inexorable laws of their masters, as effectually debarred from an acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, as are the savage inhabitants of countries where the sound of the Gospel was never heard. In confirmation of this awful fact, we refer specifically to those laws themselves:—

"In Georgia, if a free coloured man or Negro should attempt to preach, the law declares, that he may be seized, without warrant, and flogged to the extent of thirty-nine lashes, and the same number of lashes may be applied to each of his hearers. The law of Georgia also enacts, that if a white man teach either a free coloured person or a slave to read or write, he is liable to be fined in one hundred dollars, and imprisoned at the discretion of the Court. If a free coloured man teach, he is liable to be fined or whipped.

"In North Carolina, it is unlawful to teach a slave to read or write, or to sell or give him any book or pamphlet, even the Bible.

"In Louisiana, the penalty for instructing a free coloured person, in a Sabbath-school, is, for the first offence, five hundred dollars; for the second offence, death."

Thus, we see, that the Gospel of Christ is not only outraged, in its various features, by the system of American slavery, but even the knowledge of its glorious principles and promises, as far as human agency can affect it, is utterly shut out from the heathen bondsmen of the United States. Further, let it not be forgotten, that the cause of the slave is also the cause of the colourer. Whatever evil wrongs slavery promotes the real interest of the whole race, as well as that of the black. The ungenerous passions, which are nurtured by the exercise of arbitrary power, and the vice consequent on the relation of master and slave, have exercised a direful influence on the morals of society.*

* We beg to draw attention to the deep sense of authentic information embodied in the work entitled "American Slavery as it is," published in 1850, by Thomas Weston, a free man of colour, chiefly from individuals who had formed an integral part of society in the Slave States, by Theodore West, an American abolitionist. The Committee have in their library with several valuable anti-slavery works, a number of which they would like to loan, especially in direct relation to "The American Character, the hallmark of American Slavery," by James G. Birney.

We have been invited to aid in preparing articles for the anti-slavery bazaars to be held, at the close of the year, in Boston and Philadelphia; and we now ask the ladies of Ulster to co-operate with us in this undertaking. Many beautiful specimens of work have already been received by the Secretaries, and these it is proposed to send out by the first of November. The funds, realized by the bazaars, are applied to promote that great enterprise, which seeks the establishment of the civil and social rights of the coloured inhabitants of the Union.

As the abolitionists of the States are divided into two sections, which prosecute the same objects by means in some respects different, the Committee wish to have it understood, that they are prepared to forward articles to both divisions, according to the wishes of contributors.

The Boston bazaar is conducted by the Garrison party; the proceeds of that held in Philadelphia are applied to the support of what is called the Liberty party.

The Belfast Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association have come to the decision to contribute to both, from the conviction, that each of these anti-slavery sections, in its sphere of action, is helping forward the great cause of emancipation.—The Committee, being aware that, in the present crisis, some of their friends who have heard floating comments about these two parties, are anxious to have more definite ideas respecting them, present what they conceive to be the views and principles of each section.

The American Anti-Slavery Society, or old organization party, appeals solely to moral suasion; and, by heartily endeavouring to unshack the slave spirit in Church, in State, and in the social circle, hopes to render it so odious in public estimation, that it must soon cease to be tolerated. Among the foremost leaders of this section are William Lloyd Garrison, Henry C. Wright, and Maria Weston Chapman. It stands aloof from politics; and its members decline voting at Government elections, under the conviction, that the Legislature of the United States is so deeply pledged to the maintenance of slavery, as to render it a compromise of anti-slavery principles to participate in, or to support such a Legislature, in any degree. The funds of this party are applied to the advocacy of the rights of the coloured man, by the maintenance of anti-slavery lecturers, and the dissemination of information through their organs, *The Anti-Slavery Standard*. Besides this, there are three other anti-slavery newspapers published in the States, which support this section or sympathize with its views. To its patronage the friends of freedom are indebted, for having drawn Frederick Douglass from obscurity, and placed him in a position to advocate the rights of his race. The efforts of the Garrison party are intense and indefatigable; and they have their reward, in the gradualness of the slave, and the bitter exertion of the slaveholder.

The American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, or Liberty party, regard the use of political influence as a part of their duty in seeking the rights of the coloured man; and hence, to the means used by the other abolitionists, they add the strenuous exercise of their votes, as citizens of the Republic. Their organization involves the putting forward of anti-slavery candidates for all the great offices of State; thus, not only exhibiting to the nation the gathering strength of anti-slavery sentiment, but maintaining the principle of aiding at the purification of the political fountain where the laws emanate.

Eleven anti-slavery newspapers, advocating the views of this section, are supported throughout the Union. Its funds are also applied to the assistance and instruction of those fugitives from democratic bondage, who, to the number of twelve or fourteen thousand, have found a peaceful refuge in Canada, beneath the protection of British law.

In the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, or Liberty party, Arthur and Lewis Tappan, James G. Birney, and John G. Whittier, act a distinguished part. The late Reverend and deeply lamented Charles T. Torrey, the anti-slavery martyr, belonged to this section.

It may be asked, why bring forward the subject of American slavery just now, when the claims of a famishing peasantry are so pressing? We reply,—The immediate object of our Association is not so much to obtain pecuniary aid, as to excite an intelligent acquaintance with the position of the coloured inhabitants of America, and, also, to induce kind-hearted ladies, by a little exercise of industry and industry to send to America a collection of needle-work, and other fancy articles, in aid of the devoted and self-sacrificing abolitionists. These gifts, produced by their own labour, will possess high value, as a testimony of awakened sympathy, and will increase the funds of the bazars, greatly beyond the expense of conveyance. Sketches of Irish scenery, fancy work in Berlin wool, and in gold, silver, or steel beads, articles in paper, cards, and dresses for children, (especially if made of free-green produce), autographs of distinguished persons, or drawings of their residences have been mentioned among the most desirable contributions.

Much may also be done by strong remonstrances, sent through Abolition Associations, or even individual correspondence addressed to those, who are still in the pro-slavery party. Many of our own sex are laboring for Missions Society, yet holding their fellow-creatures as slaves. Strong statements, pointing out the incongruity of such conduct, and showing the light in which distant countries begin to view these inconsistencies, might reach the consciences of those, who, cradled in the possessions of the system, are blind to the revolting nature of their own position.

