

SPRING/SUMMER 2018

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THE

# KEYNOTER

THE AMERICAN POLITICAL ITEMS CONSERVATORS



## THE ROAD TO EMANCIPATION UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

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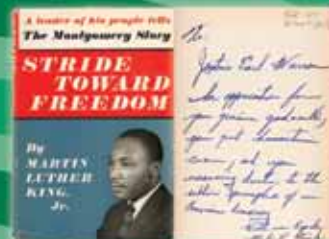
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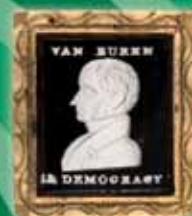
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## FROM THE APIC PRESIDENT

It is sometimes hard to realize how a society can live with a contradiction like slavery. The dilemma goes back to the earliest days of our Republic when the Founding Fathers wrestled over the issue, reaching uncomfortable compromises like states' rights and counting slaves as 3/5th of a human being for congressional representation. The issue caused what must surely have been our greatest national tragedy -- the battle between brothers known as the Civil War -- and remains unresolved to this day.

This issue explores the path to human freedom in the days before the Civil War and also the opposing reaction against freedom afterwards known as the Ku Klux Klan.

President Abraham Lincoln once said, "I think that slavery is wrong, morally, socially and politically. I desire that it should be no further spread in these United States, and I should not object if it should gradually terminate in the whole Union." A former slave who helped found the Underground Railroad to smuggle slaves out of the Slave States, Harriet Tubman, had a more personal perspective. "Now I've been free, I know what dreadful condition slavery is," she said, "I have seen hundreds of escaped slaves, but I never saw one who was willing to go back and be a slave."



*Ron Puechner*

Ron Puechner, President

Each issue contains images drawn from the collections of APIC members and many other sources. In not all cases are the images used of the density they should be for sharpness in publication, but on a few occasions, the importance of presenting the image outweighs its quality.

Our policy is to endeavor to size pinbacks as accurately as possible (since there may be several sizes of the same pin known or yet to be discovered}, but ribbons, banners, paper and 3D items are not usually shown in actual size.

We encourage members to submit images of their own items for publication in the Keynoter. Topics for future issues will be announced several months in advance on the APIC Facebook page. Images must be submitted in a digital .jpg format against a white background in a minimum of 300 dpi. If you do not have the availability of a scanner, local print shops such as Kinko's usually offer a scanning service for a small fee.

If you have any questions about how to do this, please contact the Keynoter Illustrations Editor Germaine Broussard: [watrwitch@erols.com](mailto:watrwitch@erols.com) All images should be sent to Ms. Broussard.

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**To all who dedicated their  
time and efforts to make  
"The Keynoter"  
the outstanding  
publication that it is.**

**We know first hand how  
long and hard all of you  
work to produce it.**

**Thank you  
David & Janice Frent**



## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

I have long admired Eric Hoffer's comment. "Every great cause begins as a movement, becomes a business, and eventually degenerates into a racket."

This issue focuses on the cause of human freedom and abolition of slavery. As the various articles describe, there is a process by which new ideas enter society as crazy concepts held by oddballs and cranks then evolve into broader social acceptance until they become mainstream and in time turn into clichés to be mocked by the next generation. Thus, too, was abolition of slavery.

While many of us are dazzled by the gaudy spectacle of candidates and elections, the real purpose behind all the ballyhoo is found in the issues of each era. From Independence to Secession to Protection to Labor Rights to Civil Rights, the sometimes tawdry game of politics can mask the serious nature of the issues that shape our civic discourse.

As a counterpoint to abolition, we also present some of the mementoes of the Ku Klux Klan, a durable organization created to defend White Supremacy that later expanded its enemies list to include Jews, Catholics and anyone whose ancestry was outside of Great Britain and Northern Europe.

Isaac Newton's third law is that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. That is why progress is such a fragile thing, vulnerable to being halted and reversed. That is one key reason that we study and preserve history; to know where we came from and how we got here.



Michael Kelly  
Editor



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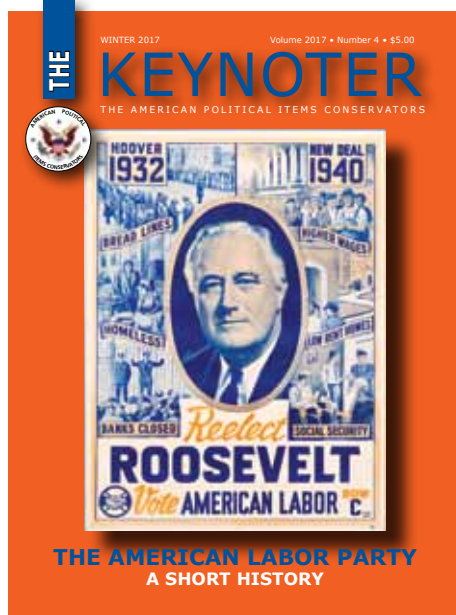


**FRONT COVER--** 19th century ceramic drinking vessel.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



*John Vargo and the entire APIC editorial staff is to be commended on the excellent American Labor Party article in the Winter 2017 issue. The graphics with this article were outstanding and reflected the short history of the party from the period. Well done!*

Dave Quintin (APIC # 2776)



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# Uncle Tom's Cabin and the Abolitionist Movement

By Michael Kelly and Robert McNamara

It was a book that shook society to its foundations. The best-selling novel of the 19th century, only the Bible sold more copies. Published in 1852, the year Democrat Franklin Pierce thrashed Winfield Scott of the crumbling Whig Party to win the White House, publication of the book was a key milestone on the nation's turbulent road to civil war. The book is *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Life Among the Lowly* and it was written by a woman named Harriet Beecher Stowe.

It can take an effort of imagination to realize the power that story had on the readers of its time.

Stowe's work appeared in the aftermath of the Compromise of 1850, which included the Fugitive Slave Act. That law required governments and citizens in free states to assist slave-owners in recapturing escaped slaves who had reached those parts of the country where slavery was illegal.

It was a law that grated on many northerners whose taxes funded slave-hunting law officers. Slavery was becoming less of an abstraction to free staters. In the novel it is made clear that all Americans, not just those in the South, are thereby responsible for the evil institution of slavery.

In the South, mail containing abolitionist literature was seized and burned by mobs and eventually by federal postmasters. Southerners saw anti-slavery literature and the Abolitionist movement as anarchy and a threat to property. Northerners questioned why the federal postal system refused to deliver the mail freely.

The 1852 election of Franklin Pierce was an attempt to avoid the issue. The opposition Whig Party was collapsing and able to carry only four states for Winfield Scott in its last presidential contest. Pierce was the product of an alliance between the South and pro-slavery Northerners. His administration supported Southern interests and during his term pressure continued to build on both sides of the issue.

Harriet Beecher Stowe produced her story at a moment when moral concerns were stirring across the nation. Her work of fiction aimed at general readers and was steeped in the suspense, drama and sentimentality that had broad appeal. All her characters, both black and white, struggle with the institution of slavery while religion plays a powerful role; many noted Christ-like qualities in Uncle Tom.







Stowe also dealt with slavery as a business, a matter of property and profit. The buying and selling of humans provide major turns in the plot, and there is a particular focus on how the traffic in slaves separated families.

As with most novels of the era, the storyline is not exactly complicated and nuanced. Historian Hollis Robbins summarizes the story thus: "The plot in brief: the slave Uncle Tom is sold away from his cabin and family on the Shelby plantation in Kentucky; he serves the St. Clare family in Louisiana, from which he is sold after the death of Eva and her father; he lands at the Legree plantation on the Red River where he is whipped to death rather than betray two runaway slaves. Meanwhile some slaves escape (Eliza on ice floes across the Ohio River) and find long-lost relatives; others kill themselves and their children. The white characters discuss politics and religion. Everybody weeps."

But the story showed how different from cattle the slaves were; how tenderness and kindness could be part of a slave's life just as for the owner. The manner in which Uncle Tom is sold and resold into harsher conditions highlights the disruption of family life "among the lowly". Uncle Tom's Cabin humanized an abstraction through memorable characters and touching situations. One reason why Uncle Tom's Cabin resonated so deeply with Americans is because characters and incidents in the book seemed real. There was a reason for that. Harriet Beecher Stowe had lived in southern Ohio in the 1830s and 1840s, and had come into contact with abolitionists and former slaves. She heard a number of stories about life in slavery as well as some harrowing escape stories. Stowe was a teacher and active in the abolitionist movement in her native New England. She first wrote the story as a serial that ran in a Washington, DC abolitionist newspaper, *The National Era*. Stowe's original intent was a short piece that would run for a few issues and use the melodramatic tale to attract support for the cause. Instant public response inspired Stowe to expand the story, which would eventually appear for 40 weeks. Such was the success that the readership of *The National Era* jumped from 17,000 to 28,000 during the story's serialization.

Seeing the popular enthusiasm for Stowe's story, book publisher John P. Jewett offered to turn the series of articles into a book. At first Stowe couldn't understand why people would buy a book when the story had already been widely read but agreed to let Jewett proceed. Certain that he had a successful publication on his hands, Jewett went to the then-unusual expense of including six full-page illustrations. When it was released on March 20, 1852 it sold 3,000 copies on the first day and soon sold out of the first run. That year sales of the novel passed 300,000 and Jewett even created a luxury edition with 117 illustrations. A stage production by American actor and playwright George Aiken remained the most popular play in England and America for seventy-five years.

As the Civil War raged, a new edition became a hit all over again. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was translated into most major languages and eventually sold 1.5 million copies in Great Britain alone (although Stowe received very little from those sales as most were illegal pirated editions under the weak copyright laws of the era). Even today, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* remains the world's second most translated book, after the Bible.

So what was all the attention about?

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* broke through the profound racial separation of 19th century society in a previously unknown way, especially on such a wide scale. For white society to read of black slaves as individual human beings with virtues and lives not beyond white comprehension was to open new ground for understanding. It became harder to accept the legal status of human slaves as being no different than cattle or other property (notwithstanding counting as 3/5 of a person when it came to congressional representation). In a world that had once accepted slavery on every continent and in every culture, dehumanizing the slave is critical to maintaining an assumption of self-righteousness on the part of those who benefit from slavery. Once that illusion falls, change can occur.

The appearance of the book had a timely impact on America. Less than a month before the story was published in book form, around 30 opponents of the Kansas-Nebraska Act gathered in a school house in Ripon, Wisconsin (on February 28, 1854) to call for the organization of a new political party. A similar gathering in July in Jackson, Michigan presented the first electoral ticket of what would become the Republican Party. In a stunning upheaval, both the established Democrats and Whigs lost a large number of seats in Congress in the 1854 election, allowing an opposition coalition to elect the House Speaker. Two years later, in 1856, the Republicans easily took second place in the presidential race, pushing the old Whig Party and the short-lived American Party into history. Republican nominee John Charles Fremont ran with the slogan "Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Speech, Free Men and Fremont."

Four years after that, Republicans elected Abraham Lincoln as President. Lincoln's election on a modestly-abolitionist platform led the slave states to immediately begin the process of secession from the Union shortly followed by the bloody Civil War. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a critical step in crystalizing anti-slavery opinion in those years and generating increased support for the Republican Party and its candidates. The question of abolition went from being considered a crazy idea advanced by assorted cranks and malcontents to being a mainstream view in little more than a decade. Clearly, Harriet Beecher Stowe's story was part of bringing anti-slavery ideas into the national consciousness.



