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Independent reporting on today's Underground Railroad

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The Emancipation Proclamation's and Watch Night's 150th Anniversaries



First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation to the Cabinet by Laura Era, 2010¹

New Year's Day this month marked the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's executive order issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, the second-most important step bringing freedom to enslaved Americans. The most important would come nearly three years later with the Thirteenth Amendment.

Though caution constrained Lincoln in what he felt he was able and unable to include in the Proclamation, anticipation ran high among all African-Americans and white abolitionists as the clock wound down toward the new year, and rejoicing rang out among them as 1863 was ushered in.

But freedom came in fits and starts over the next 36 months depending on where one lived.

Emancipated by order but not yet in fact on January 1, 1863, were only enslaved African-Americans in the



President Obama and the Emancipation Proclamation in the Oval Office

parts of the ten Confederate states not yet controlled by the Union. Remaining in bondage were enslaved people of the five slave states not in rebellion, and some in parts of the South already controlled by the Union army. The actual number immediately freed on New Year's Day was not more than 50,000, all of those in southern counties already brought under Union control.

As the Union army prosecuted the war, African-Americans in liberated regions became free. By war's end in 1865, this amounted to about 3.1 million freed people.

The five non-seceding slave states — Maryland, Delaware, Missouri, Kentucky and the newly formed West Virginia — were not included in the Emancipation Proclamation because Lincoln felt that he had restricted ability to order emancipa-
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Underground Railroad Tour Launched in Washington, DC



C. R. Gibbs

The Smithsonian Institution's Anacostia Community Museum, the Washington, DC, Humanities Council and *Port of Harlem* columnist C.R. Gibbs now offer free bus tours of Underground Railroad sites in the Washington neighborhoods of Georgetown and Anacostia, and nearby Silver Spring, Maryland and the Alexandria, Virginia waterfront. For reservations call 202.633.4844.

Gibbs, a National Museum of African American History

and Culture Scholar at the Smithsonian Institution, has authored six books on African-American history and appeared on the History Channel and European television. For Howard University's WHUT-TV, he wrote and narrated *Sketches in Color*, a 13-part companion serial to the PBS series, *The Civil War*. In 1989 he founded the African History and Culture Lecture Series offering free lectures at libraries, churches and elsewhere in the Washington-Baltimore area.

¹The woman in this 2010 painting is Anna Ella Carroll. In Francis Bicknell Carpenter's original 1864 painting, Carroll's chair, left vacant, is conspicuous for its presence, Carpenter's way of honoring Carroll who is credited with laying the foundation for the Emancipation Proclamation in her writings and suggesting to Lincoln a winning southern invasion war strategy.

Underground Railroad Honors for Book and Abolition Hall of Fame



The National Abolition Hall of Fame of Peterboro, New York, won a Public Broadcasting System contest by adding the most information to PBS's recently launched online Abolitionist Map of America.

Developed with innovative technology from public media history platform Historypin, the Abolitionist Map of America allows users to populate the map with geo-tagged notes, historical photos, documents and video clips on historical and contemporary Underground Railroad organizations and people. The map is the extension of the PBS series *The Abolitionists* premiering on January 8, 15, and 22.

See the November 2012 issue of *Underground Railroad Free Press* for an article on the map and our editorial on major Underground Railroad maps and listings.

Author Jonathan Scheckman's *Bound for the Future: Child Heroes of the Underground Railroad* was named as one of three finalists for a 2012 USA Best Book Award, sponsored by USA Book News.

The book had been nominated in the category of United States history. The winning entry was *Dressing for Altitude: Aviation Pressure Suits - Wiley Post to the Space Shuttle* by Dennis R. Jenkins.

Correction

In our November 2012 issue's book reviews including *Bound for the Future*, a line in the review of Gary Jenkins' *John Brown and the Last Train* should have read, "Narrated by and containing an interview of Jenkins, the seven-minute DVD is illustrated with graphics from Jenkins' accompanying book of the same name."

~

Now available at LifeDocumentaries.com, Mr. Jenkins offers a seven-minute clip from his 75-minute documentary *Freedom Seekers: Stories From the Western Underground Railroad* highlighting John Brown.