Humble means having been, already, so much blessed, in the cause of the slave, may we not venture to hope for some success, by carrying this subject into our families, and interesting the child from infancy, in the wrongs of the Negro? We feel especially anxious, that emigrants to America should be prepared, by a thorough acquaintance with the true nature of this question, to withstand the corrupting exhortations from the Slave States that have filled even the Northern with prejudices against the Negro and his abolition friends. Let us, if possible, unite in this righteous cause the sympathies of childhood as well as age, of the poor as well as the rich, and not relax our efforts,

UNTIL AMERICAN SLAVE,
UNSHACKLED, WITH ARMED,
AND CHAINS NO LONGER BIND
THE SMOKE OF OUR GOD!
UNTIL HIS CAPTIVE ONE
BROODERS ON LAND OR SEA;
AND IN HIS CHAINS, THE MAN
LOOKS DOWN UPON NO SLAVE!—FUGITIVE.

Contributions for the bazars may be sent to any of the office-bearers of the Association, or members of Committee. These, for the present year, are as follow:—

- SECRETARIES:
MRS. WAKFIELD, BELFAST CASTLE.
MRS. WARD, BELFAST CASTLE.
VICE-PRESIDENTS:
THE MASSES CRAWFORD, CRAWFORDSTOWN.
MRS. WAKFIELD.
MRS. THOMPSON TENNENT.
CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES:
MRS. WEBB, CANNING, BELFAST.
SECRETARIES:
MRS. B. A. T. E. S.
MRS. HINGES AND MISS VICTOR.
COMMITTEE:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| MRS. G. FINE. | MISS CURRYDIGHAM. |
| MRS. DR. THOMPSON. | MISS NIXON. |
| MRS. HOLYBERRY. | MISS KERRITT. |
| MRS. HUNTER. | MISS YOUNG. |
| MRS. ROBERT HENDERSON. | MISS REDFERN. |
| MRS. A. WOODMAN. | MISS WELSH. |
| MRS. LINDSAY. | MISS IRELAND. |
| MRS. HENDERSON. | MISS SARAH IRELAND. |
| MRS. McCracken. | MISS TENNENT. |
| MRS. McFETTER. | MISS SCOTT. |
- September 23, 1846.

Formation of the Belfast Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society



-1-

ADDRESS

FROM THE

Committee of the Belfast Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association to the Ladies

LADIES.—The late visit to this town of Frederick Douglass, the self-emancipated American slave, and his fearful revelations of the house of bondage, induced several ladies, in Belfast, who felt deeply on the subject, to form an Anti-Slavery Association, last Winter, for the especial object of aiding and sympathizing with the abolitionists of North America.

In now coming forward, as the representatives of that Association, we hope, with the Divine blessing, to render the situation of the slave more generally understood, and by this means, to kindle a spirit of greater energy and determination, even among those who have already taken an interest in this matter.

We would beg to remind you, that it is chiefly by a retrospect of the philanthropic labours, which led to the final extinction of Negro slavery throughout the British dominions, that the abolitionists in America are now hopefully cheered, whilst laboriously toiling to effect similar freedom for nearly three millions of Americans.

We should, besides, never forget, that many of those for whom they plead are the descendants of Africans, who, in days gone by, were dragged, by British subjects, under the sanction of British law, from their homes in Africa, and consigned to bondage, and that hence they have an especial claim on our sympathy. Christian benevolence not being limited in its aspirations by geographical boundaries, the philanthropists of Great Britain and Ireland have believed it to be their duty to continue their exertions, and sustain the American abolitionists, till they can announce the final overthrow of this scourge of the human race. In their efforts we would earnestly invite you to assist.

Can the pious women of Ulster, who delight in promoting missions, remain inactive, whilst the adopted home of so many of their countrymen presents such a revolting anomaly as slavery, in a country calling itself Christian?—Within the circumference of the great American Republic, hundreds of thousands of individuals, speaking our own language, are, by their sad position, and the inexorable laws of their masters, as effectually debarred from an acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, as are the savage inhabitants of countries where the sound of the Gospel was never heard. In confirmation of this awful fact, we refer specifically to those who have themselves:—

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* We beg to draw attention to the deep mine of authentic information embodied in the work, entitled "American Slavery as it is—Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses." The facts and narratives exhibited in this book were collected, a few years ago, chiefly from individuals who had formed an integral part of society in the Slave States, by Theodore Weld, an American Barrister. The Committee have it in their library, with several valuable anti-slavery works, to another of which they would take leave, especially, to direct attention.—"The American Churches, the bulwark of American Slavery," by James G. Birney.

We have been invited to aid in preparing articles for the anti-slavery bazaars to be held, at the close of the year, in Boston and Philadelphia; and we now ask the ladies of Ulster to co-operate with us in this undertaking. Many beautiful specimens of work have been already received by the Secretaries, and these it is proposed to send out by the first of November. The funds, realized by the bazaars, are applied to promote that great enterprise, which seeks the establishment of the civil and social rights of the coloured inhabitants of the Union.

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It may be asked, why bring up the subject of the anti-slavery just now, when the country is so busy with the preparations for the coming year? We reply, that the cause of our Association is not so much as to excite an intelligent acquaintance with the coloured inhabitants of America, but to kindle the kind-hearted ladies, by a little exertion, to send to America a collection of fancy articles, in aid of the struggling abolitionists. These gifts, professedly for the purpose of raising money, will possess high value, as a testimony of sympathy, and will increase the funds of the cause beyond the expense of outlay. Sketches, fancy work in Berlin wool, and in gold beads, articles in *papier maché*, and dresses (especially if made of free-grown produce of distinguished persons, or drawings of their own), have been mentioned among the most desirable contributions.

Much may also be done by strong remonstrances through Abolition Associations, or even in correspondence addressed to those, who are still in slavery party. Many of our own sex are laudably connected with Missionary Societies, yet holding their fellow-slaves in bondage. Strong statements, pointing out the inconsistency of such conduct, and shewing the light in which distant nations begin to view these inconsistencies, might reach the ears of those, who, cradled in the prepossessions of those, are blind to the revolting nature of their position.

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UNTIL REMOVAL HIND,
Unshackled, walks abroad,
And chains no longer bind
The image of our God!
Until no captive ones
Murmurs on land or wave;
And in his course, the sun
Looks down upon no SLAVE.—Whittier.