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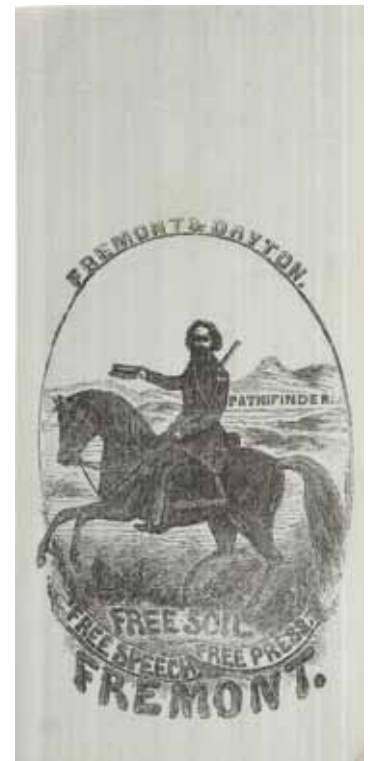
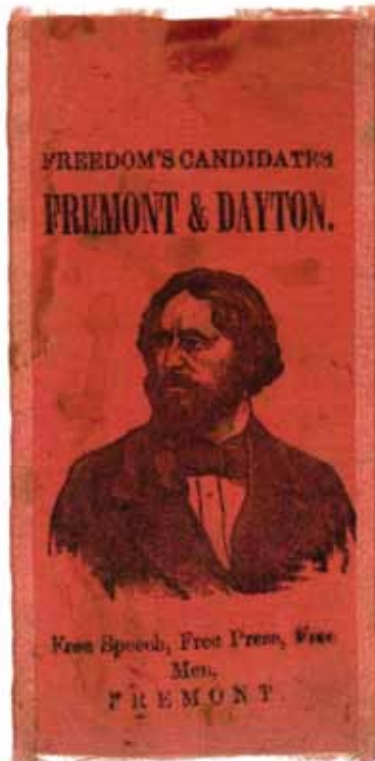
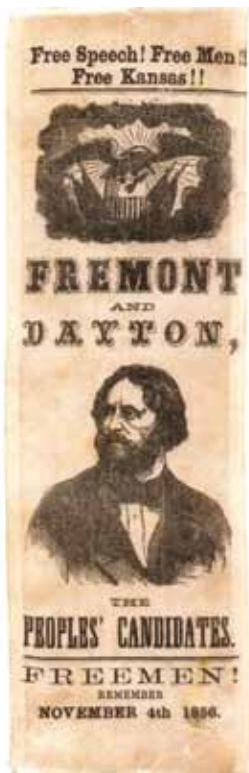
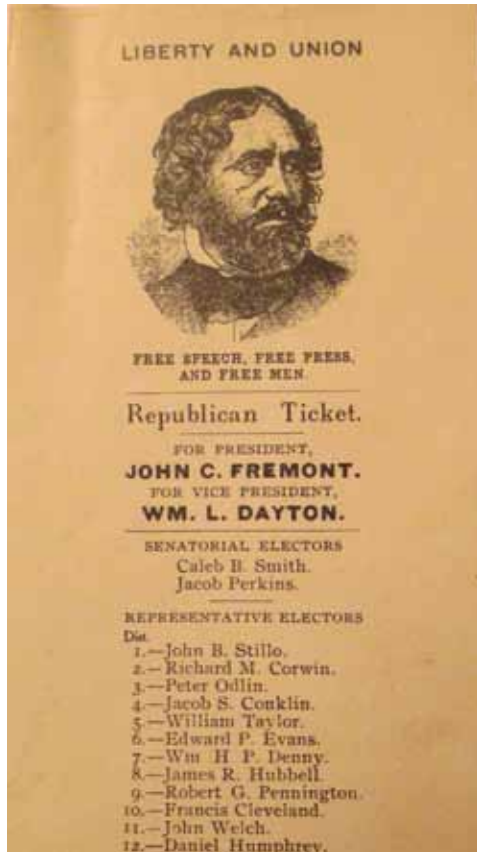
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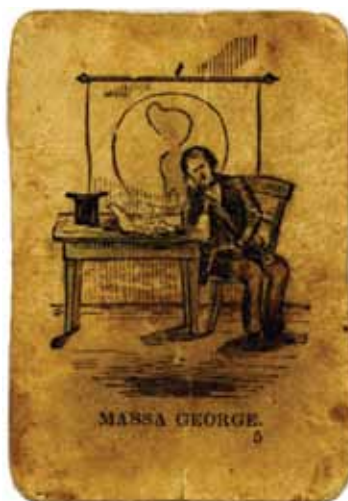
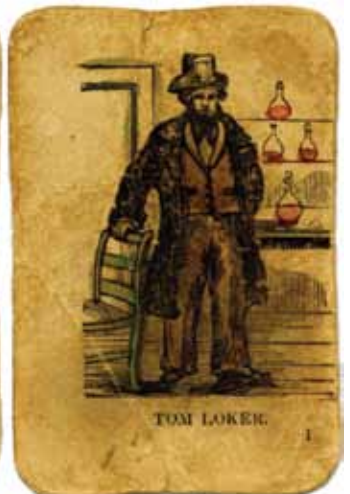
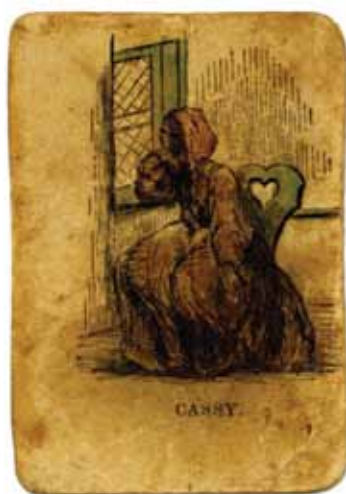
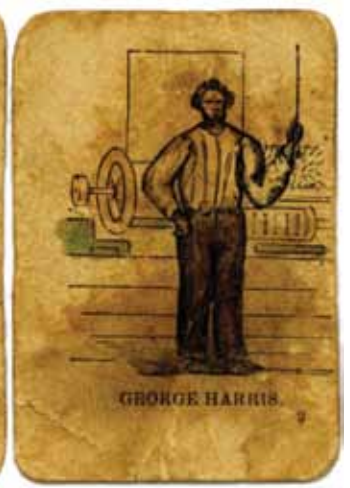
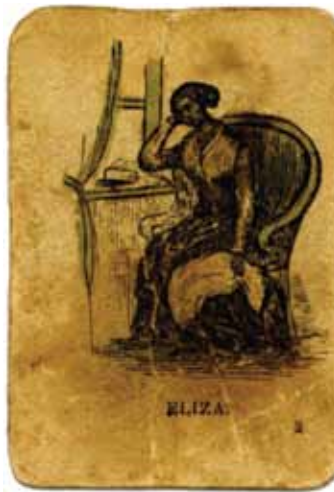


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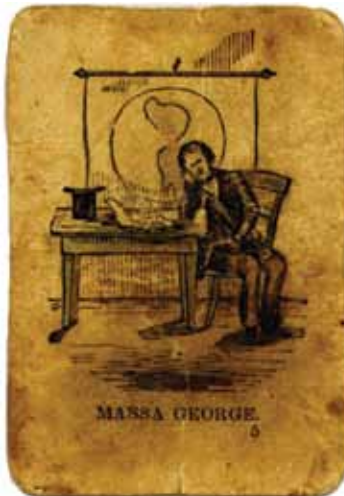




## "Justice" Card Game based on Uncle Tom's Cabin







## JUSTICE.

### DIRECTIONS.

Let all the cards except Justice be well shuffled and dealt among the players.

Let every one ascertain what family would be most pleasing to complete.

Let the dealer commence to play by calling on the one at the right for some card which goes to complete the family decided upon. Let him call until a failure is made to obtain the card called for, when the next at the right must take turn, and so on, until some one in the party has a complete family, when that person must call on some particular one for Legree, which, if possessed, must be delivered up, and a forfeit of one card made to the caller. If the person called on should not have Legree, the caller must then pay a forfeit of one card to the one called upon, when the game continues.

If the holder of a complete family should have Legree, silence must be preserved.

The first one whose cards have all been taken can have recourse to Justice, the second one out, &c., must go out of the game.

The one who holds Justice cannot be put out of the game until the card be taken.

The winner of the game is the one who holds Uncle Tom, Little Eva, and Justice.

The families are designated by different figures.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1832,  
by V. S. W. PARKHURST, in the Clerk's Office of  
the District Court of Rhode Island.



As with many important works of art, changing tastes eventually changed popular opinion but *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has remained part of American culture.

A century later, noted African-American playwright and poet Langston Hughes called the novel, "the most cussed and discussed book of its time" while George Orwell described it as "the best bad book of the age." It was admired by such writers as Victor Hugo, Leo Tolstoy and George Eliot. Tolstoy, whose work is always ranked as some of the best writing in history, praised it enthusiastically, calling *Uncle Tom's Cabin* a model of the "highest type of art because it flowed from love of God and man." Prominent authors from Mark Twain to John Updike have analyzed and debated it.

The story inspired numerous handsome objects, such as ceramic figurines, vases, plates and tin boxes, illustrated with scenes and characters from the novel. One of the most popular images featured the saintly Uncle Tom, gently caring for little Eva, the daughter of his master. A card game called "Justice" featured cards illustrated with each of the major characters plus the Justice card. Numerous examples of sheet music inspired by the story attest to its grasp on the popular imagination.

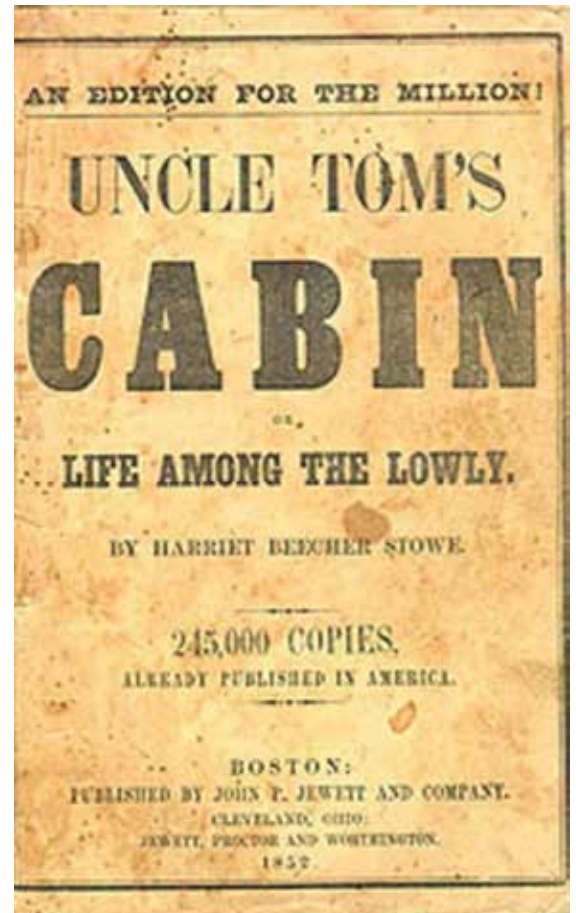
Characters like the young slave girl Topsy with her famous comic line "Oh, I'se So Wicked!" inspired songs and parodies for decades and even showed up in the political cartoons of illustrated weeklies like *Puck* and *Judge* to the end of the century.

In 1951, Broadway theatergoers were treated to the musical *The King and I*, in which the King of Siam's harem presents a production of "The Small Cabin of Uncle Thomas" which also appeared in the 1956 film version. More than a century after it first appeared, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was still part of the national culture.

By the middle of the 20th century, the term "Uncle Tom" had become an insult, aimed at African Americans not thought to be sufficiently assertive by their own community. Yet the effect of the book on the majority community and the impetus it gave to the growing movement to abolish human slavery cannot be overlooked.

The famous story of President Lincoln meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe and saying to her, "So this is the little lady who started this great war" is, sadly, not true. Scholars can find no proof that it ever happened. The quote didn't appear in print until 1896, yet it has often been cited to demonstrate the importance of Stowe's enormously popular novel as a cause of the Civil War.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* remains a notable step in the American story and did much to carry abolitionist opinion into the mainstream. Its grip on the popular imagination of its time is reflected in the many ceramics and other objects some of which are illustrated with this article.





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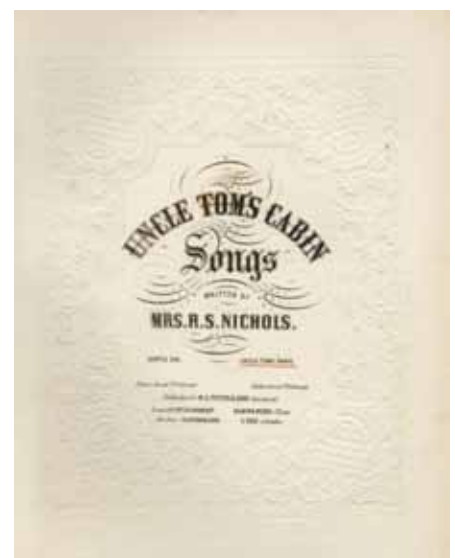
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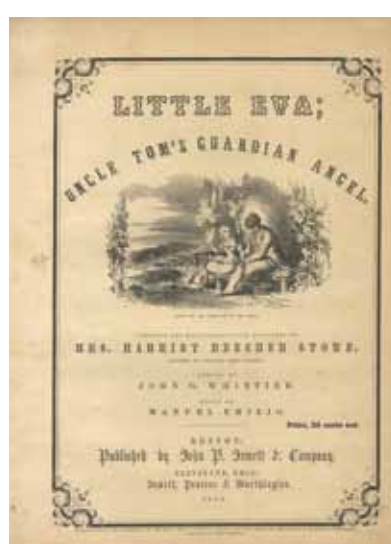
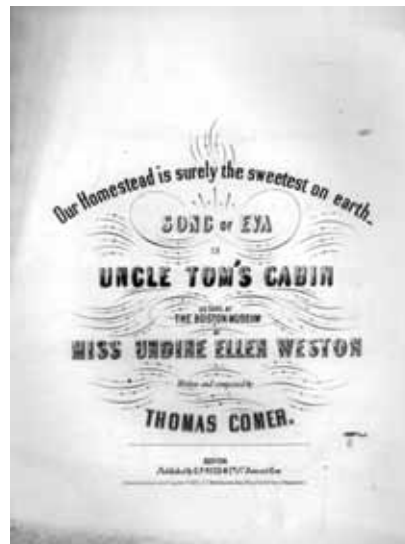
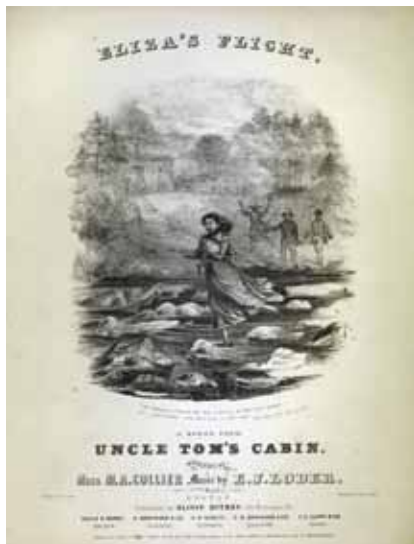




## Sheet Music







## Uncle Tom's Cabin Story Plates

Although there are many outer plate designs, the center designs are, for the most part, similar. The center images are used to tell the story of Uncle Tom's Cabin. They appeared in various languages, including French and German.





