

Hi, I'm
Harriet.



TALKING HISTORY


with

Harriet and Roxanne™

The Underground Railroad

And I'm
Roxanne.
Join us for...






Harriet, what is this building?

This is the historic Quaker Meeting House in Mt. Pleasant, Ohio. It was built in 1814 and was a center of abolitionist activity and part of the Underground Railroad.



Wait a minute, Roxanne. I think I know what you are thinking. The Underground Railroad was neither underground nor a railroad.





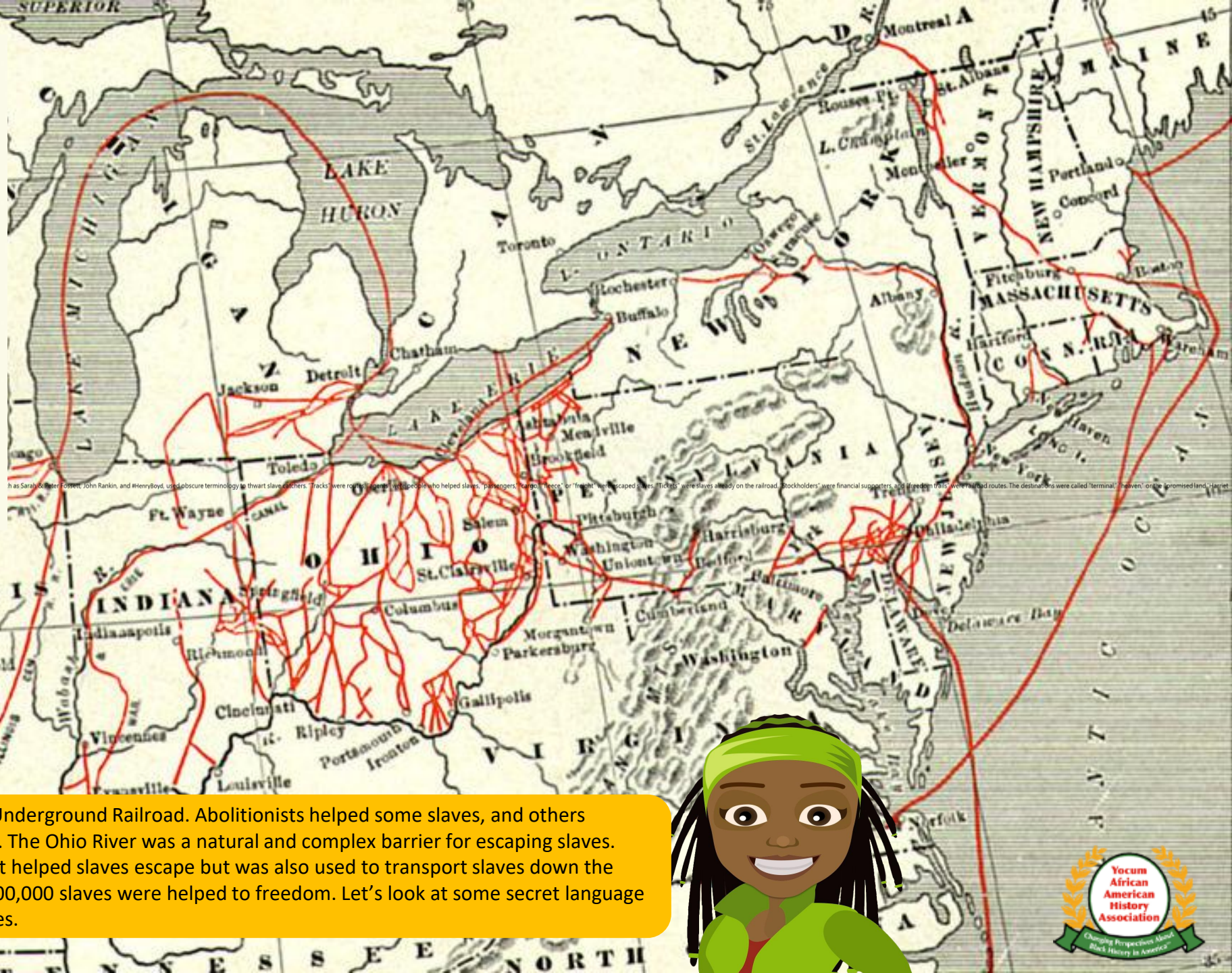
It was a system of loosely connected safe havens where escaped slaves could find shelter, food, clothing, and instructions for their journey to freedom. Several routes were part of the Underground Railroad.

