**BHM “History” Feature**

**HARRIET TUBMAN:** Civil War [scout](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconnaissance), spy, nurse, suffragist, civil rights activist

**Harriet Tubman** (born **Araminta Ross, c. March 1822**[**[1]**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman#cite_note-FOOTNOTELarson200416-1)**– March 10, 1913) was an American** [abolitionist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abolitionism_in_the_United_States) and [social activist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_activist).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman#cite_note-FOOTNOTEArmstrong202256-2)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman#cite_note-FOOTNOTEHumez2003156-3) After escaping [slavery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavery_in_the_United_States), Tubman made some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people, including her family and friends,[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman#cite_note-FOOTNOTELarson2004xvii-4) using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known collectively as the [Underground Railroad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Underground_Railroad). During the [American Civil War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War), she served as an armed [scout](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconnaissance) and [spy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War_spies#Union_Spying) for the [Union Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_Army). In her later years, Tubman was an activist in the movement for [women's suffrage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_suffrage_in_the_United_States).

Born into slavery in [Dorchester County, Maryland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorchester_County,_Maryland), Tubman was beaten and whipped by enslavers as a child. Early in life, she suffered a traumatic head wound when an irate [overseer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plantation_complexes_in_the_Southern_United_States#Overseer) threw a heavy metal weight, intending to hit another slave, but hit her instead. The injury caused dizziness, pain, and spells of [hypersomnia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypersomnia" \o "Hypersomnia), which occurred throughout her life. After her injury, Tubman began experiencing strange visions and vivid dreams, which she ascribed to premonitions from God. These experiences, combined with her [Methodist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodist) upbringing, led her to become devoutly religious.

In 1849, Tubman escaped to [Philadelphia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philadelphia), only to return to Maryland to rescue her family soon after. Slowly, one group at a time, she brought relatives with her out of the state, and eventually guided dozens of other enslaved people to freedom. Tubman (or "[Moses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moses)", as she was called) travelled by night and in extreme secrecy, and later said she "never lost a passenger".[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman#cite_note-FOOTNOTEClinton2004192-5) After the [Fugitive Slave Act of 1850](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fugitive_Slave_Act_of_1850) was passed, she helped guide escapees farther north into [British North America](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_North_America) (Canada), and helped newly freed people find work. Tubman met [John Brown](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Brown_(abolitionist)) in 1858, and helped him plan and recruit supporters for [his 1859 raid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Brown%27s_raid_on_Harpers_Ferry) on [Harpers Ferry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harpers_Ferry,_West_Virginia).

When the Civil War began, Tubman worked for the Union Army, first as a cook and nurse, and then as an armed scout and spy. For her guidance of the [raid at Combahee Ferry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raid_on_Combahee_Ferry), which liberated more than 700 enslaved people, she is widely credited as first woman to lead an armed expedition in the war. After the war, she retired to the family home on property she had purchased in 1859 in [Auburn, New York](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auburn,_New_York), where she cared for her aging parents. She was active in the women's suffrage movement until illness overtook her, and she had to be admitted to a home for elderly [African Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Americans) that she had helped to establish years earlier. She became an icon of courage and freedom. (read more):

[**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet\_Tubman**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman)

[**https://www.insauga.com/why-harriet-tubman-chose-to-live-in-st-catharines-on-north-street/**](https://www.insauga.com/why-harriet-tubman-chose-to-live-in-st-catharines-on-north-street/)

[**https://www.stcatharines.ca/en/arts-culture-and-events/the-underground-railroad.aspx**](https://www.stcatharines.ca/en/arts-culture-and-events/the-underground-railroad.aspx)

**videos**

[**https://www.facebook.com/stcatharinesmuseum/videos/on-the-liberty-line-early-black-history-in-st-catharines/649375292929674/**](https://www.facebook.com/stcatharinesmuseum/videos/on-the-liberty-line-early-black-history-in-st-catharines/649375292929674/)

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