President Polk: 1845-1849

- Election of 1844
- Independent treasury system
- Tariff reduction
- Manifest destiny
- Oregon
- Mexican American War
- California
- Gadsden Purchase
- Map of the U.S. in 1850
Items from the 1844 election campaign
First Dark Horse Candidate

Former President Van Buren had the most delegates at the Democratic convention and pledged his candidacy.

Van Buren made a serious mistake when he came out against annexing Texas.

When Van Buren realized he could not get enough votes he threw his support to James K. Polk.

Polk won the nomination on the ninth ballot.

He was a strong supporter of Manifest Destiny and campaigned on his support for westward expansion.
Whig candidates, Henry Clay and Theodore Frelinghuysen

Democrat candidates James Polk and George Mifflin Dallas
Election of 1844

"The Republic of Texas has made known her desire to come into our Union, to form a part of our Confederacy and enjoy with us the blessings of liberty secured and guaranteed by our Constitution. Texas was once a part of our country—was unwisely ceded away to a foreign power—is now independent, and possesses an undoubted right to dispose of a part or the whole of her territory and to merge her sovereignty as a separate and independent state in ours. I congratulate my country that by an act of the late Congress of the United States the assent of this Government has been given to the reunion, and it only remains for the two countries to agree upon the terms to consummate an object so important to both. I regard the question of annexation as belonging exclusively to the United States and Texas."

Portion of Polk’s inaugural speech

Polk supported the annexation of Texas as did a majority of the voters. He became one of the strongest and most successful presidents of the 19th century.
President James K. Polk

Vowed to serve only one term
At 49, youngest president at that time
Listed five goals for his presidency
First was get Texas.
The second goal was the re-establishment of the Independent Treasury System
Third, tariff reductions
Fourth, he wanted to settle the Oregon boundary dispute with Great Britain
Fifth, he wanted to purchase California from Mexico
The Independent Treasury Act was passed in 1840. This law removed the federal government from involvement with the nation's banking system by establishing federal depositories for public funds instead of keeping the money in national, state, or private banks.

The act was an attempt to remedy the disorganization caused by President Jackson’s veto of the B.U.S. recharter bill in 1832.

The Whigs hoped the 1840 law would establish their new national bank proposal. President Tyler refused and there was no organized federal financial plan until Polk became president.

In 1846 Polk pushed through a new independent Treasury Act nearly identical to that of 1841. This act remained substantially unchanged until passage of the Federal Reserve Act in 1913.
In 1846 Polk and his Secretary of the Treasury, Robert Walker, convinced Congress to pass the Walker tariff. This tariff reduced rates to the minimum revenue required to finance the federal government. The tariff did not provide protection for American manufacturers. Britain also passed tariff reductions and trade between the two nations increased.
On a sheet of paper, write down everything you see in this photo.
Manifest Destiny led to war with Mexico and the Oregon territory becoming part of the U.S.

Manifest Destiny was the belief the U.S. had a God given mission to spread its civilization by conquest to the entire western hemisphere no matter who it harmed.
John L. O'Sullivan coined the exact term "Manifest Destiny" in the July/August 1845 issue of the United States Magazine and Democratic Review in an article titled "Annexation"
Technological innovations like the telegraph, steamship and railroad could link distant places like Oregon and California that had once seemed remote.

A belief that democracy must continue to grow in order to survive.

A desire to expand the benefits of American civilization.

Southerners were anxious to acquire new lands for additional slave states.

A need to develop new markets made the acquisition of pacific ports a priority.

Fear that Great Britain would try and block American annexation of Texas and might expand her own holdings in North America.
President Polk wanted control of the Oregon Territory and was willing to go to war with Britain. “54°40' or fight” was his position. The Oregon dispute was settled peacefully on the 49° in the Treaty of Oregon in 1846.
Even though Mexico signed a treaty, they never really conceded Texas was an independent nation.

When the U.S. annexed Texas in 1845, Mexican/U.S. relations reached a breaking point.

President Polk sent an envoy, James Slidell, to seek a peaceful resolution, however the Mexican President, Mariano Parades, ordered Slidell out of Mexico and threatened war.

President Polk ordered troops to the border.

On April 25, 1846 a unit commanded by Captain Thornton was ambushed by Mexican soldiers and suffered casualties.
The Mexican American War, 1846-1848
The war proved to be a training ground for future Civil War soldiers. Three later presidents also served in the war.

