Harriet Tubman

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Harriet Tubman is one of the most important civil rights figures in the history of African Americans. She was a slave, abolitionist, railroad conductor, spy, soldier, nurse and famous for her services for Blacks in the civil rights movement. He was an avid advocate of women's suffrage and civil rights. Tubman was born into slavery and since she was quite young she was made to do the fieldwork and domestic labor. Like other slaves, she did not have a lot of control over her life. However, her rebelliousness was something she inherited from her mother[[1]](#footnote-1). She rebelled when a trader approached her owner to buy the youngest son of a slave. She told him, “You are after my son; but the first man that comes into my house, I will split his head open.” After this, the owner backed from the sale and refused the trader. This is what inspired Tubman to rebel against slavery and her mother’s rebelliousness emphasized the potentials of resistance to the brutalizing practice of slavery.

From a very young age, she stood for the rights of others despite suffering for her own pains. She also saved a fellow slave woman from beating from his master. Once she also got hit by a brick that was aimed at another slave who ran to avoid the brick and it hit Tubman. She said, “It broke my skull”[[2]](#footnote-2). After the incident, she was left untreated and again sent to the fields with the blood rolling down her face. This incident got her brain permanent damage that could not be undone but made her a strong woman and did not discourage her. This is what she lost in being rebellious against the masters and in helping other slaves.

She always rebelled against the mastery of others and decided to marry. After getting married, she was able to escape her master. Tubman was already familiar with the marshes, highways, byways, swamps, and lanes and marched 145 kilometers to Pennsylvania. Even after the escape, she could not sit still. She joined the Underground Railroad to support the escaped slaves and also became one of the best “conductors”[[3]](#footnote-3). The Underground Railroad was a route to the Southern states supported by the group of people aimed at helping the escaped slaves with accommodation and shelter. Her rebelliousness against slavery is evident from the fact that despite the dangers, she also made several trips to the South and helped about 300 slaves to escape. She was very proud that she never lost the passenger and never ran her train off the track.

In addition, she was the first woman to lead an armed attack during the Civil War against the Confederate forces. Along the Combahee River in South Carolina, she was also able to free about 700 slaves during a raid on a group of plantations. All of her life was devoted to fighting against equality and conquering slavery. As she was moving towards older age, her physical frailty began to increase but she remained a tireless rebel and took the campaign for women’s equality and vigor.

Harriet Tubman specifically was such a special person in our history because of her work specifically in trying to get as many slaves to freedom as possible, versus say, prioritizing trying to get consideration for woman slaves. She helped lead some escaped slaves to freedom in the North by way of the Underground railway due to her rebelliousness. It was a series of safe houses run by abolitionist sympathizers. They all risked imprisonment because they were breaking state laws as well as federal laws at the time. Why? Because they were stealing other people’s property according to the law, slaves were property, not people.

1. Sterling, *Freedom Train: The Story of Harriet Tubman*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Humez, *Harriet Tubman: The Life and the Life Stories*. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Harriet Tubman, the Rebel Conductor | Red Flag.” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)