Contributions for the bazaars may be sent to the office-bearers of the Association, or members of the Committee. These, for the present year, are as follows:

President:
MISS WARD, BANGOR CASTLE.

Vice-Presidents:
THE MISSES CRAWFORD, CRAWFORDS;
MRS. WAKEFIELD.

MRS. THOMPSON TENNENT.

Corresponding Secretary:
MRS. WEBB, CASSINO, BELFAST.

Treasurer:
MRS. BATES.

Secretaries:
MISS HINCKS AND MISS VINTAGE.

Committee:

MRS. G. FIM.	MISS CUNNINGHAM
MRS. DR. THOMPSON.	MISS NEILL
MRS. MOLYNEUX.	MISS BURNETT
MRS. HUNTER.	MISS DUFFY
MRS. ROBERT HENDERSON.	MISS HAY
MRS. R. WORKMAN.	MISS FRY
MISS LEMON.	MISS BIRNEY
MISS HENDERSON.	MISS BIRNEY
MISS McCRACKEN.	MISS BIRNEY
MISS MURPHY.	MISS BIRNEY
MISS McINTYRE.	MISS BIRNEY

Announcement of launch of the Belfast Ladies Anti-Slavery Society

- Formed by Middle class ladies in Belfast and Northern Ireland
- Formed as women could not join BASS as it was an auxiliary of BFASS, which did not offer membership to women.
- Set out their plan to abolish slavery

Why form BLASA?

The late visit to this town of Frederick Douglass, the self-emancipated American slave, and his fearful revelations of the house of bondage, induced several ladies, in Belfast, who felt deeply on the subject, to form an Anti-Slavery Association, last Winter, for the especial object of aiding and sympathizing with the abolitionists of North America...

Can the pious women of Ulster, who delight in promoting missions, remain inactive, whilst the adopted home of so many of their countrymen presents such a revolting anomaly as slavery, in a country calling itself Christian ?

ADDRESS FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE BELFAST LADIES' ANTI-SLAVERY ASSOCIATION TO THE LADIES OF ULSTER.

LADIES,—The late visit to this town of Frederick Douglass, the self-emancipated American slave, and his fearful revelations of the house of bondage, induced several ladies, in Belfast, who felt deeply on the subject, to form an Anti-Slavery Association, last winter, for the especial object of aiding and sympathizing with the abolitionists of North America.

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What would it do?

The immediate object of our Association is not so much to obtain pecuniary aid, as to excite an intelligent acquaintance with the position of the coloured inhabitants of America, and, also, to induce kind-hearted ladies, by a little exercise of industry and ingenuity, to send to America a collection of needle-work, and other fancy articles, in aid of the devoted and self-sacrificing abolitionists. These gifts, produced by their own labour, will possess high value, as a testimony of awakened sympathy, and will increase the funds of the bazaars, greatly beyond the expense of outlay. Sketches of Irish scenery, fancy work in Berlin wool, and in gold, silver, or steel beads, articles in papier mache, and dresses for children, (especially if made of free-grown produce), autographs of distinguished persons, or drawings of their residences have been mentioned among the most desirable contributions.

Who was involved?

- Ward family of Bangor, decedents of Viscount Bangor
- Crawford family, landowners around north Down.
- Mary Ann McCracken
- Large number of single ladies.

President:
MISS WARD, BANGOR CASTLE.

Vice-Presidents:
THE MISSES CRAWFORD, CRAWFORDSBURN.
MRS. WAKEFIELD.
MRS. THOMPSON TENNENT.

Corresponding Secretary:
MRS. WEBB, CASSINO, BELFAST. *Wrote*

Treasurer:
MRS. BATES. *the led*

Secretaries:
MISS HINCKS AND MISS VICTOR.

Committee;

MRS. G. PIM.	MISS CUNNINGHAM.
MRS. DR. THOMPSON.	MISS NEILL.
MRS. MOLYNEUX.	MISS BARNETT.
MRS. HUNTER.	MISS YOUNG.
MRS. ROBERT HENDERSON.	MISS SERVICE.
MRS. R. WORKMAN.	MISS SIMMS.
MISS LEMON.	MISS IRELAND.
MISS HENDERSON.	MISS SARAH IRELAND.
MISS M'CRACKEN.	MISS TENNENT.
MISS MURPHY.	MISS HUNTER.
MISS M'INTYRE.	

September 23, 1846.



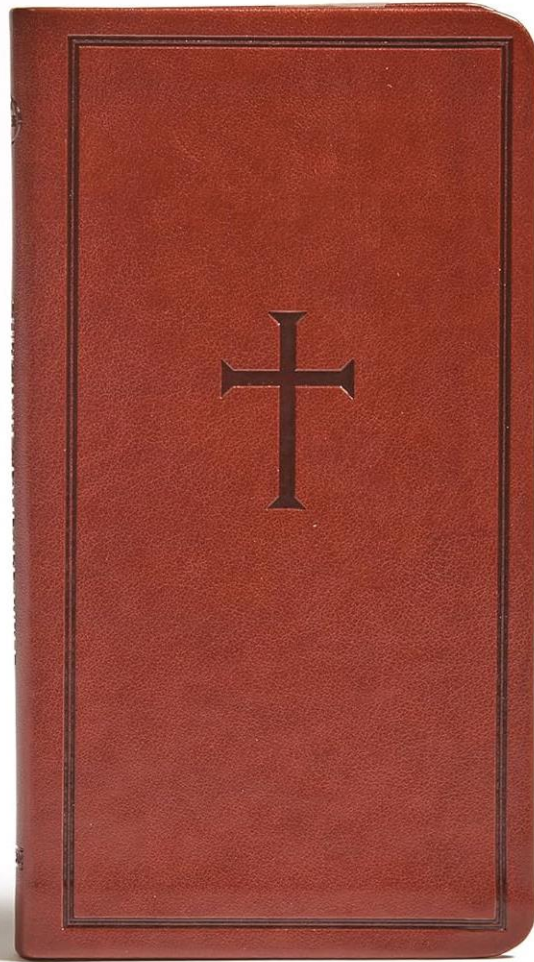
Douglass' second visit, 1846

Background to Douglass' Second Visit

General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was holding its annual meeting

Belfast born Rev Smyth of Charleston was in town on family business





Rev. Thomas Smyth

- Born on June 14, 1808, in Belfast, Ireland, Thomas Smyth was the sixth son of Samuel and Ann Magee Smith. His father, a prosperous grocer and tobacco distributor, changed the family name to Smyth to avoid confusion with another Thomas Smith.
- Initiated his education at the Academic Institution of Belfast and later graduated with honours from Belfast College in 1829 at the age of 21.

