Slavery and Abolition in the US: Select Publications of the 1800s was supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in association with Millersville University and Dickinson College.
Slavery and Abolition in the US: Select Publications of the 1800s is a digital collection of books and pamphlets that demonstrate the varying ideas and beliefs about slavery in the United States as expressed by Americans throughout the nineteenth century. The works in this collection reflect arguments on both sides of the slavery debate and include first person narratives, legal proceedings and decisions, anti-slavery tracts, religious sermons, and early secondary works. The publications are all drawn from the holdings of the Millersville University Library and the Dickinson College Library, as well as each of their respective Special Collections Departments. The collection includes more than 24,000 individual pages of printed text and corresponding searchable transcriptions. This online resource is made freely available to the public, and we hope that providing these rare and important research materials will enhance teaching and learning, at all levels of instruction, about this complex issue.
Lewis Tappan and William Lloyd Garrison founded the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. The society gave former slaves such as Frederick Douglass and William Wells Brown a chance to tell their stories. The society was very popular and spread to 1,350 local chapters with nearly 250,000 members. To further their cause, the American Anti-Slavery society published a newspaper called the National Anti-Slavery. Many famous abolitionists belonged to the American Anti-Slavery Society. Even though the Society was quite popular in certain circles, it often met harsh resistance for its beliefs and practices.

A formal statement of the beliefs and goals of the American Anti-Slavery Society at the time of their founding.

During this convention, the delegates discussed how to end the slave trade as well as how to end slavery in states like Connecticut.

Born into a Quaker family on May 7, 1799, in Elizabethtown, PA, Edwin Pitt Atlee moved to Philadelphia with his family at the age of eight. As a child he was tutored by Benjamin Tucker, an active member of the anti-slavery society. Atlee went on to study medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He joined the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery society in 1821. Atlee was also a Pennsylvania delegate to the American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery. He served as president for schools under the direction of the society for several years. Edwin Atlee died on December 25, 1836.

In his address, Edwin Atlee discusses the suffering of slaves including the enslavement of children based on the status of the mother.
Benjamin Bacon provides information on the education and employment of African Americans in Philadelphia in the 1850s.

Frederick Douglass was born in February 1818, as a slave in Talbot County, Maryland. At the age of twelve, his master’s wife began to teach him the alphabet, but was ordered to stop by her husband. Despite this interference, Douglass learned to read from white children and to write from watching writings of the men he worked with. Once literate, Douglass read newspapers, books and any material he could find. Also, he taught many other slaves to read the New Testament at Sabbath school.

On September 3, 1838, Douglass escaped from the plantation by train, traveled to New York and eventually to Massachusetts. A year before Douglass obtained freedom he met Anna Murray, a free African American, who he married after his escape. Douglass is remembered for his work as an abolitionist, author and politician. He published several newspapers that focused on key social issues like the education of African Americans. In 1872, Douglass was nominated as Victoria Woodhull’s running mate on the Equal Rights Party ticket. This made him the first African American to be nominated for the office of Vice President of the United States. Frederick Douglass died on February 20, 1895.
Frederick Douglass recounts his personal experiences as a slave.

Frederick Douglass offers an autobiographical account of his life both as a slave and later as a free man.

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. Boston: Published at the Anti-Slavery Office, 1845.

Written nearly fifty years later, David Forbes recounts the events surrounding the Christiana Riot in Pennsylvania.
Born in Massachusetts on December 12, 1805, William Lloyd Garrison became a prominent social reformer. In his twenties, Garrison supported colonization for the freed slaves but soon rejected these plans, in favor of abolition. He was editor of the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator*. Garrison was also a founder of the American Anti-Slavery Society. He originally advocated for gradual emancipation but started to fight for immediate and universal abolition of slavery. Garrison shook the abolitionist movement when he allowed women to participate in the American Anti-Slavery Society. Garrison became extremely unpopular in certain circles after he declared the United States Constitution a pro-slavery document that should be burnt. After the abolition of slavery, Garrison continued to work for social reforms including women’s rights and temperance. Garrison died on May 24, 1879 and was buried in Massachusetts.

Arguing that free African Americans are denied basic human rights, William Lloyd Garrison outlines ways that the community can overcome the differences in the races.
Ellwood Griest tells the story of two fugitive slaves that made their way to freedom with the assistance of the Quakers in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.
Hinton Rowan Helper was born on December 27, 1829 in Mocksville, North Carolina. He graduated from Mocksville Academy in 1848. In 1851, Helper moved to California but was unsuccessful in becoming wealthy and eventually moved back to North Carolina. Helper published *The Impending Crisis of the South* in 1857. The book used statistical facts to prove that slavery was not only harmful to the economic stability of non-slaveholders but also destructive for the south as a whole. Helper’s book was banned in the south, but was used as a campaign document by the Republican Party from 1857 until 1861. Even though Helper did not believe in slavery, he was not a friend to the African Americans living in the country. He believed that the races should be kept separate at all costs. Hinton Rowan Helper died on March 8, 1909.