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Dig Unearths New Uncle Tom's Cabin Finds

After inspecting old maps and a 1927 aerial photograph, archaeologists using ground-penetrating radar, metal detectors and electrical conductivity found a buried foundation on a property adjacent to the Josiah Henson Special Park in Bethesda, Maryland. The structure may have been the blacksmith workshop on

the Riley farm where Underground Railroad icon Josiah Henson was enslaved. Isaac Riley was a blacksmith.

Says Montgomery Parks archaeologist Heather Bouslog, "It's just invaluable. I don't know how many people are aware that Josiah Henson, the model for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was living right here in Bethesda."

Today, the Josiah Henson Special Park is hemmed in by suburban sprawl in the midst of Maryland's most populous county. The home and grounds, which date to the early 1800s, are open to the public. Visit MontgomeryParks.org for more.

In 1830, Henson escaped to Canada on the Underground Railroad, founded the African-Canadian settlement of Dawn, Ontario, and became a leading voice for abolitionism. His autobiography published in London in 1849 inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 historical novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, still regarded as the most influential book ever written by an American.

Josiah Henson was probably the son of Maryland plantation owner Dr. Josias Hanson McPherson and, if so, was closely related to [John Hanson](#), first president of the original United States government under the Articles of Confederation.



The Riley farmhouse (left) and a log room like that in which Josiah Henson lived at the farm

Korea's Underground Railroad Circa 2013

The covert trail that has helped thousands of refugees escape

This article by Scott Snyder originally appeared in the October 17, 2012, issue of TheAtlantic.com. Scott A. Snyder is senior fellow for Korea studies and director of the program on U.S.-Korea policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. He writes regularly at Asia Unbound. From CFR.org. Reprinted with permission of the Council on Foreign Relations and CFR.org. For more analysis and blog posts on North Korea and foreign policy, visit CFR.org. The original article may also be found at the Council on Foreign Relations blog.

Former deputy editor of the Wall Street Journal Melanie Kirkpatrick has written a compelling book describing the tortuous path North Koreans must undertake across China to reach freedom in South Korea and other countries in the West. The book captures the multiple paths that desperate North Koreans have taken to arrive safely in South Korea and the West. It champions the sacrifices of dedicated individuals outside North Korea who have risked their lives to assist North Koreans in their road to freedom and to provide information back to North Korea about the outside world. And it savages the policies of governments including China, the United States, and South Korea for turning a blind eye to the suffering of North Koreans who are victims of an uncompromising totalitarian political system.

Chinese government policies receive the lion's share of Kirkpatrick's criticism precisely because those policies are what make the North Korean Underground Railroad so dangerous. Kirkpatrick strongly criticizes China's failure to recognize North Koreans as political refugees as well as China's complicity in enabling human trafficking of North Korean women. Kirkpatrick also takes China to task for denying citizenship rights to Chinese-North Korean mixed-race children, and for Chinese government efforts to round up and return North Koreans to detention, often under life-threatening circumstances for those fleeing the DPRK. China's policies even punish Kirkpatrick's heroes who have sacrificed their own resources and freedom to lead North Koreans on the Underground Railroad to freedom.

Despite the efforts of courageous facilitators who comprise Asia's Underground Railroad, the road to freedom Kirkpatrick describes remains unnecessarily fraught with risk and tragedy for those who are caught, sold, or repatriated to severe punishments in North Korea, page 6, column 1



A North Korean child refugee looks on as her mother is apprehended by Chinese policemen when her family attempted to flee to a Japanese Consulate after they crossed from North Korea into China. (Kyodo/Reuters)

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Editorial: Lincoln's Forgotten Triumph as Champion of National Development

This is an updating of an earlier version of this article written last year by *Underground Railroad Free Press* editor Peter H. Michael.

What Lincoln and the Congress managed to accomplish in just seven weeks in 1862 amidst the most perilous war the country ever saw almost certainly did more to propel national development than what any other administration did in the nation's history. Revered as the Great Emancipator, Lincoln also deserves the laurel of the foremost and most farsighted presidential national developer the United States has ever had.