Ministerial Training and Family Life

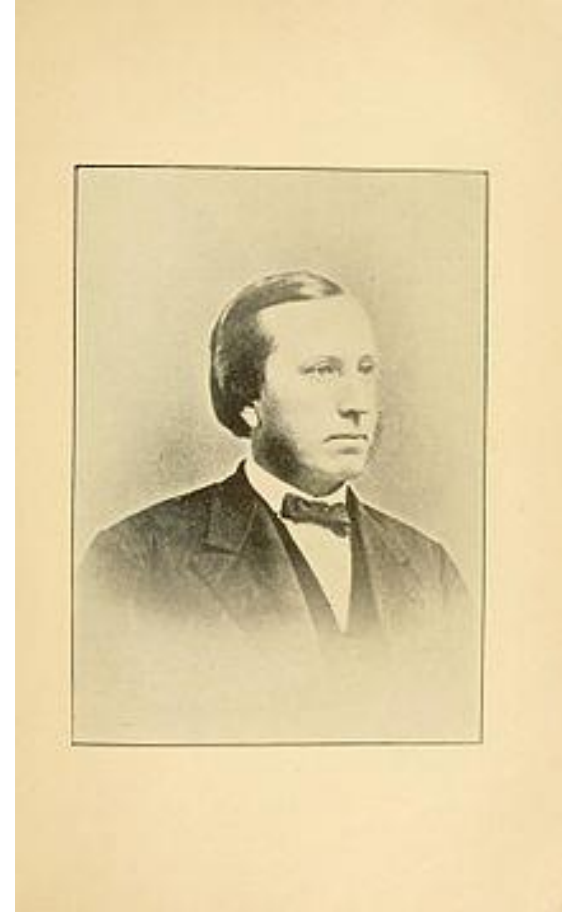
- Initially aspiring to be a priest, Thomas moved to London to attend Highbury College but had to interrupt his program when he relocated with his parents to the United States in 1830, settling in Patterson, New Jersey.
- Completed his ministerial training at Princeton Theological Seminary, graduating in 1831. In 1843, he received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Princeton.
- Married Margaret Milligan Adger on July 9, 1832, the daughter of James Adger, an elder and prominent citizen in Charleston, South Carolina. The couple had nine children.



Second Presbyterian Church, where Smyth served for more than 40 years

Pastoral Career and Controversial Stances

- In 1834, Thomas Smyth became a pastor in Charleston, South Carolina, a position he held for the remainder of his life.
- Took a moderate approach to slavery, seen as an abolitionist in Charleston, while perceived as a supporter of slavery in Britain.
- Instrumental in establishing the Zion Presbyterian Church for slaves along with John Adger and John Girardeau.
- Defended the full humanity of Africans in his book "Unity of the Human Race," facing vocal protests from militant southern slavery supporters.



John Girardeau

Ecclesiastical Disputes and Social Activism

- Faced opposition from some Southerners for efforts in establishing a Presbyterian place of worship for Africans.
- Denied participation in the 1846 session of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland due to his protest against the American Presbyterian church's perceived support for slavery.
- An ardent Confederate supporter during the Civil War.
- Thomas Smyth passed away in Charleston on August 20, 1873.



Smyth's allegations...

The *Guardian* maligned Frederick **Douglass**. It called him an impostor, a lying scoundrel, or a vagabond. It heaped upon him every foul epithet. So did the *Witness*. And Dr Smyth of Charleston, who had arrived in this country, also followed in the same wake, branding **Douglass** as an immoral and irreligious character, "entitled to no credit amongst real Christians,"—the "Free," of course, being the *real* Christians, according to Dr Smyth, slave owner or advocate, of Charleston, &c., &c.

Dundee Courier - Tuesday 18 August 1846

Next steps...

Frederick **Douglass**, breathing, for the first time, the air of freedom, and conscious of his innocence and integrity, was advised to prosecute Dr Smyth, according to the laws of England, for defamation. In America, **Douglass** would have been trampled under foot by Smyth. In America, Smyth could have whipped **Douglass** for attempting to seek justice. In America, a black man dare not say to a white man that they have a common Saviour, who died for all mankind. The reverse, happily, is the case here. Dr Smyth was brought to his senses, and to save his own marrow, or rather his own pockets, under the lash of the righteous law of England, he addressed the following humiliating apology to the *solicitors* employed by Frederick **Douglass** to prosecute him:—

Dundee Courier - Tuesday 18 August 1846

SIR,—The Rev. Dr. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, South Carolina, who lately visited Belfast, made certain statements, injurious to the moral and religious character of Mr. Douglass, the fugitive slave. These statements being calculated to injure his usefulness, Mr. Douglass felt himself compelled, for the sake of his brethren in bonds, and in justice to the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society, who invited him to this town, and especially to prevent others from defending slavery, or shielding its abettors, by calumniating him, to call upon the Rev. Gentleman to come forward, and make a full and public apology, or abide the legal consequences of refusal. Messrs. Davison and Torrens, Solicitors on behalf of Mr. Douglass, demanded this apology from Dr. Smyth, intimating, at the same time, that in case of refusal, he must abide the issue of a civil action, which would afford him abundant opportunity to prove (if he could) the truth of his assertions.

Mr. Douglass, conscious of innocence, took this manly and fearless mode of procedure, rather than the more usual one of filing a criminal information, which would hinder the party complained against from putting in a plea of justification.

I have the pleasure of handing you, by desire of Mr. Douglass (who is now in England), a copy of Doctor Smyth's letter of apology, with which Mr. Douglass's Solicitors advised him to rest satisfied, as his only object was the vindication of principle and character, and not any consideration of a pecuniary nature. This transaction, Sir, is a noble illustration of the spirit of British law, which, as Curran said, makes justice commensurate with and inseparable from British soil, which proclaims, even to the stranger, the moment he sets his foot on our shore, that the ground is consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES STANDFIELD.