What did those routes look like? Was there a map?






A SLAVE-HUNT.



As Sarah Butler Foster, John Rankin, and Henry Boyd used obscure terminology to thwart slave catchers, "Tracks" were routes used by people who helped slaves, "passengers," "cargo," "trucks" or "freight," were escaped slaves, "ticks" were slaves caught on the railroad, "stockholders" were financial supporters, and "freedom trails" were railroad routes. The destinations were called "terminal," "heaven," or the "promised land," "Harriet."

Roxanne, here are some of the routes used by the Underground Railroad. Abolitionists helped some slaves, and others individually took flight on their journey for freedom. The Ohio River was a natural and complex barrier for escaping slaves. The river symbolized freedom and slavery because it helped slaves escape but was also used to transport slaves down the river to the South. It is estimated that more than 100,000 slaves were helped to freedom. Let's look at some secret language that the Underground Railroad used to protect slaves.





Most slaves traveled at night and rested during the day. To maintain secrecy and thwart slave catchers, abolitionists used words like “tracks” and “freedom trails” for routes.

“Agents” were people who helped slaves connect to the railroad. “conductors” provided passage to the “station masters” who hid slaves. Escaped slaves were called “passengers,” “cargo,” “fleece,” or “freight.” “stockholders” were financial supporters. “Terminal,” “heaven,” or the “promised land” were the destinations.

This is such wonderful information.

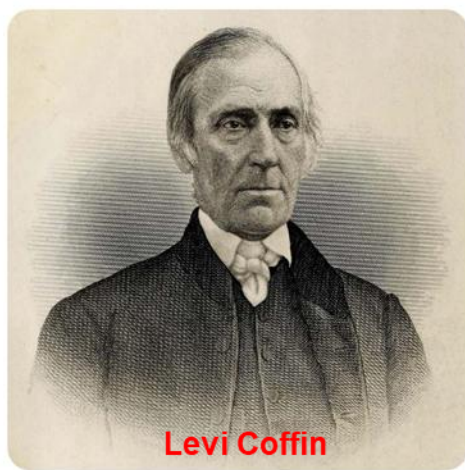
Can you share who some of these abolitionists were?

Abolitionists Levi & Catherine Coffin helped more than 3,000 slaves escape to the North and Canada.

Harriet, this painting helps me understand how brave the abolitionists were.



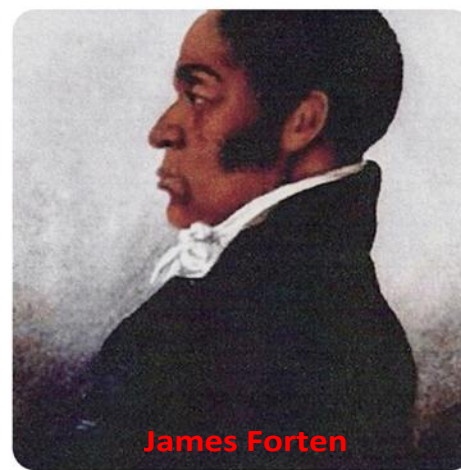
Levi and Catherine Coffin and the Underground Railroad, by Charles T. Webber