Hinton Helper, a Southerner, suggests that slavery is leading to the economic downfall of the South and that abolition is necessary in order to become commercially competitive.

Benjamin Lundy was born on January 4, 1789 in Hardwick, New Jersey. Lundy was a member of the Religious Society of Friends. At the age of nineteen, moved to Wheeling, Vermont, where he served an apprenticeship with a saddle-maker. This is where he first became opposed to the slave trade. 1815 he founded the Union Human Society. The following year, Lundy established the anti-slavery newspaper *Genius of Universal Emancipation*.

William Lloyd Garrison aided Lundy with the publication of the newspaper until Garrison moved to Boston. Lundy eventually moved to Philadelphia and began the newspaper, *The National Inquirer*, in 1829. Many of Lundy’s belongings were lost in the burning of the Pennsylvania Hall in 1838 by a mob. In 1839, he moved to Illinois and returned to publishing *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Lundy traveled throughout the country and its territories in attempts to limit the spread of slavery. Benjamin Lundy died on August 22, 1839.

Thomas Earle recounts the life of Benjamin Lundy, an active abolitionist who traveled about the young United States and the western territories.
Lucretia Mott was born on January 3, 1793, in Nantucket, Massachusetts, as Lucretia Coffin. In 1811, she married James Mott, an abolitionist and woman’s rights supporter, who actively supported his wife’s endeavors. Born into a family of Quakers, she became a minister in 1821. She was an active abolitionist and aided in the foundation of two anti-slavery groups. In her fight against slavery, Lucretia Mott boycotted the by-products of slavery. Mott is best remembered for the clarity and power of her speeches.

After Mott was refused a seat at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention, Mott became and tireless advocate of women’s rights and worked with Elizabeth Cady Stanton in organizing the Seneca Falls Convention in New York. In 1850, Mott published Discourse on Women, which detailed the restrictions placed on women in the United States and Western Europe. Lucretia Mott died on November 11, 1880.

In this sermon, Lucretia Mott discusses the evils of slavery and the importance of education for people of all races.
James and Lucretia Mott created the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1838, the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society built Pennsylvania Hall. Pro-slavery rioters burned the building three days after it opened. Several prominent abolitionists such as Mary Grew, James Miller McKim, and Robert Purvis served as members of the society. While working at the society, William Still, helped a man named Peter Freedman, who he later discovered was his own brother.
The Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society issues the annual report of its activities, and includes reports on recent events in Christiana.

In telling the story of Passmore Williamson’s trial, the Anti-Slavery Society warns Pennsylvanians against the power of the Federal Government.


Durbin was born in Kentucky, Durbin became a cabinet maker apprentice at the age 13 following his father’s death. Durbin continued to educate himself, eventually becoming a licensed minister. His travels led him to Ohio where he was able to attend college. After graduating, he taught at Augusta College in Kentucky and became Chaplain for the United States Senate. John Price Durbin served as president of Dickinson College from 1834 until 1842 when he returned to the ministry. He died on October 18, 1876.

No information is available for William Pettit.

Both William Pettit and John Price Durbin argue that slavery is an evil that should be ended, but they also suggest that America cannot handle the emancipation of the freed slaves financially, and that the best solution is colonization.
James Redpath was born in England on August 24, 1833. In 1849, Redpath immigrated with his family to Michigan. Once in America, Redpath entered the printer’s trade and wrote for the anti-slavery movement under the name “Berwick.” Discovered by Horace Greeley, Redpath moved to New York to work on *The New York Tribune* at the age of 19. Redpath made several trips into the South to study the institution of slavery first hand. From these trips, Redpath published *The Roving Editor, or, Talks with Slaves in the Southern United States*. In 1855, he traveled to Kansas and became actively involved with the anti-slavery movement taking place in the territory. While in Kansas, Redpath met John Brown with whom he shared similar ideology about slavery. During the Civil War, he continued to publish and write materials. In 1879, James Redpath started reporting on the tumultuous happenings of Ireland. He served as an editor for the book *Jefferson Davis, ex-president of the Confederate States of America: a memoir by his wife*. Due to injuries sustained after being hit by a vehicle while crossing the street, James Redpath died on February 10, 1891.

In this biography published shortly after the execution of John Brown, James Redpath recounts the life of the leader of the famed Harpers Ferry raid.

James J. Robbins, working from the notes of court reporters Arthur Cannon and Samuel Dalrymple, recounts the trial of Castner Hanway, who stood accused for his involvement in the Christiana Riot.
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn was born in New Hampshire on December 15, 1831. Sanborn attended Harvard, graduating in the class of 1855. After college, he settled in Concord, Massachusetts. Sanborn was one of John Brown’s secret six, influential financial supporters of Brown’s movement. After Brown’s attack Sanborn fled to Canada with two other members of the group. The United States Senate attempted to get him to testify but he remained on the run until the state of Massachusetts stepped in to protect him. Throughout his life, Sanborn worked as a journalist and advocate for social reforms, including prison reform and treatment of the mentally ill. Sanborn died on February 24, 1917, in New Jersey.