Story images from the centers of plates, as shown on page 16.







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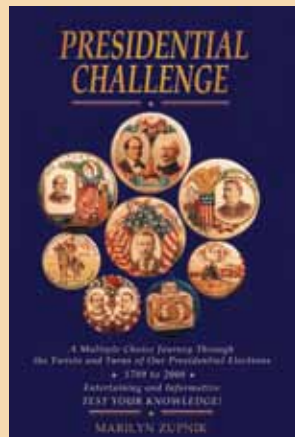




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**ERIK HOFFMANN**

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*Uncle Tom statuettes come in various sizes, particularly Tom and Eva, as can be seen in the group on the right. Variations exist for the different statues because they were all hand painted by different artists in different colors.*



*Top of embossed lithographic metal canister shown on opposite page.*





## Pitchers



*Also comes in blue glaze.*



**Cloth songsheet.**





**Rev Josiah Henson from life, presented  
as "Uncle Tom" Feb 1861.**



**Uncle Tom or Rev Josiah Henson  
of Uncle Tom's Cabin.**



*Anti abolition Bowie Knife.*



*Prattware Lid and Jars.*





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**Abraham Lincoln:** Carte de Visite by Mathew Brady Signed  
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**Abraham Lincoln:** Autograph Letter Signed on Executive Mansion Letterhead  
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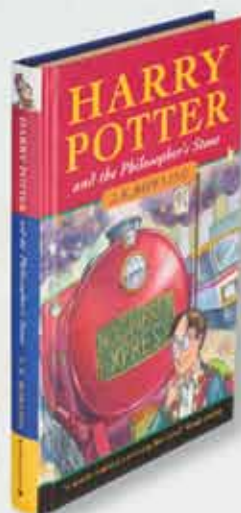
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Cigar store  
tobacconist's  
Indian Maid,  
split headdress,  
probably carved  
by John Yaeger  
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**J.K. Rowling:** chair used whilst  
writing the first two *Harry Potter*  
books, hand-painted and  
signed. "I wrote *Harry Potter* while  
sitting on this chair." - J.K. Rowling  
**Sold for \$394,000**  
April 2016



**J. K. Rowling:** *Harry Potter*  
*and the Philosopher's Stone*  
**Sold for \$81,250**  
September 2017



**Apollo:** Lunar Module  
Reaction Control System  
Marquardt R-4D Rocket  
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Manufactured in 1965  
**Sold for \$57,500**  
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**John F. Kennedy:** Rare Signed Original Painting by  
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**Apollo:** Lunar Module Reaction  
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# Elijah Lovejoy: Abolition's Martyr

By Michael Kelly

Ideas have consequences. That is why it is important to understand how a society accepts an idea.

Some ideas have been around a long time, others emerge to challenge long-standing traditions. One of the benefits of living for many years is that one has the chance to watch how new ideas enter the mainstream. They all start as crazy ideas only found among the disreputable, unreliable fringes of the community then slowly spread into broader acceptance and eventually become mainstream. Most ideas that were once thought to be fantasies of radicals -- like Social Security or fire escapes in factories -- eventually become "common sense". Let a generation or two pass and grandfathers' traumas can become tire-some clichés to the young.

The idea of Abolition of human slavery found its early voices in the revival meetings of the Second Great Awakening that broke out across America in the early 1830s. The stress on personal sin sought out examples of inequity and the cruel fact of human bondage was cited as a sin that tarnished the nation.

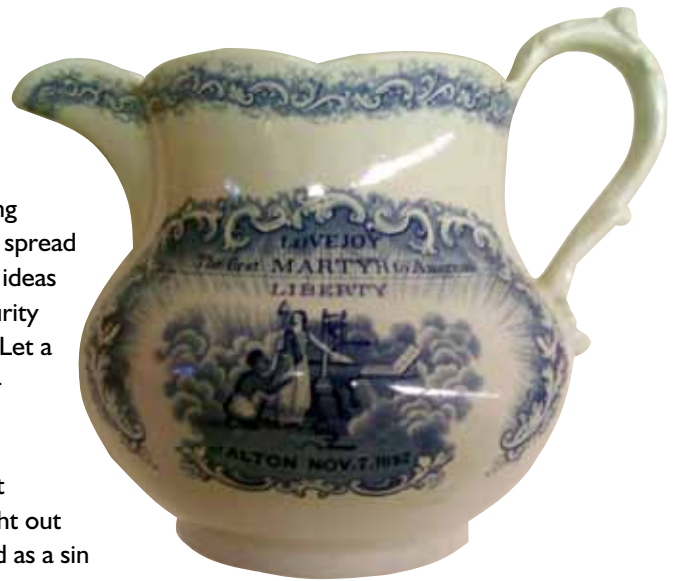
Early anti-slavery agitation, usually in the form of petitions to Congress, was often dismissed as coming from women and clergy. Slavery was a matter of property rights. How dare one gentleman take away the property of another gentleman? Abolition was the province of cranks and bleeding hearts.

The Abolition movement slowly wove its way into the national debate. There were many profound steps on the way. In 1840, James Birney was presented as candidate of the Liberty Party but won only 0.29% of the vote. Congressman (and former President) John Quincy Adams began to challenge the "gag rule" that forbid discussion of abolition on the floor of Congress. In 1848, the Free Soil Party softened calls for racial equality, added land for settlers in the new western territory and presented the prestigious ticket of Martin Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams, winning more than 10% of the vote. By 1856, John Fremont of the Republicans topped 33% and four years later Abraham Lincoln took almost 40% and the Presidency in a four-way race.

But long before the nation heard of names like Fremont and Lincoln, it knew the name of Elijah Parish Lovejoy. Lovejoy was the first martyr for the cause of Abolition.

He had been born in Albion, Maine on November 9, 1802 and would die in Alton, Illinois on November 7, 1837, two days shy of his 35th birthday. He was editor of a newspaper and would publish editorials opposing slavery. During the 1830s, respectable opinion looked down on abolitionists as dangerous, socialistic enemies of property. Slaves, after all, were no different than horses or pigs; they were cattle. For Lovejoy to oppose slavery was seen as the equivalent of advocating criminal behavior.

In 1827 Lovejoy moved to St. Louis, Missouri to work as an educator and journalist, eventually becoming editor of the weekly *St. Louis Observer*, in which he condemned slavery in uncompromising terms. He received threatening letters from prominent citizens and responded defiantly in the pages of his paper, citing the freedom of the press protected by the First Amendment. Threatened with mob violence, Lovejoy moved his printing press across the river into Free State Illinois.



The state line proved a weak protection as mobs destroyed his press on three occasions. Each time, he re-established his press and continued to attack slavery in print.

The night of November 7, 1837, a mob attacked his building, and Lovejoy was killed in its defense. The news of his death stirred the people of the North profoundly and led to a great strengthening of abolitionist sentiment. The violence of the mob against the right of an individual to express his opinion reached beyond the then-small abolitionist circles, drawing in journalists and advocates of individual rights. Lovejoy's death gave the movement its first martyr.

It has been suggested that the two most powerful events that carried America to the Civil War were Lovejoy's murder and John Brown's hanging. It is of interest that the motivation for John Brown to devote his life to the destruction of slavery was learning of the death of Elijah P. Lovejoy.



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Karl Frisch, APIC Member 17141



# John Brown

By Michael Kelly

***“John Brown's body lies a-moldering in the grave but his soul goes marching on.”***  
- American folk song

At first, the anti-slavery movement in the United States didn't know what to make of John Brown. While Henry Ward Beecher gave sermons, William Lloyd Garrison published editorials and Charles Sumner delivered speeches, Brown snarled, "These men are all talk. What we need is action—action!"

Born in Connecticut on May 9, 1800, Brown was descended from 17th-century English Puritans and lived in an environment of intense religious feelings. In 1805, his father moved his family to Ohio where he opened a tannery. One of the elder Brown's apprentices in his tannery was Jesse R. Grant, who would become the father of President Ulysses S. Grant.

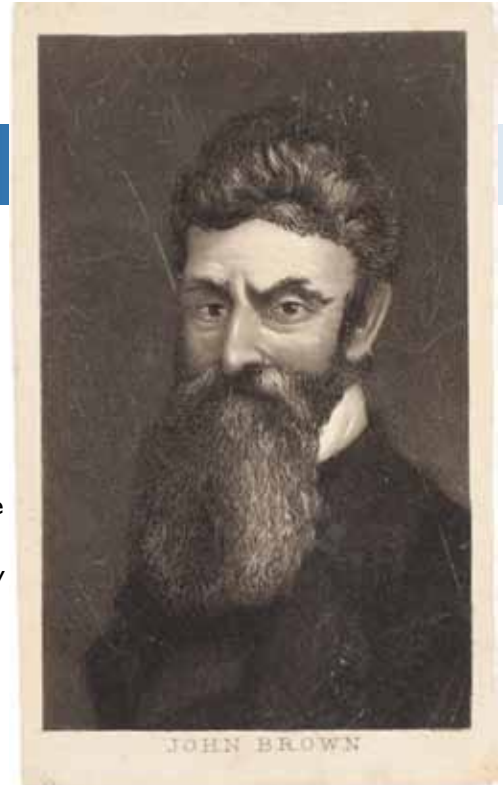
At 16, John Brown returned to New England to attend school with the goal of becoming a Congregationalist minister but a lack of money and poor health undercut his career plans and he returned to Ohio to work in his father's tannery. Eventually the younger Brown opened his own tannery in another Ohio town, married and began a family. In 1825, he moved his family to Pennsylvania where he bought land, built a cabin, barn and tannery and opened a new business.

The tannery was successful at first and soon John Brown employed 15 men along with raising cattle and doing land surveying. He established a post office and school in his new community and was heading toward a life of industrious prosperity.

Things took a bad turn in 1831. One of his sons died. Brown himself fell ill, and his businesses began to suffer. He found himself deep in debt but his troubles were just starting. The next year, after the death of a newborn son, his wife died. Left with seven children to care for, Brown soon remarried. He and his second wife eventually had 13 children of their own in addition to the seven children from his first marriage. Brown moved his large family back to Ohio in 1836 where he borrowed money to buy land along the Cuyahoga River and establish another tannery but his money problems continued; the economic crisis of 1839 swept away John Brown's hopes along with those of many others.

At this point in time, Brown's religious fervor and social theories took him to a new mission. Spurred by the 1837 murder of abolitionist editor Elijah P. Lovejoy by a pro-slavery mob, Brown publicly vowed, "Here, before God, in the presence of these witnesses, from this time, I consecrate my life to the destruction of slavery!" Like the biblical Job, Brown's burdens grew heavier.

In 1842, he was forced to declare bankruptcy and shortly thereafter lost four of his sons to dysentery. He continued to struggle to support his family as his anti-slavery views became ever more strident. In 1846, Brown moved his family to Springfield, Massachusetts and for the first time found himself in an environment that agreed with his abolitionist views. He even joined a church -- the Sanford Street Free Church -- where blacks and whites worshipped together.



In 1847, the Free Church hosted Frederick Douglass as a guest speaker. After his talk, Douglass sat up most of the night speaking with John Brown. Douglass later wrote, "From this night spent with John Brown in Springfield, Mass. 1847 while I continued to write and speak against slavery, I became all the same less hopeful for its peaceful abolition. My utterances became more and more tinged by the color of this man's strong impressions." While in Springfield, Brown became deeply involved in making the city a significant stop on the Underground Railroad to help fugitive slaves to safety.

As Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act as part of the Compromise of 1850, Brown founded a militant group called the League of Gileadites to prevent slaves' recapture (named after the biblical Mount Gilead where the best Israelite soldiers gathered to face invaders). After Brown established the League, no fugitive slave would ever be recaptured in Springfield.

