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people.

[Countries](#), [Canada](#)



Throughout history, there have been many atrocities, people either deal with them, or take action against them. An atrocity is a situation where cruelty has happened and usually involves violence or injury. In America, slavery has been a major atrocity that happened in North America for 246 years. , the underground railroad and the people in it helped collectively freed over 100,000 enslaved people.

During the 1850's, Harriet Tubman became a famous "conductor" on the Underground Railroad. In 1849, she fled from slavery, leaving her husband and family behind to escape. Even though there was bounty on her head, she still returned to the south to free her family and hundreds of other slaves by the Underground Railroad. The Underground Railroad wasn't underground nor was it an actual railroad. The underground part symbolizes how they escaped in secret and out of sight, and the railroad part symbolized the emerging systems of transportation. "The underground railroad was a loosely organized system with no defined routes, in which provided houses and freedom to the slaves" (Historical Society) .

In the underground railroad there was not just one route , there was multiple so slave catchers could not easily find them. Harriet Tubman was born into slavery, after she'd escaped from it she returned to slave holding states to help other slaves escape. She led them safely to free states in the north and to Canada, knowing the dangers of being a runaway slave, she still wanted to help free slaves. Every time she returned to free more slaves , she was breaking the law more and more, placing herself in great danger. Some slaves that she freed were hesitant and wanted to go back, she persuades

them by pulling out a gun and expressing " you will be free or you can die a slave" (Harriet Tubman), saying that because yes, she did want to free slaves, but also because knowing if they were to go back could easily put not just her but the over 300 slaves she freed in bigger danger.

Reason many of those whom were trying to escape went for Canada was because of the Fugitive Slave Acts, " which allowed local governments to apprehend and extradite escaped slaves from within the borders of free states back to their point of origin, and to punish anyone helping the fugitives" (History. com) , and because Canada is not within the borders these fugitive slaves do not have to be brutally punished for just trying to escape this prison. The Fugitive Slave of 1850 was made to make previous law stronger. This came with " harsher penalties and set up a system of commissioners that promoted favoritism towards slave owners and led to some freed slaves being recaptured" (History. com). Canada offered blacks freedom to live where they wanted, sit on juries, and much more. Slavery was no joke back then, that's why they had to do all this escaping in secret , that's why they wanted to escape in the first place.

Harriet Tubman knew what a struggle it was to be a slave because she was born into it, that's part of the reason she freed so many slaves in so little trips, because she didn't want any other African Americans to have to struggle like that based on their skin tone. Besides just Harriet Tubman, most Underground Railroad operators were ordinary people. There was also many wealthy people involved to, such as Gerrit Smith, a millionaire. " In 1841, Smith purchased an entire family of slaves from Kentucky and set

them free" (History. com). There was also Levi Coffin , a Quaker from North Carolina.

" he learned their hiding places and sought them out to help them move along" (History. com) , Levi Coffin then moved to Indiana then to Ohio, and continued to help slaves escape wherever he was. Another conductor of the Underground Railroad is John Brown , an abolitionist. John brown " was devoted to helping fugitive slaves get to Canada" (history. com).

Brown was a abolitionist, who was famous and has played many roles in the abolition movements, his famous movement was the raid on Harpers Ferry, his goal was " to create an armed force to make its way into deep south and free slaves by gunpoint" (History. com) . Brown and his men did not win and Brown hanged for treason in 1859. In 1837 Reverend Calvin Fairbank helped slaves escape from Kentucky into Ohio. In 1844 he got together with an school teacher, Delia Webster, to help slaves and her child escape, but then ended up getting arrested. " He was pardoned in 1849, but arrested again and spent, but arrested again and spent another 12 years in jail" (History. com).

Then there was Charles Torrey, who helped an enslaved family escape from Virginia, then was sent to prison for six year. " He operated out of Washington, D. C., and had previously worked as an abolitionist newspaper editor in Albany, NY" (History.

com) . Another person was Jonathan Walker, a Massachusetts sea captain, he had a boatload of slaves he was trying to help escape to the north, then was arrested in 1844 after he was caught. Jonathan Walker was in jail for a year, and had the letters “ SS” wrote onto his right hand for Slave Stealer. Lastly was, John Fairfield of Virginia, he didn’t want to accept his slave-holding family so he can help the left behind families of enslaved people who made it north.

His method was to try and act as an “ slave trader”, he was caught and then jailed. He broke out of jail twice and died in 1860 in Tennessee during slave rebellion. The Underground Railroad stopped operations about 1863, during the Civil War. ” In reality, its work moved above ground as part of the Union effort against the Confederacy” (History. com). Harriet Tubman and others played a big part in the atrocity of slavery, by taking an action against that led in the freedom of many, many slave and their families even though it was dangerous.