Last year marked the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Land Grant Act, the sweeping legislation of 1862 which became the prime wellspring of national development, vaulting United States gross domestic product more than five-fold by the dawn of the twentieth century. The Act gave federal lands to the states and territories for the express purpose of founding public universities which over the rest of the 1800s became the nation's main founts for practical agricultural, technical and mechanical knowledge, from contour plowing to electrifying prairie towns to laying roads across a continent. Representative Justin Morrill of Vermont sponsored the Act and in 1871 Iowa State University became the first land grant institution.

While before 1862 a few eastern states, Maryland in 1807 for example, had launched state-funded universities, nearly the entire rest of the nation still had only more expensive private colleges catering almost exclusively to the sons — but seldom the daughters — of the wealthy. Some states and territories had nothing beyond high schools and few of them. From 1800 to 1900, the number of American colleges and universities grew from 23 to 821 with the bulk of growth coming in the new state universities after passage of the Morrill Act. Today the United States leads all nations with more than 4,000 colleges and universities.

The Morrill Act was one of four path-bending national watersheds accom-

plished in just 49 days during the Lincoln administration. On May 15, 1862, Lincoln signed into law a bill creating the United States Department of Agriculture. Five days later came the Homestead Act which, with its free 160 acres, then 640, to anyone who would farm them, made a sleeping-giant heartland hugely productive. The last Homesteader was a settler in Alaska in 1976. With the Pacific Railway Act on July 1, Lincoln and the Congress authorized the transcontinental railroad whose steel ribbons seven years later would tie the continent together, hugely accelerating national development. The following day came the Morrill Act. As much as anything in the nation's history, it was Lincoln's foresight which jump-started America's now waning international competitive advantage.

While the Homestead Act began boosting national productivity as soon as homesteaders' first crops came in, and the Transcontinental Railroad did so the day after the Golden Spike was driven into the Utah desert at Promontory Point in 1869, public investment in higher education kindled by the Morrill Act took longer to bear fruit but became the foremost engine of national development and American international competitive advantage.

The term "investment in human capital" coined by economist Jacob Mincer in 1958 was employed by Michael Porter in his landmark 1990 *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* in which Porter showed that the most potent national advantages are gained from the investments that a country makes in its own people, and that the most powerful of these is education. Medical care is second. Porter's groundbreaking global research cited the United States and Singapore as the most successful examples of investment in human capital to promote national economic development.

In Singapore's case, the only resource which the small country had to work with was her people. As Singapore's founding Prime Minister, the brilliant Lee Kuan-Yew, once noted, his nation's

Please see Lincoln, page 5, column 1

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And a very Happy New Year with our best wishes to you and yours for health, happiness and prosperity in 2013

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Peter H. Michael, Publisher
publisher@urrfreepress.com
301 | 874 | 0235

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Lincoln

only natural resources were 900 square miles of mud flats and a few tigers. Beginning with Singapore's independence in 1963, Lee and his government poured heavy investment into the Singaporean people with free public education through university, national medical care, strong public health measures, up-to-date information technology, and one of history's leading examples of rapid reduction of population growth. A poor country in 1963, Singapore only fifty years later boasts the world's longest life expectancy, nearly the world's top literacy and university graduation rates, and annual per capita income topping \$50,000, now slightly higher than that of the United States.

In the US case, the prime impetus of the nation's until recently unmatched international competitive advantage has been investment in public education by governments at all levels, with the leading drivers being the Morrill land grants founding public universities in every state, free compulsory public education through high school, and the community college movement begun in 1901, all of which rapidly began educating ever larger proportions of the US population well before most other industrialized nations caught on and followed suit. The GI Bill in 1944 and Pell Grants in 1972 were game-changers further accelerating investment in human capital through education.

Today, American state universities turn out a significant proportion of the world's university graduates, especially doctorates. Just over half of American high school graduates now go on to receive some college education, a figure until recently unmatched by any other country. With its attractiveness to foreign students worldwide, American higher education has become one of the nation's top export earners. American public universities and colleges have been building these educational advantages for well over a century, giving the United States a long head start in international competitive advantage that springs from educational investment in human capital begun with the Morrill Act.

The nation's other unique higher education innovation — an American expansion of the very definition of education — is the community college movement begun with Illinois' Joliet Junior College in 1901. America's 1,167 community colleges not only prepare people to transfer to four-year schools to complete their baccalaureates, but have become the main locus of training in the trades and providing essential spot courses to mid-career learners upgrading their skills. Your college grad relative, nurse, plumber, chef, programmer, co-worker, builder, grandchild or grandparent may well be a community college product.