When social reformer Gerrit Smith offered land grants to poor blacks in upstate New York, Brown decided to move his family to this new community. Near New Elba, New York, this community would be where his widow chose to bury his body after his execution. It was while in New York in 1855 that John Brown heard news from some of his sons who had gone to live in the newly-opened territory of Kansas during the struggle between pro- and anti-slavery settlers. His sons advised their father that anti-slavery settlers were unprepared to defend themselves in the face of militant pro-slavery raiders from the neighboring slave state of Missouri (the famed "border ruffians").

Brown set off for Kansas, stopping on the way to speak at anti-slavery meetings and urging support for the anti-slavery settlers in Kansas. Events rapidly moved toward conflict. In 1856, border ruffians sacked the town of Lawrence, Kansas and destroyed an abolitionist printing press while on the floor of the United States Senate a congressman from South Carolina savagely beat abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts. The abstract discussions about human freedom versus property rights were turning violent. It was a perfect environment for someone driven by John Brown's passions.

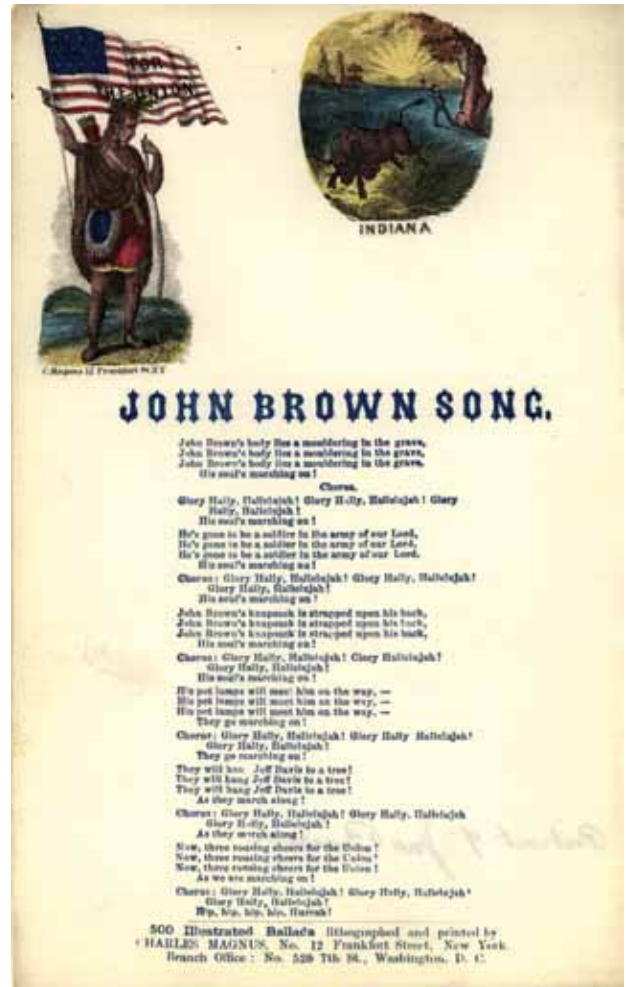
Out in the Kansas Territory, border ruffians had attacked the homestead of Brown's sons and captured John, Jr. and Jason. The elder Brown arrived in Kansas determined to free his sons and protect the anti-slavery settlements.

On June 2, John Brown with nine of his followers and a score of Kansas settlers successfully defended a Free State settlement at Palmyra, taking the pro-slavery attackers prisoner. His captives signed a treaty promising to release the Brown sons in exchange for their own liberty but, after being freed, would delay releasing the two Brown sons for four months.

In August, more than three hundred Missourians under the command of Major General John W. Reid crossed into Kansas with the goal of destroying Free State settlements in Osawatimie, Topeka and Lawrence. On the morning of August 30, 1856, the raiders killed Brown's son Frederick and a neighbor on the outskirts of Osawatimie. The heavily outnumbered John Brown had only 38 men on his side and placed them along natural defenses on the road. As the two groups clashed, Brown's smaller group used its defensive position to kill at least 20 of Reid's men and wound 40 more.

Regrouping, Reid ordered his men to dismount and charge Brown's position, forcing him and his men to retreat into the woods after losing one dead and four captured. The Missouri raiders plundered and burned Osawatimie but the valiant defense under John Brown gave heart to the anti-slavery settlers and made Brown a national figure.

In September, Brown met with Free State leaders in Lawrence to prepare defenses against an expected attack from an army of 2,700 pro-slavery Missourians invading Kansas. There was a skirmish near Lawrence but the new governor of Kansas, John W. Geary, was able to negotiate a fragile peace.





Brown took with three of his sons with him and went back East to raise money for the cause. His new visibility brought him into personal contact with abolitionist leaders, especially in Massachusetts where a committee of successful businessmen joined forces to fund John Brown's activities. Brown was responsible for heightened activity such as the shipments of Sharpe's rifles (dubbed "Beecher's Bibles") to the Kansas Free Staters.

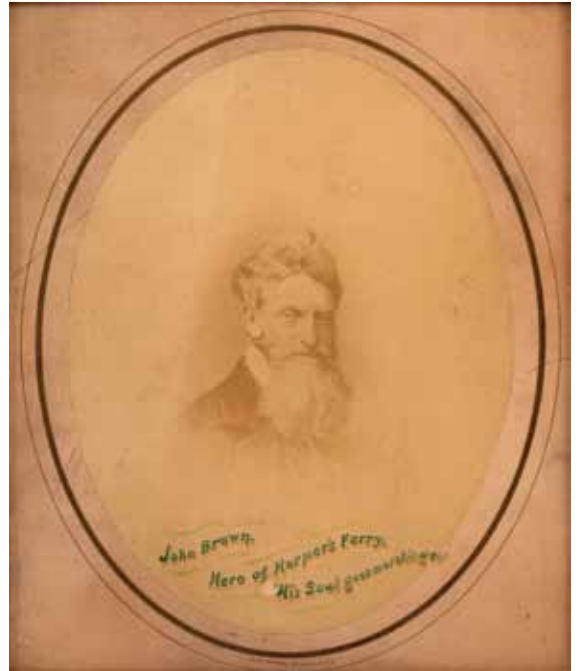
It was during this time that Brown sought ways to take more direct action against Slavery. He conferred with most prominent abolitionist figures, proposed to invade the South, establish a new state for freed slaves (Brown even went to Canada to participate in a convention to draft a constitution for that new state) and generally encouraged the more aggressive aspects of the abolition movement. When bigger plans fell through, Brown returned to Kansas where he joined in direct military action against the slave system. On a raid against slave holders, he liberated eleven slaves and then smuggled them to Canada.

But John Brown was not a man for small ideas or actions. He chafed to take his battle to the South itself, certain that he could arm freed slaves and build an army as he went. The real need was a quantity of weapons to supply his new army, a need that brought him to the federal military arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia where 100,000 muskets and rifles waited.

Harriet Tubman worked closely with Brown as he planned his invasion of Virginia, providing detailed knowledge of the roads and geography of slave territory with a variety of contacts. Most prominent abolitionists disagreed with Brown's willingness to use violence (not to mention the open call for a slave revolt) but he gathered a small band of dedicated followers and began to sharpen his plan.

Brown's original plan had projected a force to 4,500 men. On October 16, 1859, he marched on Harper's Ferry with only 21 men (16 white and 5 black: three free blacks, one freed slave, and a fugitive slave): the youngest was 21 and the oldest 49. Leaving three men behind as a rear guard, Brown actually led 18 men in the attack.

Despite the small numbers, they made quick progress. They cut the telegraph wires and captured the armory, overcoming a single watchman. They then seized hostages from neighboring farms and spread the word to area slaves that freedom was at hand. But things started to go wrong. A passing train noticed problems and the train baggage master (a free black man) was shot by Brown's men. Word





Younger image of John Brown.



JOHN BROWN EXHIBITING HIS HANGMAN!

**ANTI-SLAVERY  
MASS MEETING!**

Agreeably to a call, signed by about 50 persons, and published in the Lawrence Republican, a Mass Meeting of the friends of Freedom will be held at Miller's Hall, at 2 o'clock P. M., on Friday, Dec. 2d, the day on which

**CAPT. JOHN BROWN IS TO BE EXECUTED,**  
To testify against the iniquitous SLAVE POWER that rules this Nation, and take steps to

**Organize the Anti-Slavery Sentiment**  
of the community. Arrangements have been made with prominent speakers to be present and address the meeting.

PER ORDER OF COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.  
Lawrence, Nov. 30, 1859.



spread through the area and local men took positions on high ground above the arsenal, exchanging gunfire with the raiders.

The next day Marines arrived under the command of First Lieutenant Israel Greene, USMC, with Army Colonel Robert E. Lee in overall command. Army First Lieutenant Jeb Stuart carried a white flag to the line and offered to spare the raiders' lives if they surrendered. Brown replied, "No, I prefer to die here."

The subsequent Marine attack was over in three minutes.

Ten of Brown's men -- including his sons Watson and Oliver -- were killed while another five men -- including his son Owen -- escaped. The rest were captured along with Brown. As a military encounter, it wasn't a major engagement. As an event that would shape attitudes and opinions across the American Republic it was profound.

Given that he had attacked a federal arsenal, one might have expected John Brown to be tried in federal court but Virginia officials weren't willing to risk any Northern influences in the trial and charged him in state court. Despite his wounds from the battle, Virginia doctors declared Brown fit for trial and court convened nine days after the battle.

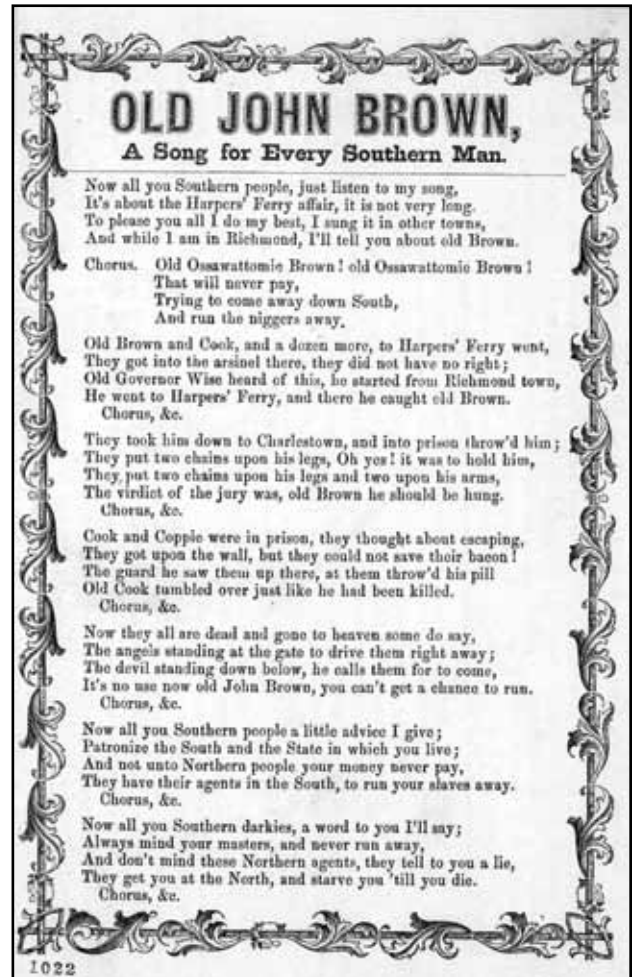
The State of Virginia charged the defendant with three charges: murder, conspiracy with slaves to rebel and treason against Virginia. His lawyers pointed out that Brown clearly hadn't conspired with local slaves to rebel as none had risen to join him, that he couldn't commit treason against Virginia as he had never been a citizen of that state and that there was no proof that John Brown had personally murdered anyone. Nonetheless, on November 2 the jury took only 45 minutes of deliberation to find him guilty on all three counts. Brown was sentenced to be executed by public hanging on December 2.

The raid, trial and sentence drew wide attention throughout the nation. When poet Ralph Waldo Emerson heard the news, he declared that John Brown "will make the gallows glorious like the Cross." From Europe, the famed author Victor Hugo wrote a public letter stating, "The murder of John Brown would be an uncorrectable sin...Brown's agony might perhaps consolidate slavery in Virginia, but it would certainly shake the whole American democracy. You save your shame, but you kill your glory."

Throughout the North, many began to see John Brown as a Christ-like figure, willing to sacrifice his life that others might be free. When a friend arranged for Brown to escape from the jail, the condemned man refused to leave, declaring that he was ready to die for the cause.

While polite society still looked down on Brown, his calls for "action" were finally being widely heard. His actions had established a new milestone, broadening the range of perspectives and making the cost of ending slavery more evident.

On the morning of December 2, 1859, Brown wrote: "I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood." He read his Bible, wrote a final letter to his wife and at 11 a.m. was led to the gallows by a large company of 2,000 soldiers. Among the crowd were the future Confederate general Stonewall Jackson, the poet Walt Whitman and (disguised in a borrowed militia uniform) John Wilkes Booth.