- Future president General Zachary Taylor “Old Rough and Ready” commander of U.S. forces in northern Mexico
- Future president Franklin Pierce, after serving in Congress volunteered to fight in Mexico City
- Future president Ulysses S. Grant fought in the capture of Mexico City
The war with Mexico sparked sectional conflict

Battle of Churubusco
August 20, 1847

The war was the ultimate extension of Manifest Destiny: the belief that Americans had a God given destiny to take over the entire North American continent.
Ohio Senator Tom Corwin accused Polk of involving the U.S. in a war of aggression.

Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina abstained from voting, correctly foreseeing the war would aggravate sectional strife.

Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster voiced doubts about the constitutionality of Polk's actions, believing Polk had failed to consult adequately with Congress.

Author Henry David Thoreau refused to pay his $1 Massachusetts poll tax because he believed the war an immoral advancement of slavery.

Former President John Quincy Adams described the war as a southern expedition to find "bigger pens to cram with slaves."

A freshman Whig Congressman from Illinois, Abraham Lincoln questioned whether the "spot" where blood had been shed, which had begun the war, was really U.S. soil.
The Mexican-American war was the first war where news about the fighting could be transmitted quickly through the use of the new telegraph.

Samuel F.B. Morse came up with the idea of a communications system using the electro-magnet and a series of relays through a network of telegraph stations. In order to transmit messages in this system, he invented Morse Code, an alphabet of electronic dots and dashes. The system made communication across the country much faster than ever before.
“Bear flag revolt” on June 14, 1846

John Fremont launched a revolution to free California from Mexican control and establish a republic. In less than a month, the territory was independent. When news of the Mexican American War reached California, the goal became statehood. It later became a state in 1850.
The war was fought in northern and central Mexico in many different battles. Although the Mexican army had several victories, the U.S. dominated in the end, captured Mexico City, and forced the Mexicans to surrender.
The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the war on February 2, 1848.
Impact of the war on the United States

1. 525,000 square miles of new territory was added.

2. The Americans suffered heavy losses; the nearly 13,000 dead included only about 1,700 in combat—the rest fell to disease.

3. The war was a proving ground for young military officers (Grant, Jackson, Lee, Meade, Sherman, for example) who would soon put their skills to work against each other in the American Civil War.

4. It led to political problems over the extension of slavery that resulted in the Civil War 13 years later.

5. The U.S. became a Pacific power.

6. The expansion plans of Britain, Russia and France on the North American continent were thwarted.
The U.S. in 1840, prior to Polk’s presidency

The U.S. in 1850, after Polk’s presidency
Wilmot Proviso 1846

Wilmot Proviso – was a proposal to outlaw slavery in any new territories acquired from Mexico during the war. (Didn’t pass, but brought the issue of slavery front and center)

[Passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, 1846 and 1847, never passed by the U.S. Senate]

David Wilmot, a Congressman, from Pennsylvania began a new round of sectional political conflict when, in August of 1846, he introduced his famous Proviso barring slavery from any lands taken from Mexico. Southerners immediately took offense at the proposal, and defeated it in the Senate. A surprising number of northern Democrats voted with their section rather than their party on the measure. Their votes only confirmed many southerners' fears that the North harbored an unfair bias against slavery, and pushed them into increasingly aggressive demands for its protection. These actions helped pushed the nation into the sectional crisis that became the Civil War.
The Spirit of Reform

- Political and religious background
- Religious reform groups
- Utopian communities
- Temperance movement
- Educational reforms
- Labor reform
- Rights for the mentally ill
- Struggle for women’s rights
- Abolitionism
Reform Movements

- Women’s rights
- Anti-slavery
- Temperance
- Utopian communities
- Religious Reform groups
- Educational reform
- Legal code and prison reform
- Rights for the mentally ill
In the early 1800s, a huge religious movement known as the Second Great Awakening swept the U.S.

Massive religious meetings known as revivals or camp meetings were held throughout the nation.

Protestant philosophy changed to include a belief that doing good and helping solve societies problems was a path to salvation.

The concept of the social gospel, a belief in helping others, which brought needed reforms at the beginning of the 20th century had its origins here.
Called "America's foremost revivalist."

Christian evangelist said to have converted 500,000 people in large outdoor meetings called revivals or camp meetings.

Major leader of the “Second Great Awakening” religious revival that swept parts of America in the early years of the 19th century.

Differed from the older Calvinist Christian tradition that believed man was predestined (born to go to heaven or hell) and could do nothing to change his or her fate. Finney believed that people could choose their salvation by doing good works. He believed in free will rather then predestination.

Active in the abolitionist movement, condemning slavery from his pulpit.

Supported temperance and women’s rights.
The Shakers were a breakaway group from the Quakers which started in England in the late 18th century. A group moved to New York and later to other states.