Belfast, 7th August, 1845.

Smyth's allegations against Douglass

(COPY.)

Dublin, July 28, 1846.

GENTLEMEN,—In reply to your letter, of the 16th inst., informing me, that you had been instructed, by Mr. Frederick Douglass, the Anti-slavery lecturer, to institute proceedings at law against me for certain statements made by me, injurious to his moral and religious character, I beg to express my sincere regret for having uttered the same; the more especially as, upon mature reflection, I am quite satisfied, that the statements I incautiously made, on the report of third parties, were unfounded.—Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOMAS SMYTH.

Messrs. Davison & Torrens.

Northern Whig - Saturday 08 August 1846, p.1

8 July 1846, Primitive Wesleyan Chapel, Donegall Place

At this meeting Douglass again presented:

‘another opportunity of exposing the infamous system of slavery as it exists in America. More than usual interest was attached to the proceedings, in consequence of the General Assembly [of the Presbyterian church in Ireland] holding its annual meeting in town...the meeting was large and highly respectable’.

At the meeting and speaker were:

Rev. Thomas Drew, Church of Ireland preacher

Rev. Dr John Edgar, Presbyterian Preacher, Armagh.

Rev. Isaac Nelson, Presbyterian Preacher, Minister of Donegall Presbyterian School.



Rev. Thomas Drew, Church of Ireland preacher

- Born on 26 October 1800 near St Mary's Abbey, Limerick city, Thomas Drew was the son of George Drew, a baker and grocer, and Sara (or Sarah), daughter of the Rev. Thomas Ryan, chancellor of the Church of Ireland diocese of Emly.
- Entered Trinity College Dublin on 8 June 1819, graduating with a BA in 1826, LLB in 1841, and MA, BD, and DD in 1842.

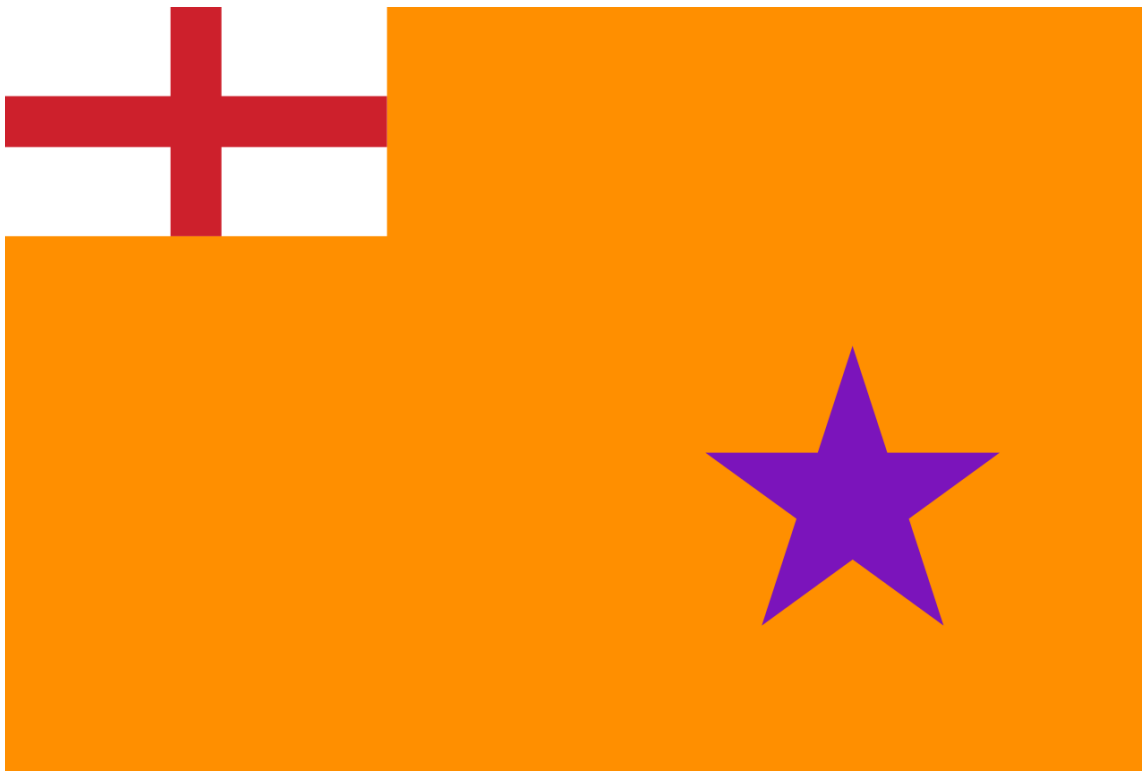


Ecclesiastical Career and Anti-Catholic Activism

- Ordained deacon in the Church of Ireland in 1827 and priest in 1828, Drew served as a curate at Broughshane in the joint parish of Skerry and Racavan, Co. Antrim, from 1829 to 1833.
- Relentless opponent of Catholic emancipation, campaigned for its repeal after 1829.
- In 1833, appointed the first incumbent of the new parish of Christ Church, College Square, Belfast, where he remained until 1859.



St Patricks, Broughshane



Religious Leadership and Ecclesiastical Controversies

- Low church by inclination, Drew was an ardent member of the Orange Order, serving as grand chaplain.
- Oversaw the building of about twenty low-church style churches in and around Belfast, often dedicated as memorials to Protestant martyrs.
- Engaged in a protracted conflict with Bishop Richard Mant over ecclesiastical ideals, with Drew advocating low-church principles.

Social and Political Engagement

- Actively involved in political affairs, Drew, a Tory, served as chaplain to successive Lord Lieutenants Earl de Grey and Lord Heytesbury.
- Militantly opposed concessions to Catholics, suspecting statistical manipulations in the 1841 census aimed at granting more concessions.
- Established the Church Accommodation Society in 1838 for church-building, dispensaries, relief centers, and Sunday school excursions.



Lord Heytesbury.