Known supporters, Northern journalists and even sympathetic clergy were kept away from the execution by local hostility but word of the death of John Brown swept through the nation like a bolt of lightning. The South saw proof that abolitionists would threaten the very nature of Southern society while the North saw the unveiled face of Slave Power.

Like the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the murder of Elijah Lovejoy, John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry would prove a powerful emotional turning point in the story of slavery in the United States. While most abolitionists distanced themselves from Brown's tactics, they could not help but admire his commitment. Frederick Douglass later wrote, "His zeal in the cause of my race was far greater than mine—it was as the burning sun to my taper light—mine was bounded by time, his stretched away to the boundless shores of eternity. I could live for the slave, but he could die for him."

Less than a year after John Brown's death, northern voters would be willing to elect a mild abolitionist President, Abraham Lincoln, and the Republic would split asunder over the question of human freedom.



The inscription on the stoneware jug reads "Dec 1st 12 O'clock PM Gov Wise Sleeps with one eye open, Expecting the rescue of John Brown".

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# From John Brown's Body to The Battle Hymn of the Republic

By Michael Kelly

Songs used to be a part of every American's life. Before recorded music became dominant, everyone sang; at church, civic gatherings and especially political rallies, voices joined together in song. One of the most powerful songs of the Civil War era was "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Unlike other Civil War songs like "We Are Coming, Father Abraham" or "Marching Through Georgia", the "Battle Hymn" remains in common usage to this day. It was part of spreading the abolitionist perspective and rallying support for the Union.

The tune comes from an already popular song of the era -- used for "John Brown's Body Lies Mouldering in the Grave" among others -- and the words were written by a Boston poet named Julia Ward Howe. On November 18, 1861, Howe attended a review of Union troops near Washington with a group of friends. On the slow journey back to town through roads clogged with marching troops, the friends started singing Union songs, including "John Brown's Body." Nearby troops and spectators joined in on the rousing chorus: "Glory, glory hallelujah, his soul is marching on!"

One of Howe's friends suggested that the poet provide the tune with new lyrics that might be even more inspiring. Howe admitted that she had thought of doing that but the words hadn't yet come to her.

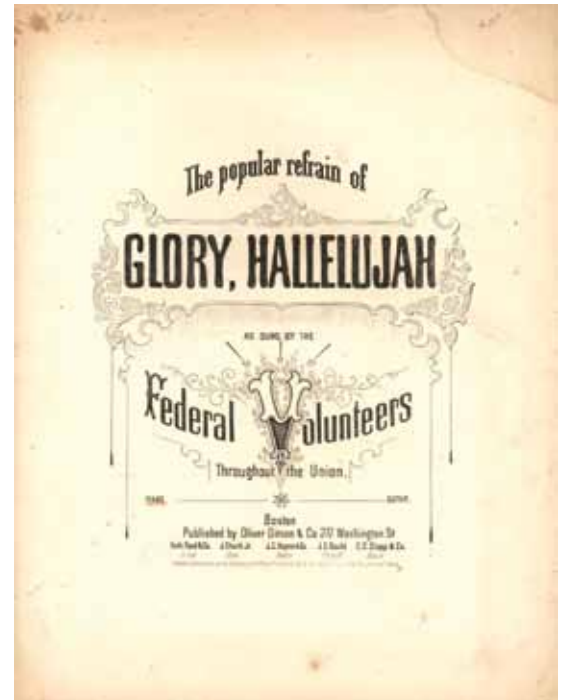
Staying that night at Washington's noted Willard Hotel, the new words finally came in the middle of the night. Fearing that she would forget the lines, she arose from bed and scribbled the lines down. In the morning, she couldn't remember the words but found her scrawled notes that began with "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

The poem wrapped the Union Army in biblical, apocalyptic, imagery, comparing the sacrifices of Northern soldiers to Christ's passion and crucifixion ("As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free"). The poem - now entitled "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" -- soon appeared in the pages of the *Atlantic Monthly* and quickly became one of the most popular Union and abolitionist anthems of its era and would continue to be part of popular culture to this day.

In those early days of the Civil War when the Union had experienced a series of significant defeats on the battlefield, the North needed to believe the deaths and suffering were justified by the righteousness of the cause. Howe's words assured them that the Lord favored their struggle and depicted the Union military as the instrument of divine justice:

***He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat;  
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him; be jubilant, my feet!  
Our God is marching on.***

"The Battle Hymn of the Republic" raised spirits across the North and presented the sacrifices of the Union as holy sacrifices. Even today, the song remains part of our national culture.





# The KKK: A part of American Culture

By Michael Kelly

Along with tracing some of the important steps on the way to abolition of slavery, this issue also deals with an important reaction to that anti-slavery movement; the Ku Klux Klan. Interestingly, both Abolition and the Klan claim roots in Christianity.

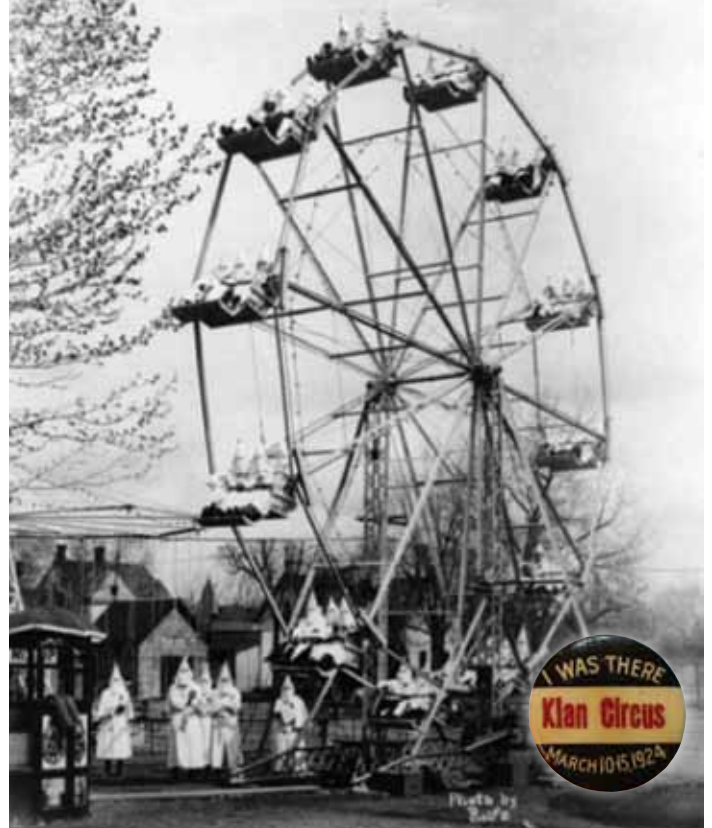
As mentioned in the Elijah Lovejoy article in this issue, the Abolition movement was sparked by the great religious revival in the 1830s and grew into a national cause. The Klan was founded in 1866 in the early days of Reconstruction being imposed on a defeated Confederacy. The KKK had chapters throughout the South by 1870 and organized resistance to the Republican Party's policies seeking political and economic equality for blacks. Through economic pressure and a campaign of intimidation and violence, the first Klan movement successfully suppressed white and black Republicans leaders in the South. By the late 1870s, white supremacy had been re-established in the old Confederacy and the South became a one-party region with a whites-only Democratic Party winning absolute control.

With the battle won, the KKK receded until the early 20th century when it took on a white Protestant nativist orientation, expanding the list of enemies to include immigrants, Catholics, Jews, blacks and organized labor.

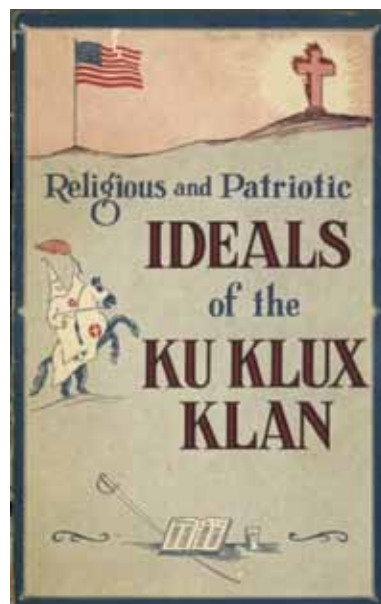
While the early Klan claimed to be a Christian organization, using the cross as its symbol, the later revived Klan wrapped itself even more thoroughly in religion. It was launched in 1915 by a Methodist preacher named William Joseph Simmons, who used a Bible in Klan ceremonies and limited membership to "good white Christian people." Washington Post reporter DeNeen Brown wrote: "Simmons believed that Christianity supported white supremacy, Kelly J. Baker, author of *The Gospel According to the Klan*, said in an interview. 'He and other Klan leaders would look to Christianity to find support for racism. Even liberal Protestant churches supported white supremacy. That seemed the natural order of things -- just as people used biblical texts to support slavery.'"

The KKK declined after peaking in the 1920s but would experience a second revival during the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which saw a surge of Klan activity, including bombings of black schools and churches and violence against black and white activists in the South. In recent years, the KKK has undergone a third revival as part of the current "alt-right" movement.





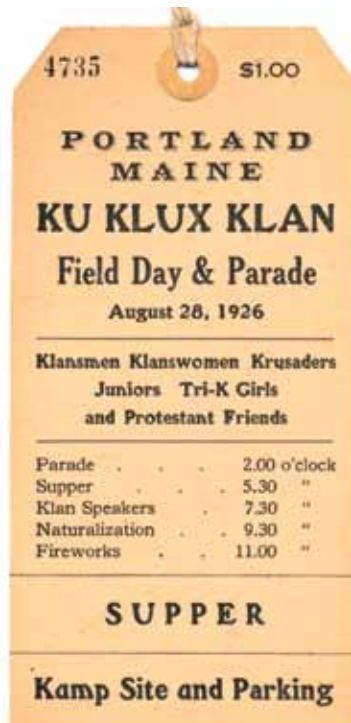
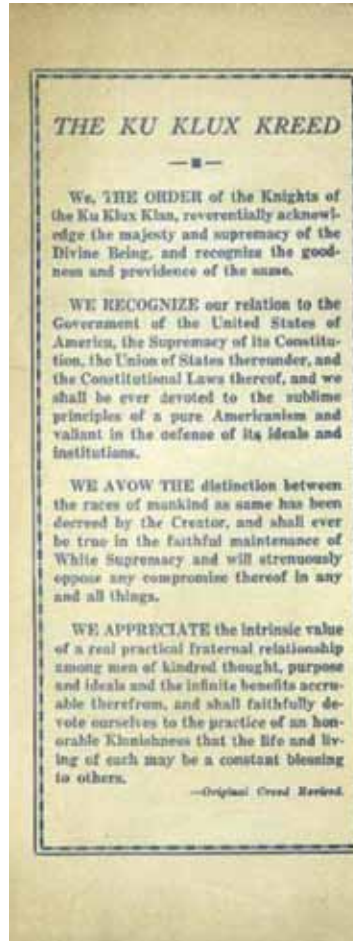




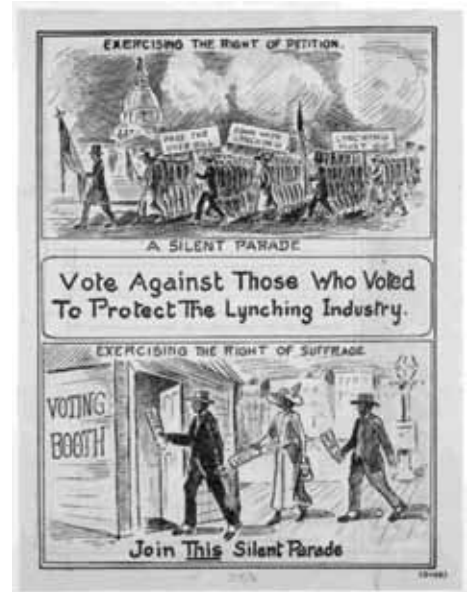
Below: "The True Story of the Jewish People" brochure showing Klan endorsement of Henry Ford's anti-semitic views.













# The Klan and “The Birth of a Nation”

By Michael Kelly

Political and social movements benefit from admiration in the form of art. Whether the melodrama of Uncle Tom's Cabin or the anti-Trump jokes told by late night TV hosts, art helps create an environment that is either hostile or friendly to a cause. So, too, the Ku Klux Klan benefitted from art.