However, United States investments in human capital and resulting economic surges stem disproportionately from three eras — the 1860s, the 1930s and the 1960s — when the federal government was able to pass visionary, destiny-altering legislation which would accelerate national economic development.

The Lincoln administration not only passed the Morrill Act, the Homestead Act and the Pacific Railway Act, and drove that last spike tying the continent together, but won a war permitting the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to open the door to African-American talent in national life.

The Franklin Roosevelt administration's creation of the personal savings program called Social Security provided the first decent measure of economic protection to another large segment of the population, allowing its children more options to cement their own economic futures. Polls repeatedly show Social Security as

Americans' single most valued government program.

With Medicare, the Lyndon Johnson administration bolstered the security of the elderly, the infirm and therefore of their families, and with the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, freed vast trapped human capital by finally fully enfranchising African-Americans (and all other citizens) after 88 years of Jim Crow. The Civil Rights Act also outlawed endemic "Madmen"-style discrimination in employment and other spheres of national life which until then had kept reins on nearly anyone who was not male or white.

The reason that Lincoln, Roosevelt and the second Johnson — Republicans and Democrats — and enlightened legislators were able to push through so much nation-bolstering legislation in their three eras was that the party in power had insuperable Congressional majorities, rare situations in American political history and a fortuity sorely denied today. The political supermajorities of the 1860s, 1930s and 1960s were brought about by high national turmoil in each case.

The United States hasn't done as well investing in its human capital by guarding its people's health. While all other industrialized nations and a growing number of middle-income countries have for decades assumed decent health care for all as natural a government role as fixing potholes, the United States now diverts nearly a tenth of all national resources, public and private alike, away from bettering the nation's health and into the coffers of insurance company middlemen as misguided and hugely expensive political dogma.

The results are a wasteful national health care bill nearly twice the proportion of national income that any other country pays, and American infant mortality which has sunk to 49th place, just above Slovakia and Qatar. United States life expectancy paints an even worse picture, in 50th place below Puerto Rico, Bosnia and Macao, and barely better than Libya, Cuba or the Dominican Republic. These rankings come not from any fuzzy-headed compilation but from the CIA. Failure to realize savings from investment in health drags on national economic growth, braking America's international economic competitiveness.

Today, America's competitive advantage ebbs before our eyes with too many not bothering to take note of it. While other nations promote health, learning and comity, the United States' combination of millions left expensively unhealthy, most states' current disinvestment in public education, and gang warfare in Congress is a wicked prescription for national decline which, in fact, is already under way. Only a few years ago, the United States had enjoyed the world's highest per capita income for decades; today it is 12th, just below the tiny enclave of Hong Kong and just above the even smaller Cayman Islands.

As the United States moves past the sesquicentennial of 1862's uniquely American innovations of national betterment, their jump-starting of the nation's astounding economic development, and securing of the nation's unique place on the world stage, the nation needs to ask if it is paying attention to the only thing that can sustain this great performance: continued investment in its own people, particularly their education and health, something to think about beside fiscal cliffs which aren't cliffs. As the 2013 blame-game shouting match grinds on in Washington, the two parties would do well to recall how Lincoln, a determined Congress, and their mutual comity accomplished so much in just seven weeks 151 years ago.

Korea

Korea. Over 20,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea in the past decade (2,737 arrived in South Korea in 2011 and 135 have relocated to the United States since 2006), but there is no way of knowing how many North Koreans fled the North but failed to find freedom. Even more serious for the future of the Underground Railroad is that the number of North Korean refugees during the first six months in 2012 under Kim Jong-un compared to the figure for the same period in 2011 dropped over 40 percent, to 751. This conspicuous difference is likely the result of strengthened North Korean border control efforts.

Escape from North Korea stands alongside *Nothing to Envy* and *Escape from Camp Fourteen* as books that highlight the tragic human consequences of North Korea's systemic failure. North Korea's famine in the late 1990s broke the hermetic seal that had previously shrouded the worst aspects of the North Korean system from the outside world; with growing flows of refugees came testimony to a political system that imposes absolute control by punishing even relatives of individuals accused of political dissent. These books convey the previously silenced voices of North Koreans, alongside North Korean refugee autobiographies such as Kang Chol-hwan's *The Aquariums of Pyongyang* and Yong Kim's *Long Road Home*.