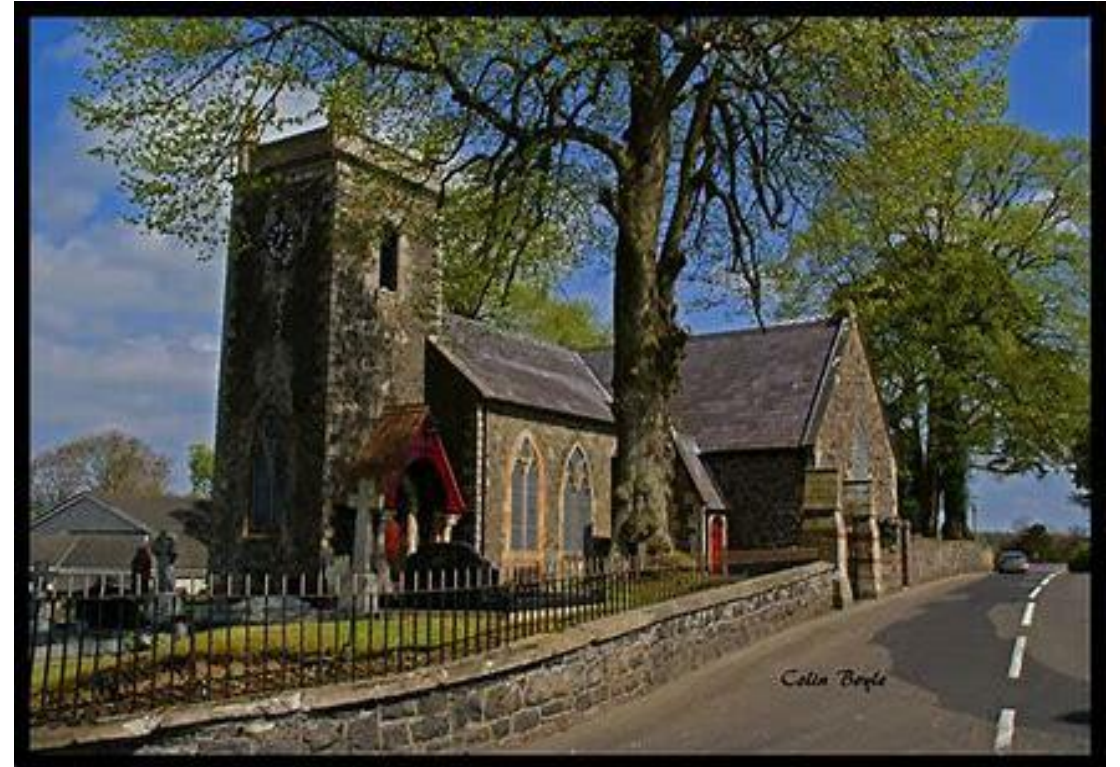


Later Career and Legacy

- Drew's religious passion intensified with age, forming the Christ Church Protestant Association in 1854 to counter the rise of Roman Catholicism.
- Notorious for a 1857 sermon at Christ Church, contributing to a ten-day sectarian riot in Belfast.
- From 1859 until his death in 1870, served as rector of Loughinisland, Co. Down, and precentor of Down Cathedral, Downpatrick.
- Died on 22 October 1870, leaving a legacy of popular Protestant fervor, evangelical sermons, and hymns.
- Buried at Seaforde, near Loughinisland, Co. Down, and memorialized by St Philip's Church, Belfast, built in 1872.

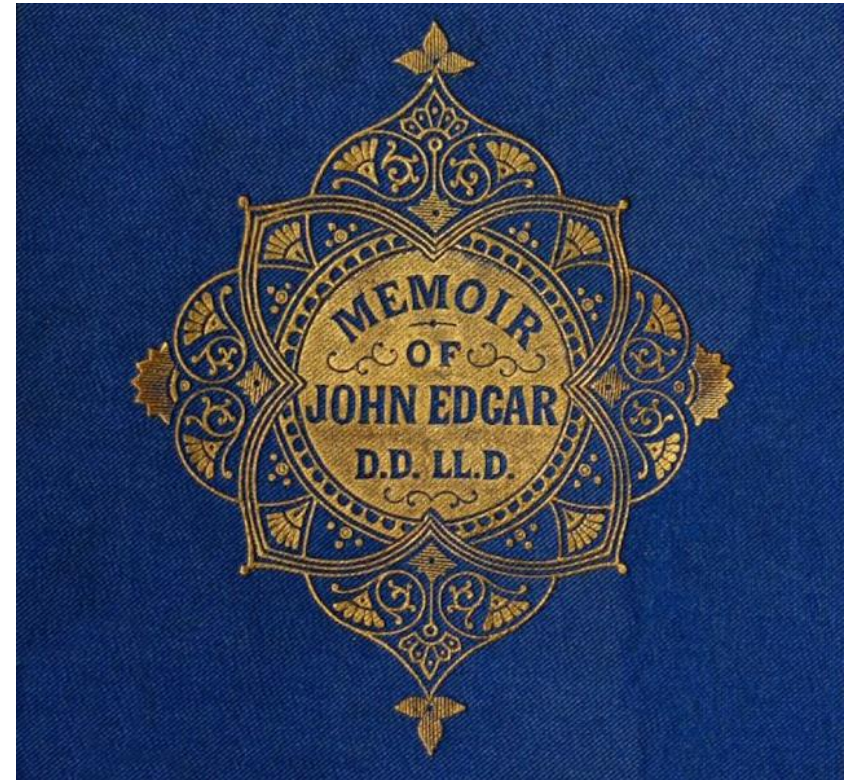
Rev. Dr John Edgar, Presbyterian Preacher, Armagh

- Born in 1798 in Belfast, Rev. Dr John Edgar was raised in a devout Presbyterian household and commenced his education at Belfast Academical Institution.
- After completing his theological studies, he was ordained as a minister, dedicating himself to the Presbyterian faith.
- Having received his education at Belfast Academical Institution, his early years significantly influenced his commitment to the Presbyterian Church.