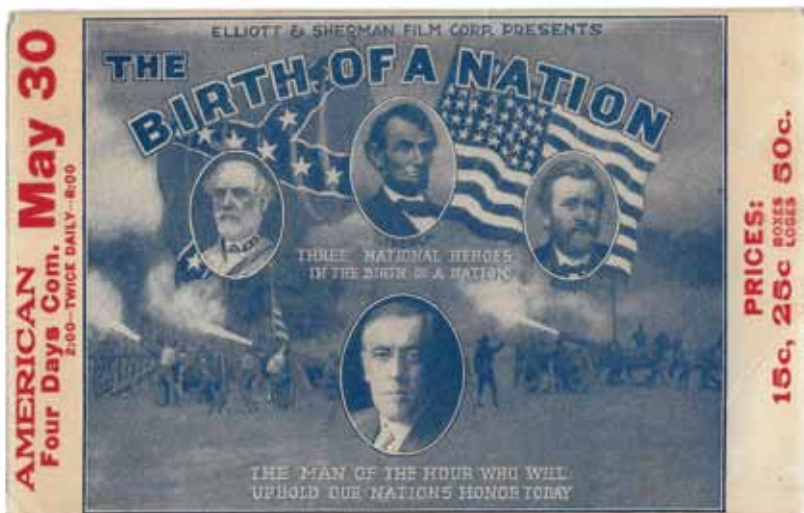
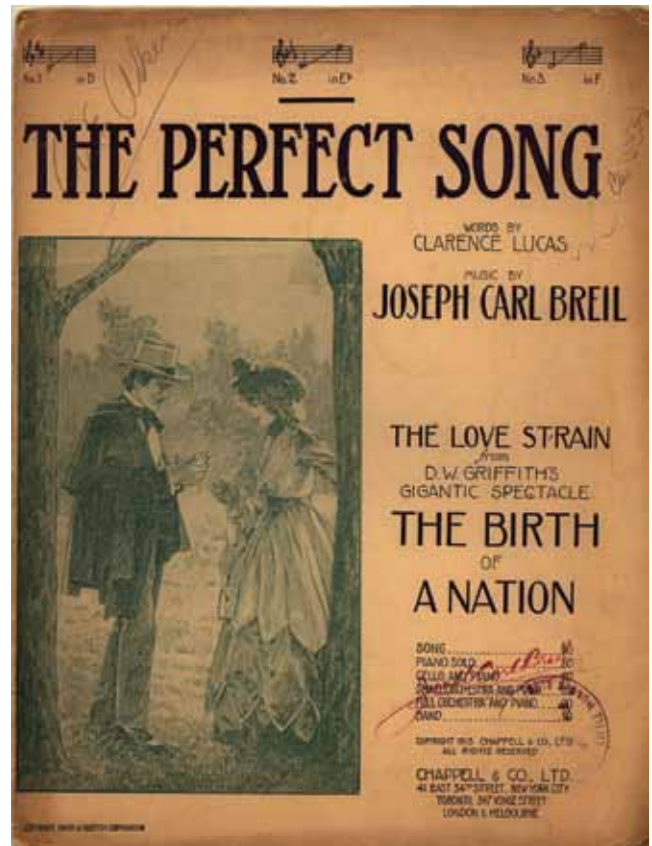
A powerful inspiration for the reestablishment of the KKK at Stone Mountain, Georgia in 1915 was a film titled “The Birth of a Nation” (originally called “The Clansman”). Released on February 8, 1915, “The Birth of a Nation” was an epic historical drama from the silent era of film that ran three hours and broke new cinematic and narrative ground. Astonished audiences had never seen such story-telling. Co-directed and co-produced by D.W. Griffith and starring the popular Lillian Gish, the film tells a melodramatic tale of Southern life during Reconstruction in which rascally Northerners allow impudent black freedmen to insult white women. Theater-goers cheered as the KKK arose to protect the virtue of white women and the honor of white men, putting the blacks in their place and driving out the Republican scallywags.

While a commercial success, the film was highly controversial. Its portrayal of black men (usually played by white actors in black-face) as ignorant and sexually aggressive to white women plus the presentation of the Klan in a heroic light caused widespread protests against the film by the black community. An attempt by the NAACP to ban the film only served to sell more tickets to white film-goers.

The film was a sensation. At a time when movie tickets averaged less than 25 cents, it earned between \$50 and \$60 million; The Birth of a Nation was the first 12-reel film in the United States and the first American motion picture to be screened inside the White House (at the invitation of President Woodrow Wilson).

Although a generation of WPA-era historians emphasized Wilson's progressive side, he was a native of Virginia and believed in white supremacy. One of his first acts after his inauguration was to order that federal employees be resegregated by race, something banned under the previous Republican administrations.

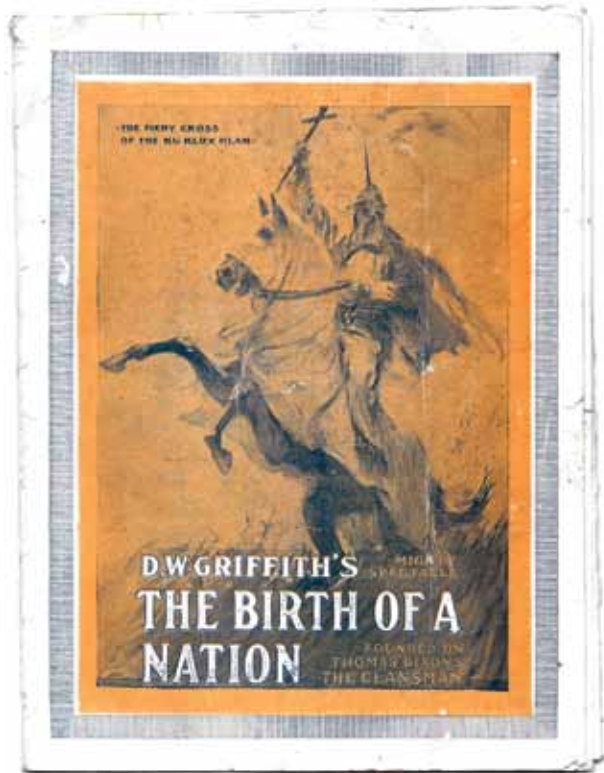
President Wilson was thrilled by the film's power, reportedly remarking, “It is like writing history with lightning, and my only regret is that it is all so terribly true.” The film even included a screen slide quoting Wilson praising the KKK as protecting the South. As the controversy regarding the film grew, President Wilson would make some disapproving comments distancing him from the work





but the film helped inspire a revival of the Ku Klux Klan, expanded to hate Catholics, Jews and foreigners along with African-Americans.

Despite the controversy, the film is still recognized as a landmark in film-making. In 1992, the Library of Congress cited the film as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" and preserving it in the National Film Registry. Klansman David Duke is known to have used the film as a recruiting tool for the Klan.

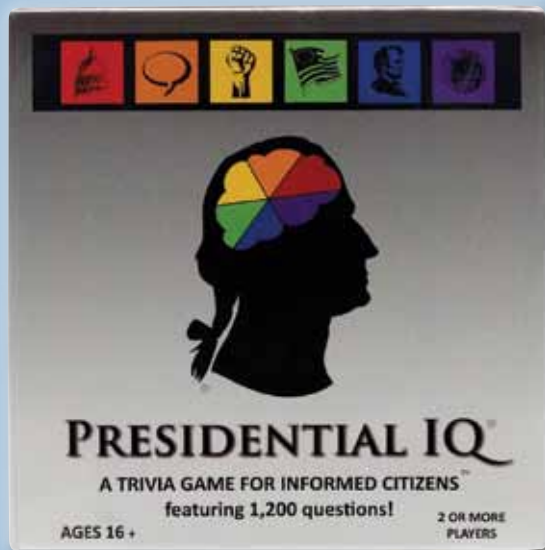


**Gilbert Owen Nations (1866–1950) was a lawyer, judge, President of the District of Columbia Bar Association and anti-Catholic activist. In 1924, he was the presidential nominee of the American Party, and was endorsed by the Ku Klux Klan**



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# Ku Klux Klan Sheet Music

By Danny O. Crew

Given today's all pervasive media, it is difficult for us to conceive of a time when the primary form of public discourse was face-to-face interaction. There were, of course, newspapers in eighteenth and nineteenth century America, though few resembled our papers of today in their approach to content; rather they were a more thoughtful publication, of a literary nature rather than the hard news we expect today. These papers were dominated by essays, letters, poetry, music, and only the occasional major news event.

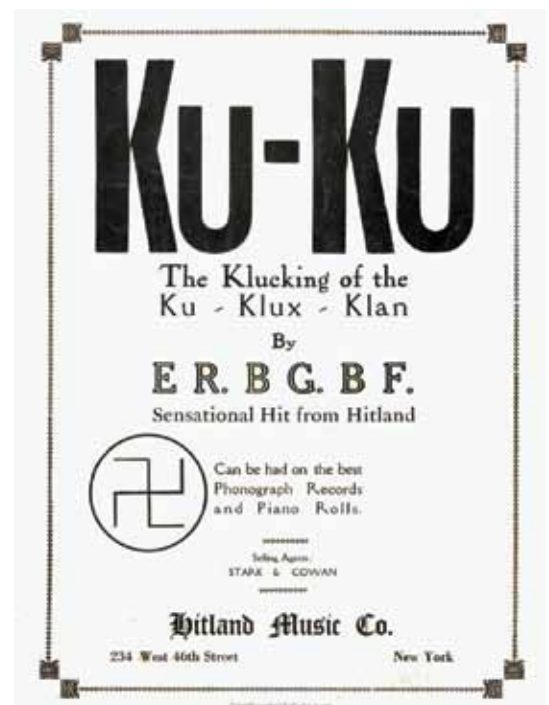
In addition to newspapers, pamphlets and broadsides were also commonly used to communicate a position or idea in early America. These were published and sold, or even given away, by print shops or partisans on the street or at mass rallies. Additionally, they were often posted in public places for all to read.

However, in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially outside of the major cities, face-to-face communication was the primary component of political interaction. Politicians held rallies that were often accompanied by barbeques with free liquor, parades, stump speeches and lots of singing. The art of one-on-one campaigning was perfected and ingrained into our national psyche during this era. Parades, festivals, civic feasts, badges and songs are how most Americans experienced national politics.

One major form of entertainment and mass media social communication during this pre-electronic era of American history was popular music; in particular, published sheet music. Historian Suzanne Flandreau writes that "Sheet music [was] the primary means by which music was disseminated from 1800 to the 1920s." Because the role and place of music in our society today is so different from its role in pre-electronic America, it is often overlooked as a valuable source of primary research material that reflects the thoughts and priorities of the people of those eras.

The Klan was both a product of our nation's conservative tradition, and an influence on its continuing evolution. Davis Tyack notes in his book on American pluralism, "Nativism, 100% Americanism, anti-Catholicism, distrust of the rich and well-born, political and moral religious fundamentalism have all played a role in the development of our American cultural landscape" and have, individually and collectively, spawned numerous political and cultural movements: Freemasonry, Know Nothings, Lily-White Movement, John Birch Society, English-Only, World Christian Fundamentals Association, Ku Klux Klan, White Citizens League, and Order of the Star Spangled Banner. Each has played a role in defining who we are as Americans, good and bad.

Over the past two centuries, these threads of thought have directly contributed to our customs and laws - from the Alien & Sedition Act of 1798, the Anti-Immigration Acts of 1920s, and the "English as the official language" and "Anti-Sharia" laws found in many locales today. Understanding the Klan's manifestation of these underlining traditions, myths, and stereotypes through-



out a large part of our nation's history, provides an important window into today's cultural attitudes.

The Ku Klux Klan in America has had three distinct periods of significant activity and influence: the late 1860s, the early-to-mid 1920s, and the 1950s-1960s, though there has always been some Klan activity in between and after these major periods. While each of these eras offers numerous opportunities for study and analysis, it was during the second era Klan, roughly 1915-1926, that the movement reached nationwide importance with an estimated four million members. In a clear indication of their presumed respectability, over 25000 members of the KKK, in full unmasked regalia, marched from the Capitol down Pennsylvania Ave in Washington D.C. on Aug. 8, 1925.

Following their heroic portrayal in the film "The Birth of a Nation," the Klan quickly embraced a public persona of a deeply Christian and highly patriotic brotherhood. This second-era Klan was publicly pledged to save the Country from foreign influences (principally Catholicism), and to defend a white America from the horrors of immigration, Bolshevism and racial impurity. One illustrates the great American "melting pot" as a pot of discontent fueled by anarchy, the I.W.W. (International Workers of the World Union) and Bolshevik while another pictures Uncle Sam being accosted by the Devil as represented by clouds of "Immigration," "Isms" Bootleggers," "lawlessness" and "Graft." Despite these ills, Sam is smiling because he sees the Ku Klux Klan riding in to save America. The use of Uncle Sam, the American flag and other patriotic imagery is typical of pro-Klan sheet music.

Another theme of Klan music is that of 100% Americanism. Again, it is the appeal to patriotism that made the Klan appear to be a "normal" patriotic organization...so normal that many college campuses around the nation had KKK chapters and part of their Greek life ... so normal that no less than future Supreme Court justice Hugo Black was a member ... and so normal that the Klan had a float in the annual Orange Bowl parade in Miami.

