

The frederick douglass historic site essay



Frederick Douglass was born a slave and spent his life fighting for the abolition of slavery and attainment of equal rights for African Americans. His quest for justice and equality for all people made him famous. He is a historic person and his struggle to have slavery abolished continues to inspire many people today. This paper examines the Frederick Douglass Historic Site located in 1411 W Street SE, Washington, DC. The home of Frederick Douglass is located in this site. The relevance and historical significance of this site is discussed.

It is at this site that the home of Frederick Douglass is preserved. The site is protected by Public Law and is meant to commemorate the life of Frederick Douglass. Frederick Douglass has been described as “ a great abolitionist, civil rights advocate, author and statesman” (National Park Service 1).

He was greatly committed to ensuring that there justice in the treatment of all people. During his time, he was described as “ the most important negro of the nineteenth century” (Hinds iii). This site helps to celebrate his contribution to the US civilization.

The home preserved in this site was Douglass’s second home. He purchased it in 1877 and made it his official residence up to the time of his passing away in 1895. The house was built by John Van Hook between 1855 and 1859. It had 14 rooms. After purchasing the house, Douglass made some additions to it.

By the time he passed away, he had increased the number of rooms in the house to 21. Among the many changes he made in the house were the conversion of “ the original kitchen into a dining room and construction of a

new kitchen in the south wing” (National Park Service 1). He converted two rooms which were upstairs on the west wing into three small bedrooms. He also completed the attic creating five more rooms and added a library to the house (National Park Service 1).

A number of restorations have been carried out on Douglass’ home. The first restoration was undertaken by Frederick Douglass Memorial and Historical Association (FDMHA) in 1922 – this was 19 years after the death of Douglass’ second wife. In 1962, the custody of Douglass’ home was transferred to the National Park Service from FDMHA.

The second restoration was carried out by the National Park Service between 1962 and 1972. The house was reopened to the public in 1972. The construction of a visitor center at the site was started in 1980 and completed in 1982. The third and last restoration so far was undertaken between 2004 and 2007 (National Park Service 1).

Taking into consideration the knowledge that Douglass displayed, his library is often treated as a special place. The library is lit by three windows which are large enough to allow enough natural light in. The library is filled with many books on various topics.

There is an iron stove in the library which Douglass used to warm himself up with in the library during the winter seasons. Since it is not possible to closely examine the texts in this library, the National Park Service is making plans to avail a list of all the books Douglass had in the library (National Park Service 1).

Frederick Douglass is a very significant person in the US history. To best understand the significance of this historic site, one needs to examine the significance of Frederick Douglass.

Frederick Douglass was born a slave in 1818 but escaped from slavery at the age of 20 years (Douglass 9). He dedicated the whole of his life to fight for upholding of human dignity: “ first for personal freedom, then for the freedom of his own people, and then for female equality” (National Park Service 1).

For sixteen years, Douglass edited an influential newspaper which changed its name three times. The changes in the name were as follows: “ The North Star (1847-1851), Frederick Douglass’ paper (1851-1858), and The Douglass Monthly (1859-1863)” (Blight 1). He used his oratory skills and persuasive writing abilities to advance the course of his antislavery campaign. He was the voice and hope for those who were subjected to slavery and racism.

Douglass used the Civil War to advance the antislavery campaign. During the war, he was described as a “ fierce propagandist of the Union cause and emancipation, a recruiter of black troops, and on two occasions as an advisor to President Abraham Lincoln” (Blight 1). It is worth noting that there was a great connection between the Civil War and abolition of slavery.

Douglass seems to have seen this connection early enough and sought to mobilize African Americans troops to fight against the South alongside the North side. He knew that the North side had to take the victory if his antislavery campaign was to bear fruits. Seemingly, he was also aware that

by the African Americans joining hands with the whites in the war, they would stand a chance to demand for equal treatment afterwards.

Frederick Douglass was a selfless leader who committed himself to ensuring African Americans acquired freedom from slavery. He wisely used his knowledge, and oratory and persuasive writing skills to fight for his people.

The Frederick Douglass Historic Site therefore is of great significance. It helps visitors to remember a great leader who fought for the right values in the society. The site inspires human right activists to forge ahead with their campaign to uphold human dignity. A lot of inspiration can be drawn from the work written by Frederick Douglass and his life.

Frederick Douglass set the foundation for the liberation of the African Americans from slavery. The historic site therefore has a special connection to the very present freedom of African Americans. The site can also be viewed as a symbol of the supremacy of civilization over barbaric acts such as slavery.

The Frederick Douglass Historic Site preserves the home of Frederick Douglass. This site is a commemoration of the life of Frederick Douglass. Frederick Douglass was a great leader who fearlessly fought for the liberation of slaves. He had great oratory skills and could write persuasively. His fame rose to an international level and his campaign to have slavery abolished was successful. He is remembered as a great African American leader of the nineteenth century who helped slaves to break free from shackles of slavery.

His legacy is celebrated by people of all walks of life. He is especially a significant figure to the African Americans and generally to all the civilized societies. His life can be said to be a living testimony of the power of persistence against evils in the society. This historic site therefore stands tall as a symbol of the victory of good over evil.

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