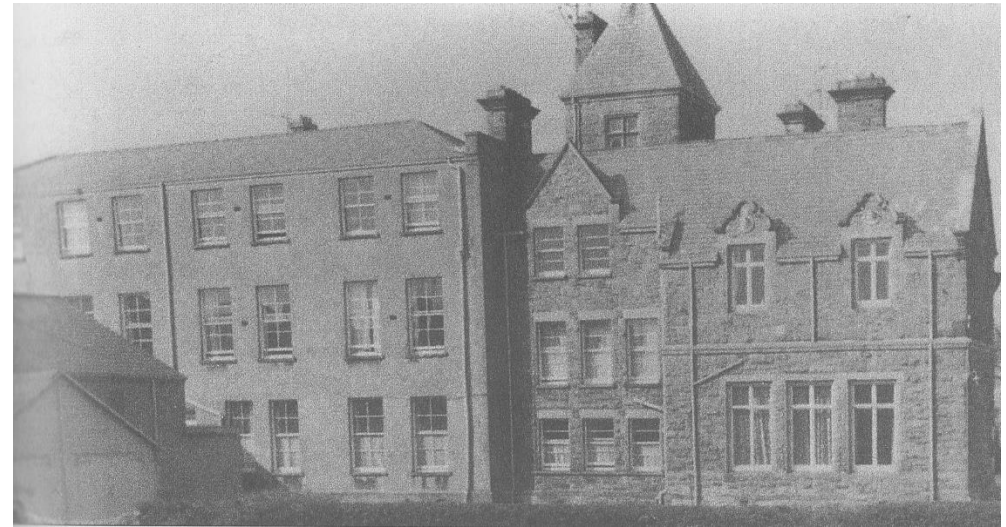
Contributions and Impact on Presbyterianism

- Served as a Presbyterian preacher in Armagh, Reverend Dr. John Edgar played a pivotal role in the spiritual development of the community.
- Renowned for his eloquence and theological insight, Edgar's sermons drew congregants seeking spiritual guidance and enlightenment.
- In 1834, he published "The Variations of Popery," a significant work critiquing the Catholic Church and emphasizing the tenets of Presbyterianism.



Social Work and Political Stance

- Beyond his religious duties, Rev. Dr John Edgar held strong social and political convictions.
- In 1836, he actively supported the Temperance Movement, advocating for sobriety and societal well-being.
- He was also the founder of the Ulster Female Penitentiary in 1839 which was a residential home for prostitutes; and was instrumental in getting the Deaf, Dumb and Blind Institute set up in Belfast.



BURYING PL
OF THE
THOMAS DR
D.D., LL.D.,
1870

Rev. Isaac Nelson

- Born in 1809 in Belfast, Nelson received his education at Belfast Academical Institution.
- Ordained as a minister in 1837, he initially served at First Comber Presbyterian Church and later moved to Donegall Street Presbyterian Church in 1842.

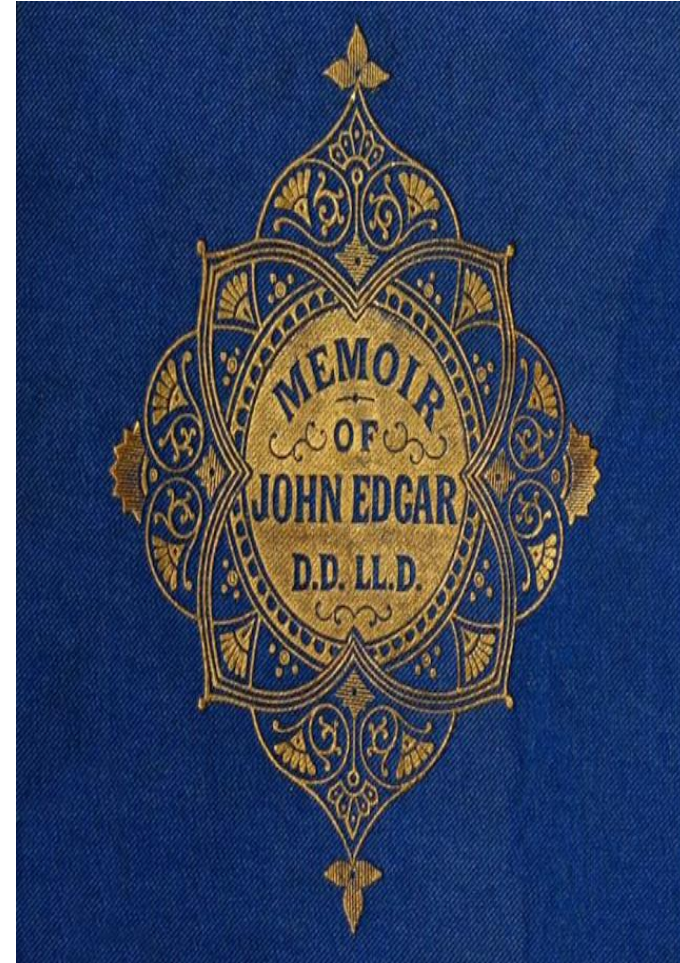


Later life

- In 1860, Nelson published "The Year of Delusion," criticizing the 1859 Ulster religious revival as religious hysteria and condemning the official Presbyterian Church for treating it as miraculous.
- A staunch abolitionist, Nelson praised Douglass as a 'literary wonder' and 'intellectual phenomenon'.
- An Irish nationalist, Nelson, in 1873, highlighted the historical nationalism of Ulster Presbyterianism at a home rule conference in Dublin.
- Represented Mayo in the House of Commons from 1880 to 1885 for the Irish Parliamentary Party.
- Despite condemnation from the moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, Nelson's views on home rule were published in The Northern Whig Newspaper.
- After his political career, Nelson returned to Belfast and lived in retirement until his death in 1888.

The meeting

- Douglass said he wanted the General Assembly to 'expression of opinion from that body against slavery'.
- It was discussed that Rev Smith of Charleston was in town and ran churches for people who were slave holders and communicants.
- Douglass said that 'All [Smyth's] sympathies were with the slave holders'.
- He challenged Smyth to challenge him to prove the statements said against him.
- He added that 'In America, he dare not challenge Dr Smyth, but in Belfast he was safe'.



Praise for Douglass

- Nelson then said that a slave holder called Douglass a very common sort of negro. Nelson asked, 'If Frederick Douglas was only a common Negro, he would like to see an uncommon one'.
- Rev Dr Edgar of Armagh spoke next. He had never seen Douglass before but was 'more delighted with any speech he had heard than he was on that occasion'. Edgar said Douglass as an orator so good and he had never heard a more powerfully convincing speech. Edgar said the Word of God was decisive against slavery.





What impact did Ireland have on Douglass?



After his first 4 very successful talks in Dublin in September 1845

“One of the most pleasing features of my visit ... has been a total absence of ... prejudice against me on account of my colour. The change of circumstances in this is particularly striking. I find myself not treated as a colour, but as a man – not as thing, but as a child of the common Father of us all.”