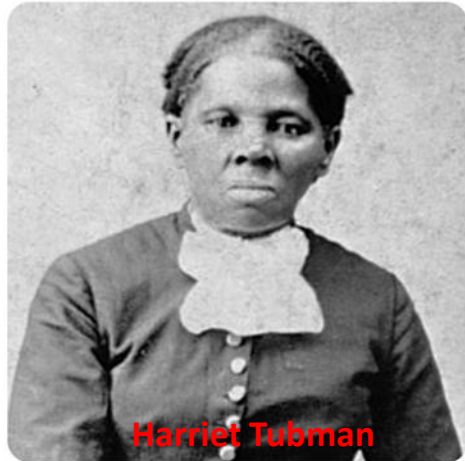
Levi Coffin



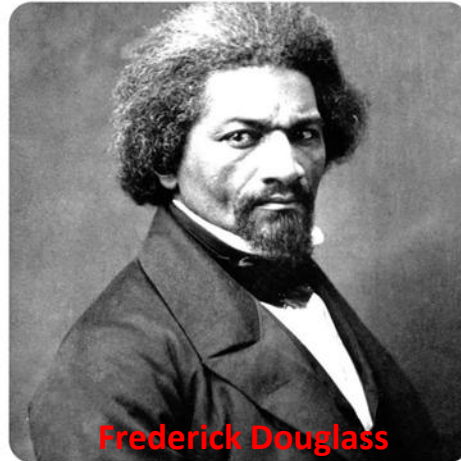
Ellen Craft



James Forten



Harriet Tubman



Frederick Douglass



Harriet Beecher Stowe



William Lloyd Garrison



Catherine Coffin



John Mercer Langston

Levi Coffin was known as “the president of the Underground Railroad.” Harriet Tubman was an escaped slave who brought more than 60 slaves to freedom. Ellen and William Craft were slaves who escaped in plain site (more on that later in the lesson). James Forten was a wealthy free Black man who supported the Underground Railroad. Douglass, Stowe, Garrison, and Langston were abolitionist writers and activists who helped free slaves.

Harriet, it’s important to learn how Blacks and Whites worked together in the abolition movement to end slavery. Thanks for teaching that to me. Please tell us more!





The Rankin Family

The Reverend John Rankin started an antislavery society in Kentucky and moved to Ripley, Ohio, where slavery was illegal. His home was at the top of a hill where he could see people across the river in Kentucky signaling with lanterns that slaves were ready to cross the Ohio River. Rankin was one of the first “conductors” on the Underground Railroad. The Rankins were the most prominent family involved in the Underground Railroad in the Ripley, Ohio.



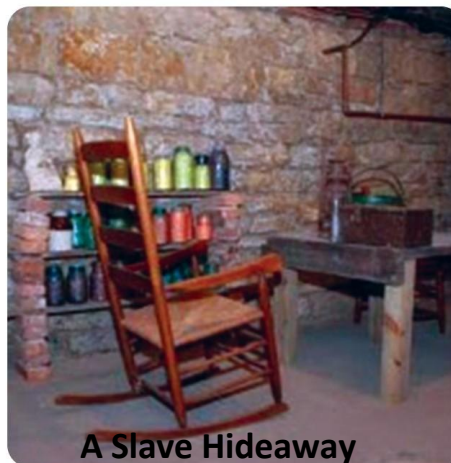
“Station masters”
used secret
compartments and
cellars to hide
escaped slaves in
their homes.



I am proud and
amazed at what these
abolitionists did to
help slaves and end
slavery.