One interesting facet of the early twentieth century Klan incarnation was their interest in public education, particularly grammar school education. The Klan, and many other Americans, believed that one major role of grammar school education was to instill American values into children at a young age. Values such as patriotism, faith in God and the Bible, and respect for the symbols of America such as our flag, our presidents, and our national holidays, were to be core values integrated into the school's curriculum. Of course, in the case of the Klan sympathizers and many others as well, these values were viewed through the lens of a "white, protestant" perspective, and as they saw it, these values were being challenged by parochial schools, mostly Catholic, but also Jewish and non-protestant Christians such as Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons, as well as other "Popish" denominations like Episcopalians.





The importance of the public school movement to the Klan was frequently reflected in the music of the Klan movement. Between 1921 and 1925, no less than eight popular songs associated with the Klan were published about public schools or featured a schoolhouse in the iconography of the sheet music cover page. "America Means the Klan," is one such piece. Illustrated here is the cover page which features several photographs reflecting some of the most common continuing Klan themes including "The American Home," The "Holy Bible" and "The American Public School." Below the photos is the phrase "Let Us Preserve Them."

In reality, the Klan's concern for public schools and their use of public school imagery actually had less to do with education and everything to do with their ongoing campaign against ethnic pluralism. It was, in fact, about anti-immigration and anti-Catholicism. A number of these songs went beyond iconography and addressed the subject directly in the lyrics. Songs such as "School Days," "The Little Red School house," and "Put the Bible Back in the Schools" focused on using the public school metaphor specifically to attack Catholicism:



The little red school house is nearer and dearer,  
As down through the years I am passing along,  
How often the lessons I learned there have helped me,  
Not can I refrain from to raise this my song.  
No Milligan guards in the school of my childhood,  
We read not with prejudice [sic], but with my eye.

In lands where the Romans hold longest dominion,  
Is ignorance blackest and darkest is crime,  
Awaken, ye Yankees, and guard well the school house,  
The foe is upon us, don't lose any time.  
For foreign hands clutch at the throat of our goddess,  
Come enter the battle with this for your cry.

We sang Hail Columbia instead of Hail Mary,  
And never once to the pope [sic] did we kneel,  
No crossing ourselves in the little red school house,  
Then why let the Romans our treasury steal;  
Our teachers has Bibles and led our devotion,  
But now all such teachers and Bibles must go.



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Here the Klan leaves little doubt wherein America's problems lie: Klan members believed that foreigners, and especially the Roman Catholic Church, were attempting to use parochial schools to indoctrinate children in the ways of the Catholic religion rather than in Americanism and the one, true, chosen religion, Protestantism.

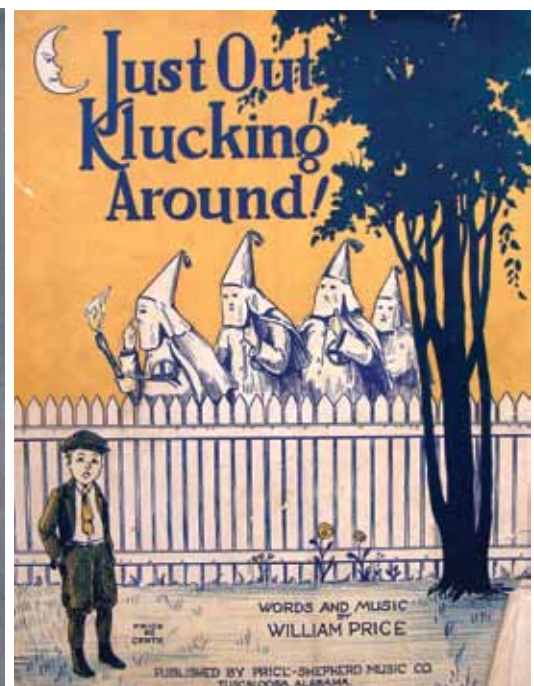
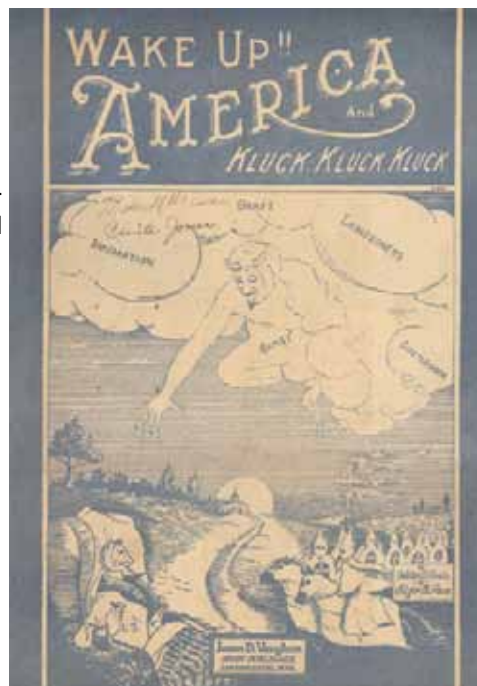
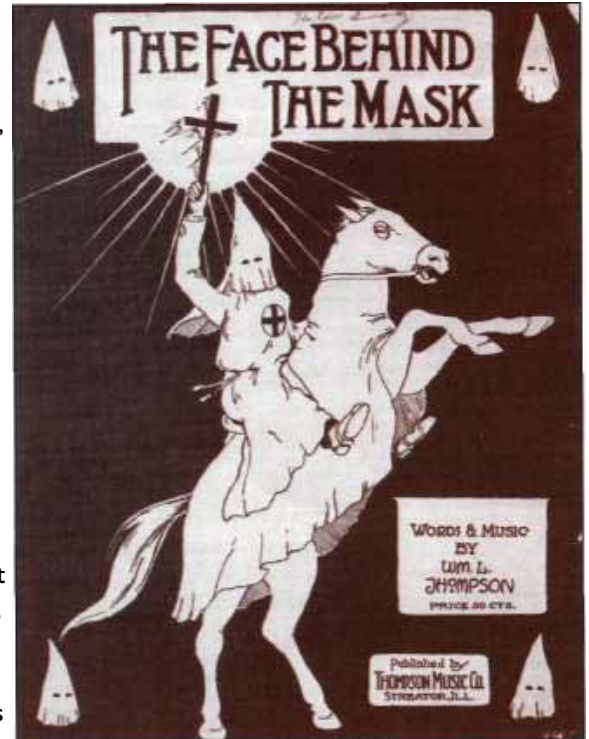
The Klan used the symbol of the public school as a metaphor for American purity. The idea of public education was an important value in American culture and could easily be co-opted to their purpose. A Klan music sheet featuring a public school and the women of the Ku Klux Klan is shown with this article.

While the original Klan of the 1860s and 1870s was principally oriented against the newly freed slaves, the second-era Klan was much more subtle in its approach to race, at least in the public musical interface. Almost all of the contemporary sheet music featuring Blacks on the cover was published by non-Klan publishers (i.e. Tin Pan Alley, etc.). African-Americans had been the subject of almost continuous racial denigration since the earliest days of lithographic illustrated music covers in the 1830s. Klan-related sheet music featuring Black caricatures was usually either anti-Klan or most often, merely using stereotypical Black images to sell music. Published popular music in general was one of the major factors in perpetuating racism well into the mid-twentieth century through the sale of tens of millions of copies of racially degrading images and lyrics.

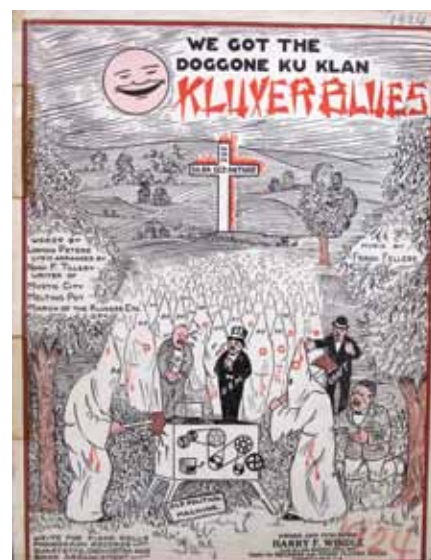
Most of the pro-Klan songs were not published for the general public. Most had limited circulation and were published in official Klan song books or hand-out song sheets designed for use at Klan meetings and rallies and in limited-run, sheet music editions published by Klan sympathizers. As such, their purpose was not to necessarily to convert individuals to the Klan view, but rather to reinforce Klan values and priorities among members.

The lessons of the Ku Klux Klan as clearly documented through their musical legacy are those that we can ill afford to forget today. Respectability is a key to the expansion of such vile groups' power and influence. History is repeating itself with such present day movements as the Christian Identity Movement, patriot militias, and various Alt-right and neo-Nazi groups.

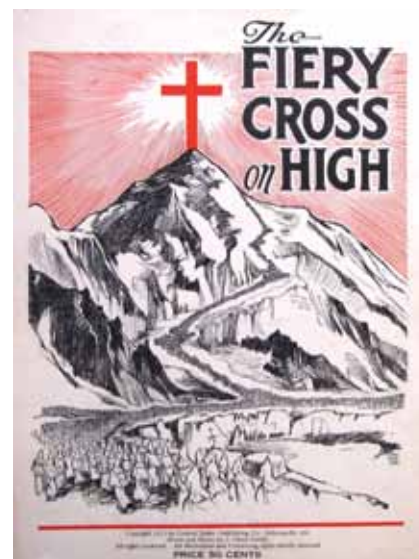
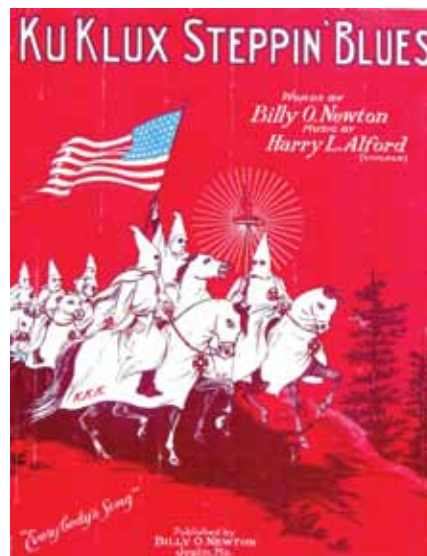
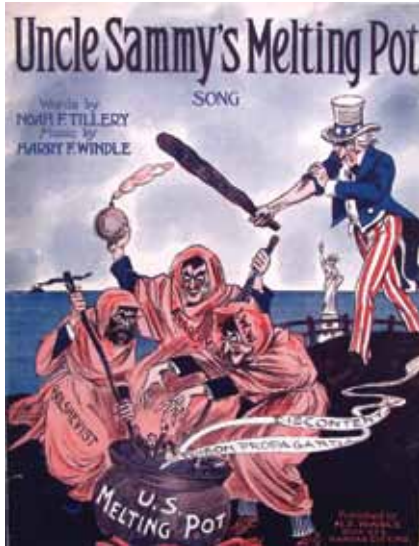
Let this music, and the success it helped generate for the Klan in the 1920s, serve as a warning for all of us to be wary of quick calls to partisanship, patriotism, religion, America first and other such "panaceas" for our perceived injuries and slights. While some of these causes will be legitimate, it is incumbent on us all to view such calls with a healthy degree of skepticism, and it is our duty to question for hidden motives. Evil wears many disguises and it is up to us to see beyond the public mask presented by such groups and individuals if we are to prevent another Ku Klux Klan or Jamestown, or Enron.



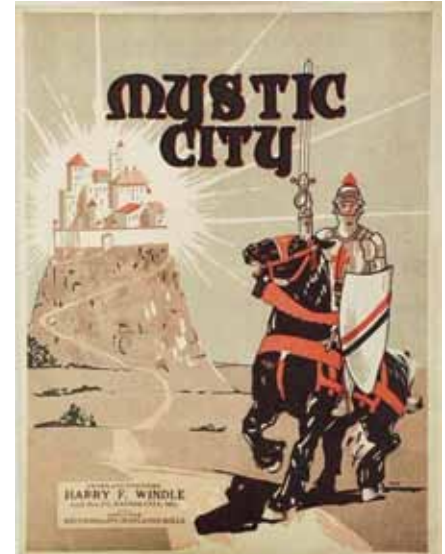
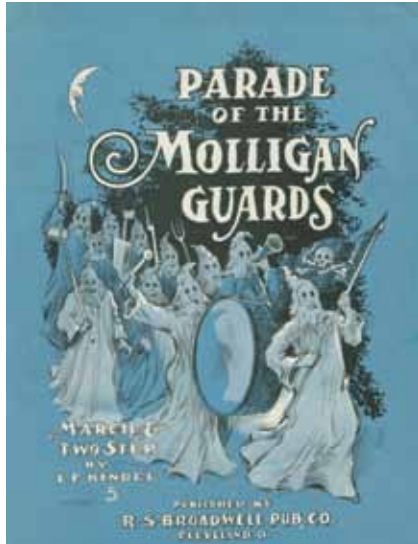












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# The KKK on Phonograph Records

*By William Davis*

Music has long been a way to spread the word about political and social movements and the Ku Klux Klan was no exception. The mid-teens saw a re-birth of the post-Civil War group in a new incarnation. The release of the D W Griffith film, "Birth of a Nation" presented a "Heroic" image of the original group. In addition, the anti-Semitism aroused by the Leo Frank case in Atlanta (and the subsequent lynching of Frank) created an atmosphere in which William J. Simmons, a local recruiter for men's fraternal societies determined to establish a new organization. This was a period of strong association with fraternal organizations, and Simmons held an initial ceremony for the new organization at Stone Mountain, Georgia on Thanksgiving evening, 1915.