Observation on the population of Belfast:

“Everyone I meet with
here seems full of
religion, drinks wine
and prays.”



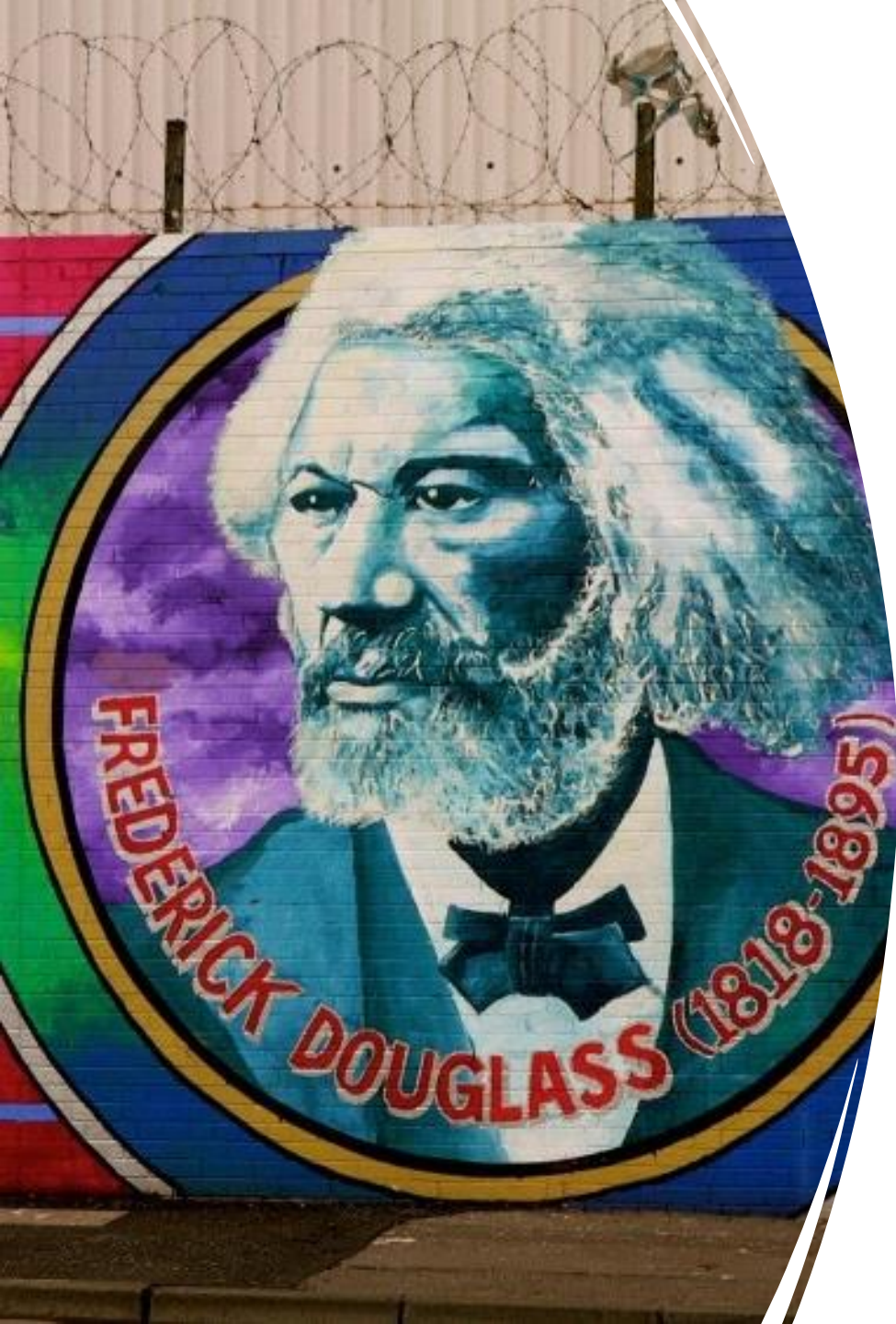
Property to humanity

“... behold the change ... Instead of the bright blue sky of America, I am covered with the soft grey fog of the Emerald Isle. I breathe, and Lo! The chattel becomes a man.”





What impact did
Douglass have?



Raising Awareness

Douglass' speeches and public appearances in Belfast helped raise awareness about the horrors of slavery among the local population. His firsthand accounts of the brutality and dehumanization endured by enslaved people resonated with many listeners, bringing the issue of slavery to the forefront of public consciousness.



DERICK DOUGLASS

1818 - 1895

ABOLITIONIST

AND

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

Strengthening the Abolitionist Movement

Douglass' visit bolstered the existing abolitionist movement in Belfast and throughout Ireland. His powerful rhetoric and personal experiences inspired and galvanized local activists, encouraging them to intensify their efforts to combat slavery. His speeches served to unite and mobilize people around the cause, fostering a sense of solidarity and determination. Forming the Women's Belfast Anti-Slavery Society.



Influencing Public Opinion

Douglass' visit had a profound impact on public opinion in Belfast. By sharing his personal story and highlighting the moral and ethical implications of slavery, he challenged prevalent pro-slavery sentiments and shifted public attitudes. His persuasive speaking style and undeniable credibility as a former enslaved person helped to dismantle stereotypes and prejudices, fostering a more empathetic and supportive view of African Americans and the abolitionist cause.



Political and Legislative Effects

Douglass' visit contributed to the political discourse surrounding slavery. His speeches and interactions with political leaders in Belfast influenced their stance on the issue, encouraging some to become more vocal opponents of slavery. The increased awareness and public pressure generated by his visit may have indirectly influenced political decisions and policies related to slavery.



International Solidarity

Douglass' visit to Belfast was part of a broader tour in the United Kingdom and Ireland. His presence and advocacy helped strengthen international solidarity against slavery. The exposure of American slavery's horrors to an international audience contributed to the global abolitionist movement and increased pressure on the United States to address the issue.



However...

- Famine turned many abolitionists charitable efforts away from anti slavery towards relieve of starvation and suffering
- Split in the Church of Scotland ruptured the Belfast anti slavery scene
- Other domestic concerns began to dominate the activist sphere of interest

Questions