The Milton House



A Slave Hideaway



The Maltby Home





Ellen & William Craft

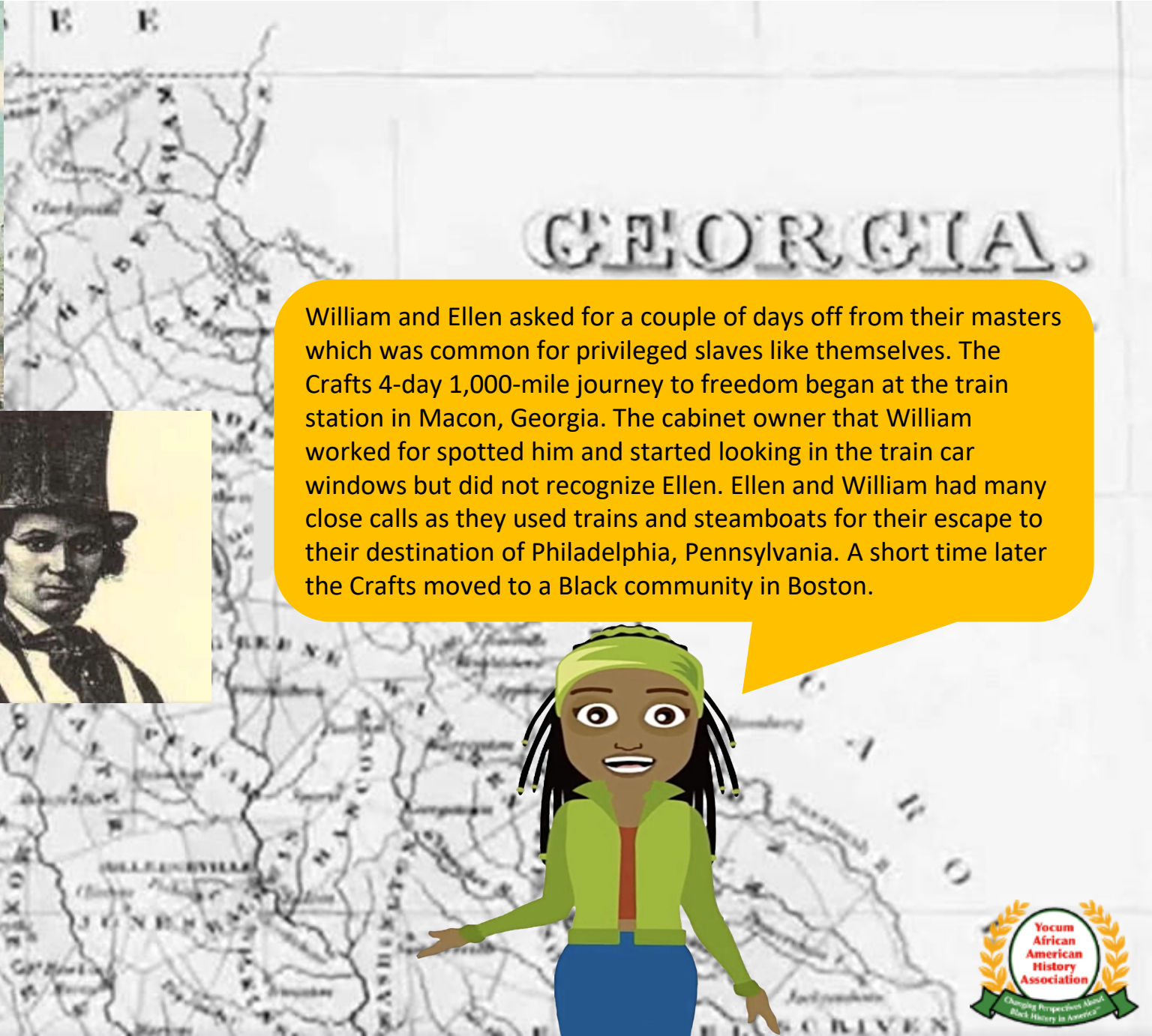


Roxanne, I want to share an unusual story with you. Ellen and William Craft were privileged slaves owned by separate masters. They had more freedom; Ellen was a ladies' maid, and William was a carpenter who was often hired out. Ellen's mother was a slave of her father, her master. Ellen looked white. The Crafts decided to escape from Macon, Georgia, by having Ellen pose as a wealthy southern planter and William as her slave. Ellen's disguise consisted of a top hat, trousers, and short hair. Ellen put her arm in a sling and covered her face with bandages to hide her illiteracy and beardless face.

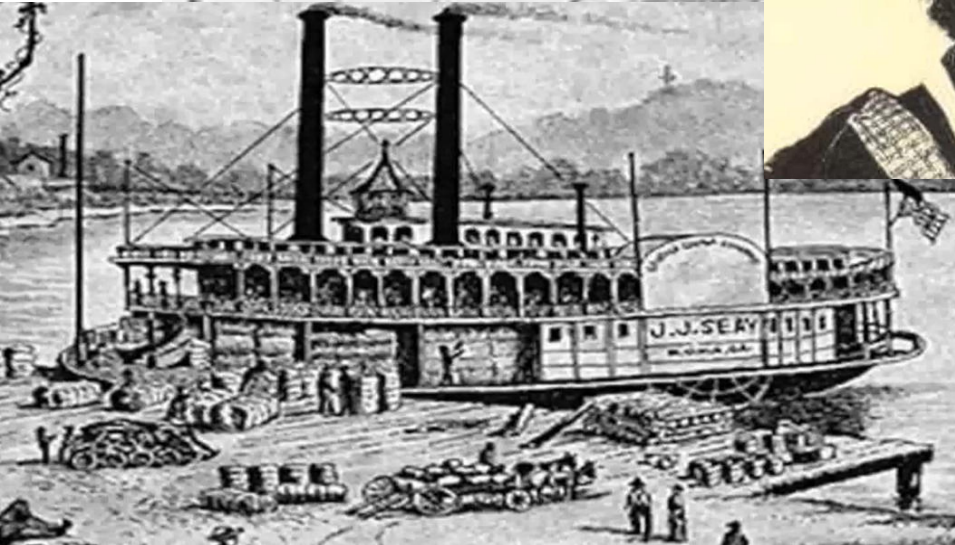


Ellen Disguised as a Man





William and Ellen asked for a couple of days off from their masters which was common for privileged slaves like themselves. The Crafts 4-day 1,000-mile journey to freedom began at the train station in Macon, Georgia. The cabinet owner that William worked for spotted him and started looking in the train car windows but did not recognize Ellen. Ellen and William had many close calls as they used trains and steamboats for their escape to their destination of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A short time later the Crafts moved to a Black community in Boston.