The group grew slowly, but in 1920 the group changed its recruiting methods and gained support among many Americans uncomfortable with social changes of the day. No longer concerned solely with African Americans, the Klan now railed against Catholics, Jews, immigration, illegal alcohol, and social decay. It further proclaimed itself as an advocate for fundamentalism and extreme patriotism. Membership grew rapidly and among all social classes with membership reaching estimates ranging from 3 to 8 million members and becoming a major influence in politics in many states. Further, its strength was far beyond south with strong Klan movements in states like California, Oregon, Indiana, Ohio, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maine before a series of scandals in the mid-20's decimated its influence.

One interesting sideline was the growth of phonograph records for the enjoyment of members. Several labels appeared with recordings which could be purchased through mail or in department stores and other standard commercial locations of the day. Indiana was perhaps the major locations and center for the 100%, Our Song, and KKK labels although there were others like Fiery Cross in Detroit.

Unlike the music issued by later Klan groups in the 50's and 60's the music of the 20's was far less aggressive and more reflective of the times and the group's adherence to strong religious and patriotic themes. These were for members of an organization which reached out to middle class and upper-middle class conservative, religious, frequently rural individuals who saw themselves as defenders of propriety and tradition. As such the music intentionally omitted crude and overtly offensive lyrics often found in the music of the Klans that would arise after WWII. Hymns, patriotic songs, and even popular music of the day were the source of music with adapted lyrics and titles ranging from "The Bright Fiery Cross (a re-working of the hymn, The Old Rugged Cross) to "Barney Google Klansman"

"Oh Barney Google he joined the Ku Klux Klan.  
Barney Google was a hundred percent man.  
Barney's wife she was an Irish Jew  
She thought Barney was one too  
But Barney Google belonged to the Ku Klux Klan."

Many of these recordings were produced by Gennett Records in Richmond, Indiana, a label best known today as a major source of classic early jazz recordings (King Oliver, Bix Biederbecke, Jelly Roll Morton, etc.) as well as old-time music - a predecessor of today's country music (Vernon Dalhart, E V Stoneman, Bradley Kincaid) and gospel. It is strange to imagine that studio director, Ezra C.A. Wickemeyer, was recording both King Oliver with Louis Armstrong's first solo and a few weeks later, the 100% Americans, but Gennett also operated as a vanity label and welcomed any artist who paid for production of the recordings.

One major performer was W R. Rhinehart, an ice truck driver from Muncie, Indiana whose recordings (accompanied on piano by Miss Hattie Fletcher later Hattie Fletcher Buckles) on the 100% label are perhaps most often found. Others include, the 100 Percent Americans (aka the Logansport Klan Quartet) and the Wayne County Klan Quartette (Detroit, but also recorded by Gennett).

By 1925, the Klan suffered a series of sex and corruption scandals from which it would not recover and the organization declined. D.C. Stevenson, Grand Dragon of the Indiana Klan was convicted of kidnapping young teacher Madge Oberholtzer,



holding her in his private train car, and raping and torturing her before returning her to her home. Ms. Olberholtzer died from a combination of staph infections and kidney failure from poison she took while held captive in a suicide attempt but not before revealing the story to others before her death a month later. The resulting scandal caused a flood of departures from the Klan.

In addition, newspaper investigations of the Klan followed and when Stephenson was denied a pardon in 1926 by Governor Jackson (whom he had supported in the election), he began to reveal to the *Indianapolis Times* the names of high placed Klan members, including those to whom the Klan had paid bribes. Resulting scandals and trials doomed the Klan and membership dissolved quickly as it lost the reputation it had tried to build as defenders of law and the purity of womanhood. So, too, passed away the Klan recordings – not to be re-born for a few decades until a new, more verbally aggressive Klan was revived in the 1950s.









# 1924: Oscar W. Underwood and the KKK

By Michael Kelly



After World War I, the Ku Klux Klan surged in popularity and spread beyond the South into the North. At the 1924 Democratic Convention, the KKK had a strong presence among delegates (for more details, see the Winter 2016 Keynoter) rallying behind William McAdoo to stop the nomination of Al Smith. Among the many alternatives to the McAdoo/Smith clash was a progressive senator from the Deep South state of Alabama: Oscar W. Underwood.

Underwood had served as congressman and senator, establishing a progressive reputation while supporting President Woodrow Wilson's administration. The Alabama senator had sought the Democratic presidential nomination in 1912 and again in 1924. By 1924, he was one of

only a handful of anti-Klan office holders left in the South. He took a strong position against the Klan during the primaries, losing to McAdoo in Georgia and having a hard time garnering delegates from the South because of his anti-Klan stance.

That year the Klan organized a parade in Birmingham, Alabama which Underwood called an effort "to intimidate me, the Alabama delegation and the Democratic Party....It will not succeed....I maintain that the organization is a national menace....It is either the Ku Klux Klan or the United States of America. Both cannot survive. Between the two, I choose my country."

At the convention, Underwood took the lead in pushing a platform plank condemning the KKK, which was defeated by a single vote. As the convention deadlocked between McAdoo and Smith, delegates gave Underwood a serious look and put him in second place on the 101st ballot. Opposition from the KKK was enough to stop him and throw the nomination to John W. Davis of West Virginia on the 103rd ballot.

His battle against the Klan put such pressure on the Alabama senator that he declined to seek re-election to the Senate in 1926. At the 1928 convention, Underwood supported Al Smith and on January 25, 1929, Oscar W. Underwood died.

UNDERWOOD FOR PRESIDENT



OSCAR W. UNDERWOOD  
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# The Scottsboro Boys

By Michael Kelly



The rocky road toward equal rights in our nation is marked by many events, including a number of precedent-setting trials. One of those landmark events was the trial of the Scottsboro Boys, named for the town of Scottsboro, Alabama.

On March 25, 1931, as the Great Depression gripped the nation and unemployment rose to unknown levels, nine young unemployed black men were illegally hitching rides on railroad boxcars, traveling in search of work. When the freight train pulled into Scottsboro the nine men -- Charlie Weems, Ozie Powell, Clarence Norris, Olen Montgomery, Willie Roberson, Haywood Patterson, Eugene Williams, and Andrew and Leroy Wright -- were taken off the train by local police and arrested on a minor charge.

Searching the boxcars, police also found two white women -- Ruby Bates and Victoria Price -- and were appalled to discover such a violation of the strict racial segregation of the era. The police pressured the white women to accuse the black youths of raping them while on the train. Such a charge was perhaps the worst possible accusation to be made against black men in Alabama at that time. The trial was swift and within two weeks those men that would become known as "the Scottsboro Boys" were tried and convicted by an all-white jury. Of the nine men, eight were sentenced to death while Leroy Wright, the youngest of the nine at age 13, was sentenced to life imprisonment.

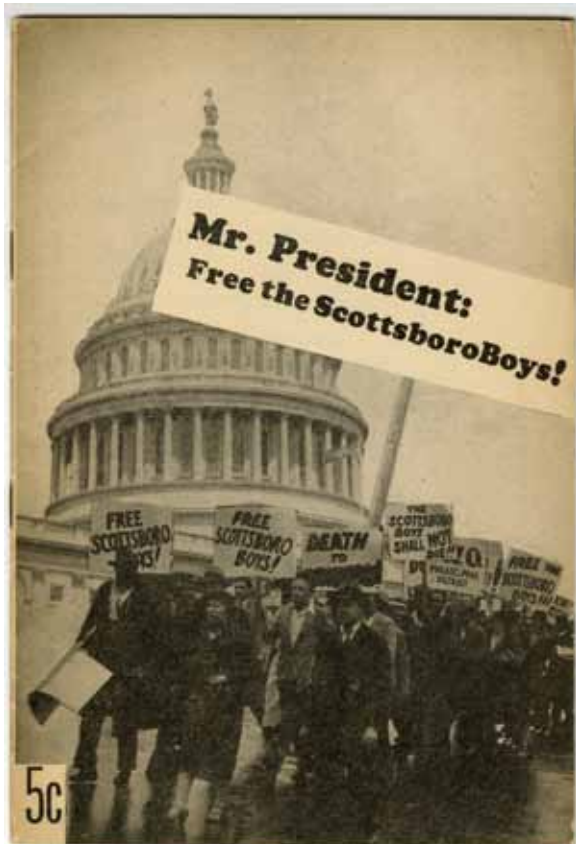
The International Labor Defense (ILD), legal arm of the then-active American Communist Party (CP), was in the midst of an active drive to organize resistance to racism and economic exploitation in the American South. The ILD jumped in to offer legal defense for the Scottsboro Boys. Their conviction -- aggressively promoted by racist state newspapers -- was upheld in a second trial, also decided by an all-white jury, which led the ILD and CP to launch a national protest campaign against the conviction. The campaign featured marches, speaking tours and popular songs. The case drew attention from across the globe.

Eventually the NAACP and other civil rights groups joined with the CP and ILD to form the Scottsboro Defense Committee. As the legal battle continued, Ruby Bates repudiated her previous testimony, admitting that the rape had never occurred.

By 1937, the case reached the United States Supreme Court where the conviction was overturned and the lives of the Scottsboro Boys were saved. Nonetheless Alabama officials carried on the battle, placing every possible legal obstacle in the way of their release so that it took almost twenty years to free the last defendant. The Scottsboro Boys trial was a rare example of victory by American radicalism over the Jim Crow legal system during an era of intense racial codes.







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 Friday, November 2, 1934, 7:30 P. M.  
 At **Shiloh Baptist Church**  
 South East 14th and Scott Streets  
**HEAR**  
 James B. Morris, *Editor Iowa Bystander*  
 Robert Conroy, *Communist Candidate for Lieut. Governor*  
 William Sennett, *Organizer Young Communist League*

Stabbed, then shot to death and hung to a tree? Such was the fate of a Negro youth in Florida, Saturday. He was accused of having committed a crime. Troops and federal officers are used against kidnappers of the wealthy, but for a poor Negro who was kidnapped for a lynch mob advertising their intentions in advance, not a finger is moved.

Nine Negro boys in Scottsboro, Alabama, have been in prison for over 3 years and face death on a framed up charge of raping two white women. In spite of all evidence to the contrary, in spite of the testimony of one of the women that they were never touched, two of the boys have been sentenced to die for the third time on December 7th.

**Lynchings mean growing Fascism against all Toilers**  
 Increasing lynchings of Negroes and the "legal" frame-up of the Scottsboro boys, show very clearly the growth of fascism in this country. Fascism means murder, terror, nationalism, lowering of living standards of all the masses. An attack against the Negro masses is therefore a blow against the white toilers as well.

Mass protest has forced a reversal of the death sentence against the Scottsboro boys twice before. Let us raise our voice now. The Young Communist League calls on the workers, especially the young workers and students to protest against lynchings.

**Demand Freedom for the Scottsboro Boys**  
**Death to those Responsible for the Lynchings**

ISSUED BY YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE 220 Walnut Street, Room 1 Des Moines, Iowa

**J. LOUIS ENGDAHL**  
 Revolutionary Working Class Leader  
 By Harriet Silverman

5c.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF  
 SCOTTSBORO BOYS  
 ALL OUT  
 Union Sq. **MAY 1** at 2 p. m.  
 United Front May Day Committee

**FREE THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS**  
**DEFEAT ALABAMA LYNCH COURTS**  
**FREE TOM MOONEY!**

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 10c - 10c

TO THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS  
 THE ALABAMA LYNCH COURTS  
 THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS  
 THE ALABAMA LYNCH COURTS  
 THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS  
 THE ALABAMA LYNCH COURTS

TO THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS  
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 THE ALABAMA LYNCH COURTS  
 THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS  
 THE ALABAMA LYNCH COURTS



Hammer Price \$5,500



Hammer Price \$2,750

Hammer Price \$5,000



Hammer Price \$11,000

Hammer Price \$1,100

Roland Auctions has presented several sales from esteemed collector and APIC member, Dr. Alan York, which featured historic Americana, presidential campaign ephemera, philately, and numismatic selections spanning Lincoln through the space race. We anticipate offering future political auctions and encourage political consignments.

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