Journalist Franklin B. Sanborn offers a biographical account of his friend John Brown, and includes in his work correspondence between Brown and other prominent figures of his time.
Born in Vermont on April 4, 1792, Thaddeus Stevens suffered many hardships as a child including being born with a club foot and having an alcoholic father. Stevens graduated from Dartmouth in 1814 and moved to York, Pennsylvania, where he taught and studied law. After passing the bar, Stevens practiced law in Gettysburg and then in Lancaster. Thaddeus Stevens was an active member of political parties including the Federalist Party, the Anti-Masonic Party, the Whig Party, and the Republican Party. He was a member of the House of Representatives from 1849-1853, and again from 1859 until his death in 1868. An active social reformer, Stevens increasingly became involved in defending fugitive slaves. Stevens died on August 11, 1868, in Washington, D.C. His funeral and burial took place in Lancaster, PA. In his will, Thaddeus Stevens left money for the development of a school for orphaned children regardless of color.
Speeches of Thaddeus Stevens

Senator Thaddeus Stevens argues against the expansion of slavery into the western territories.

Thaddeus Stevens suggests that the majority of the nation opposes slavery, but that the institution has grown in importance, replacing other notable issues such as agriculture and commerce.


Jesse Torrey was a physician in Philadelphia. He wrote *A Portraiture of Domestic Slavery in the United States* based on his observations and interviews about the slave trade. Torrey was the author of several other works including *The American Slave Trade, Or An Account Of The Manner In Which The Slave Dealers Take Free People From Some Of The United States Of America, And Carry Them Away, And Sell Them As Slaves In Other Of The States*. Torrey argued that slavery should be ended gradually. While other reformers of the time advocated for colonization, Torrey believed that most slaves would like to remain in America where they were born.

Writing for an end to the African slave-trade, Jesse Torrey argues that, while slavery might continue in the United States, slave masters should not be tyrants to those under their authority.
Dudley Atkins Tyng was born on January 12, 1825, in Prince George’s County, Maryland. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1843, and then pursued studies in theology at the Alexandria seminary in Virginia. Tyng became an Episcopal minister in 1846, and went on to serve in New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Tyng served as rector of the Church of the Epiphany in Philadelphia from 1854 until right before his death. He was forced to leave his parish over his opposition to slavery. He died as a result of an accident on April 19, 1858, in Brookfield, Pennsylvania.

Reverend Dudley Tyng used the events in Kansas in 1854 to highlight the evils of slavery and their effect on society.
Pennsylvania citizens express their disgust and dismay that slavery is tolerated in the nation’s capital.

Attributed to Samuel Webb, this history includes letters, speeches and other information regarding Pennsylvania Hall, built as a place to discuss slavery and other important social issues of the day, but destroyed by an angry mob after only four days.

Webb, Samuel. *History of Pennsylvania Hall, which was Destroyed by a Mob, on the 17th of May, 1838*. Philadelphia: Merrihew and Gunn, 1838.
Theodore Dwight Weld was born on November 23, 1803, in Hampton, CT. Weld attended Philips Andover Academy but did not finish due to failing eyesight. In his youth, Weld was influenced by Charles G. Finney and Charles Stuart. In 1833, Weld began attending Lane Theological Seminary in Ohio but left when the school’s trustees suppressed the anti-slavery movement on campus. In 1838, Theodore Weld married Angelina Emily Grimké. Weld was very active in the anti-slavery movement on a national level. Not only was he a well known speaker, Weld was the editor of books and pamphlets for the American Anti-Slavery Society. Theodore Weld started a school for children of all races and genders in Eagleswood, New Jersey, in 1854. Theodore Weld eventually moved to Massachusetts in 1864 where he continued his work as a teacher and lecturer. Weld died on February 3, 1895.

Abolitionist Theodore Weld, with the assistance of the American Anti-Slavery Society, publishes a compendium of slavery accounts drawn primarily from newspapers and other printed sources.
Passmore Williamson was born on February 23, 1822, in Westtown, Pennsylvania. Williamson was a member of the Society of Friends and believed strongly in the abolitionist movement. He served as secretary for the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society. The actions of Passmore Williamson gained notoriety in July 1855 when Williamson and William Still boarded a ship in Camden to remove the slave Jane Johnson and her children from John Wheeler’s possession. Wheeler’s political connections meant a speedy arrest for Williamson. He was imprisoned in Philadelphia’s Moyamensing Prison. Presiding Judge Kane convicted Passmore Williamson of Contempt of Court. He served time from July 27 to November 3, 1855. The case highlighted the ongoing battle in America between the abolitionist movement and the rights of the slaveholders. During his time in Moyamensing Prison, many famous abolitionists visited him in prison. Passmore Williamson died in February of 1895.

The trial of Passmore Williamson, accused of aiding fugitive slaves, is presented in full.
Acknowledgment

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