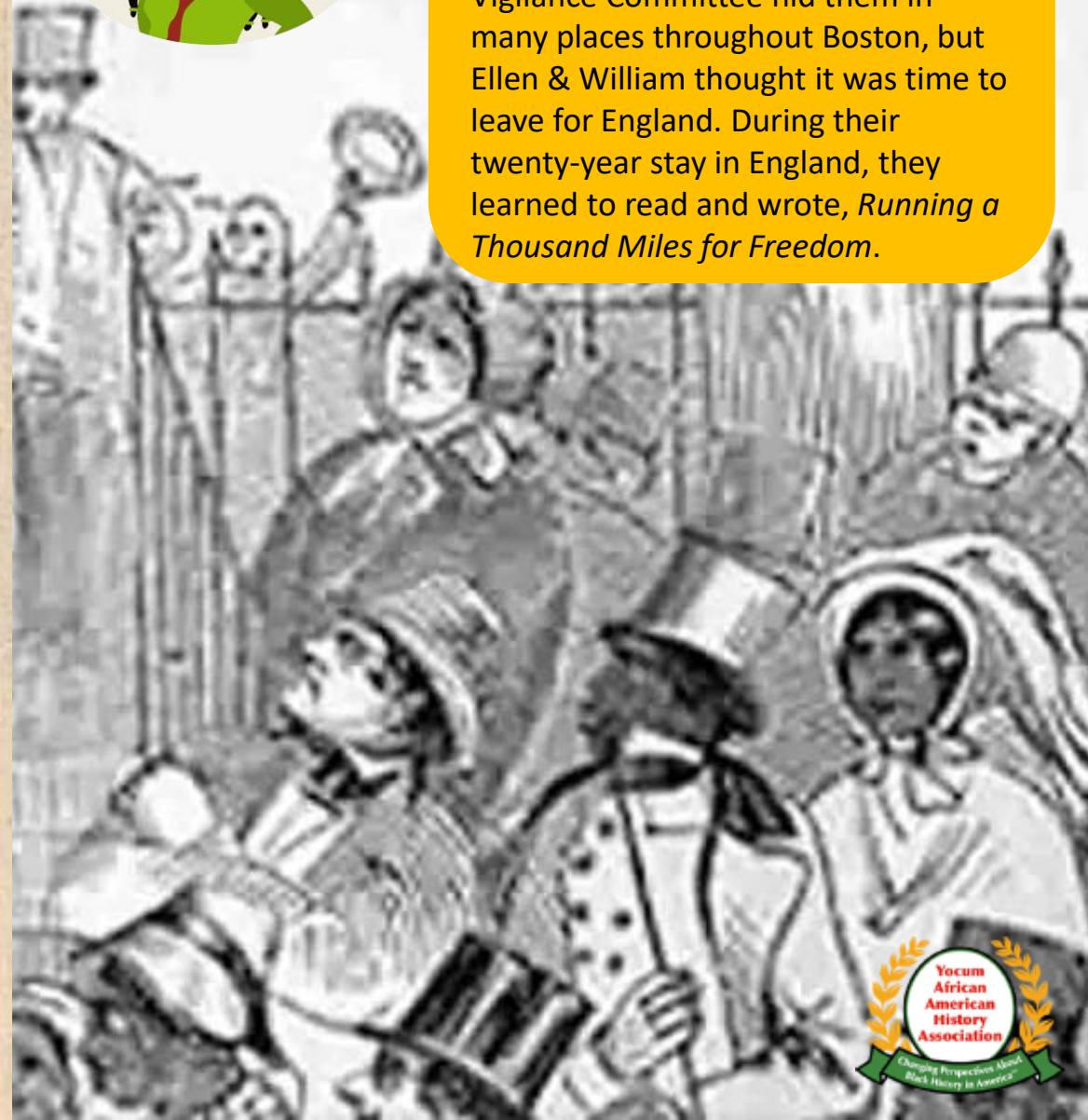


What happened to the Crafts in Boston?

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 Crafts became very popular and made many public abolition speeches. After the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, slave catchers sought the Crafts. The Vigilance Committee hid them in many places throughout Boston, but Ellen & William thought it was time to leave for England. During their twenty-year stay in England, they learned to read and wrote, *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom.*



It was wonderful! I hope you will all come back soon for more **Talking History with Harriet & Roxanne.**

Roxanne, I hope you enjoyed a few of the many stories about Black and White heroes from the Underground Railroad. Together these leaders made a difference in ending slavery.





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