But the books also raise a chilling question. Why, despite the growing record of personal testimonies regarding the brutality of North Korean totalitarianism, has there not been more effective international pressure to hold North Korea to account for the most egregious injustices? A U.N. human rights rapporteur has submitted reports on the country for almost a decade, but has never been allowed to visit North Korea. North Korea takes umbrage at criticisms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, but beyond naming and shaming North Korea, the DPRK government faces few tangible costs for its human rights violations. President Bush reportedly took pride in highlighting the plight of North Korean refugees through personal meetings in the Oval Office with Kang Chol-hwan and the family of abductee Megumi Yokota, but while raising international consciousness about the plight of North Korea's victims these gestures did not materially change the situation in North Korea.

During a speech at a symposium on genocide prevention co-sponsored by CFR and held at the Holocaust Museum last July, Secretary Clinton highlighted the Obama administration's establishment of an Atrocities Prevention Board designed to take action in response to "demonizing brutality in North Korean prison camps," but it is not clear that the establishment of that board will have any direct effect on the "slow-motion" crisis that has persisted in North Korea. The conditions reported by North Korean refugees who have experienced detention in North Korea are exactly the circumstances that the world has resolved should never be allowed to happen again. But it is happening, and Melanie Kirkpatrick's book provides a call for action.

The 1,500 North Korean refugees making it to South Korea in 2012 were barely half the 2,700 of 2011 according to South Korea's Unification Ministry. The 2012 figure is the first below 2,000 since 2006 as the North, under Kim Jong-un, has cracked down on people trying to leave, says Yonhap news agency.

Watch Night

tion only by his wartime authority under Article II of the Constitution. The Proclamation gave Lincoln the legal basis to free slaves only in Southern places still in rebellion.

However, Maryland, Tennessee, Missouri and West Virginia would emancipate their states' enslaved and outlaw slavery by their own legislation or, in Maryland's case in 1864, by entirely rewriting her constitution.

The last to be freed, Kentucky's 40,000 slaves and Delaware's 1,000, would not gain their freedom until December 18, 1865 with the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment eight months after the end of the Civil War.

Aside from opening the door to freedom, the Emancipation Proclamation proved to have strategic advantages for Lincoln and the Union.

Predictably, the South was enraged by the Emancipation Proclamation and northern Copperheads, not as much interested in freeing the enslaved as keeping the nation whole, were antagonistic, but this was expected.

Gained immediately were high hopes by African-Americans nationwide, the Proclamation's allowing African-Americans to serve in the Union military which 200,000 of them then did, and the approbation of European powers most of which had themselves abolished slavery earlier in the century. The Emancipation Proclamation is also credited with helping Lincoln to win reelection in 1864 and having brought in an additional five Republican Senate seats (among a then total of forty-eight) in 1862 leading up to the already announced Proclamation.

A day earlier than the Emancipation Proclamation, an American tradition still observed was born. Around the country on the last night of 1862, African-Americans and others waited with the hugest anticipation the stroke of midnight and would continue this observation, Watch Night, on new year's eves ever since. Among many others, the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum of Peterboro, New York observed Watch Night as 2013 dawned.

One very prescient emancipated nine-year-old Virginia boy put it thus:

"As the great day drew nearer, there was more singing in the slave quarters than usual. It was bolder, had more ring, and lasted later into the night. Most of the verses of the plantation songs had some reference to freedom.... Some man who seemed to be a stranger (a United States officer, I presume) made a little speech and then read a rather long paper—the Emancipation Proclamation, I think. After the reading we were told that we were all free, and could go when and where we pleased. My mother, who was standing by my side, leaned over and kissed her children, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks. She explained to us what it all meant, that this was the day for which she had been so long praying, but fearing that she would never live to see."

Only sixteen years later, as a free man twenty-five years old, the grown boy founded the first African-American institution of higher education, Tuskegee Institute. Booker Taliaferro Washington would go on to live a life of many firsts.