Believed in a new way of life: abolished families, practiced celibacy, and full equality between sexes.

Families in Shaker society were completely segregated, houses had separate entrances for men and women.

They did not believe in procreation, so the only ways to gain new members was through adoption or conversion.

Their simple, functional furniture designs, music, dancing, and self-published books became popular.
Founded by German immigrants in 1843 in New York, later settled in Iowa in 1855.

The Amanas based their society on Christian ideals.

The community provided each family with a home and monthly allowance at the general store.

Medical care was provided free by the community.

Each person was expected to work and was assigned a job by the community Elders based on the needs of the community as well as the talents of the individual.
The Mormons were organized by Joseph Smith in New York in 1830. Smith and his followers moved to Illinois, where he was murdered by opponents. Brigham Young succeeded him and led migration to Utah. During the crossing to Utah, Church leaders encouraged wealthy and established men to take additional wives to help widows and their children, as well as young women without families. The practice of polygamy was publicly announced by the Church in 1852.
Oneida

 Started by John Humphrey Noyes in Oneida, NY in 1848 as a religious community

 Lived communally where everyone shared everything including work, food, possessions, and living space.

 Among other beliefs, the community rejected "exclusive love" and considered all men married to all women

 Practiced “mutual criticism” in which actions were reprimanded in front of a committee or sometimes even the entire community

 Lasted about 30 years
Non-religious utopian communities

Utopia is defined as a perfect place.

Robert Owen founded a socialist community in New Harmony, Illinois in 1825. He believed everyone should contribute to make it self-sufficient and not need currency. It failed after several years.
Founded in 1841 in Massachusetts by former Unitarian minister George Ripley to live self-sufficiently. Influenced by transcendentalist thought, which rejected organized religion as the source for enlightenment, emphasized individualism and the mysteries of nature. They preferred to live apart from society due to the unequal and unfair treatment of individuals. Influenced many important writers such as Hawthorne and Thoreau. Lasted only until 1847 mostly due to its reliance upon agriculture and its location on infertile land.
Locations of various communities in the mid-1800s
Temperance Movement (anti-alcohol)
Began in 1826 to eliminate the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Estimated that the average American in the early 19th century consumed over four gallons of liquor a year. In 2000, the average was just over two gallons a year.

Made up mostly of women who saw “demon rum” as the number one enemy.

In the years before the Civil War (antebellum) the main focus was to get men to sign pledges promising not to drink alcoholic beverages.

Later anti-alcohol organizations such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) worked to make alcoholic beverages illegal.
"The Drunkard's Progress/From the First Glass to the Grave", 1846

Step 1: A glass with a friend
Step 2: A glass to keep the cold out
Step 3: A glass too much
Step 4: Drunk and riotous
Step 5: The summit attained...Jolly companions...A confirmed drunkard
Step 6: Poverty and disease
Step 7: Forsaken by Friends
Step 8: Desperation and Crime
Step 9: Death by suicide

Wife and daughter weeping outside the burning house, in the distance is a prison.
By 1840, there were over 2,000 temperance societies in the United States. 70,000 members signed pledges, like those below, promising abstinence from alcoholic beverages.
Free public education was rare before the 1820s. A movement for “common schools” began in Massachusetts during the period of 1830-1850 to Americanize new immigrants. Horace Mann was an important leader in the movement which advocated compulsory education. Common schools were designed to have a similar educational experience for all children regardless of class or locale. Common schools were viewed as a vehicle to preserve rural values in new urban society. Normal schools were established to train teachers.
The original 1836 version of the reading books used for 75 years by about 80% of all American students. Some 120 million sets were sold. No other books ever had this much influence over so many children over such a long period.

**LESSON I.**
The Little Readers.

1. Frank, what a fine thing it is to read. A little while ago, you know, you could only read little words, and you had to spell them—c-a-t, cat; d-o-g, dog.
2. You were a long time getting through with the “First Reader,” but now you can read quite well.

2  

ECLECTIC FIRST READER.

John must not tear the book. He may see how fast he can learn.

Ann has here nice
Jane must keep clean

LESSON II.

This boy has a bird. This bird is on his hand. Some birds can talk.

The dog barks. Do you hear the dog bark? Boys play with dogs.
Unions began to form after the Revolutionary War in cities such as Philadelphia and Baltimore.

In the 1820s the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations, the first to combine different types of unions, formed.

Their goals were not only higher wages and improved working conditions but also free public schools, abolition of debtors jail, and universal male suffrage.

The Union entered politics to secure their goals.

Preamble of the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations (Philadelphia, 1828)

“We, the Journeymen Mechanics of the City and County of Philadelphia, conscious that our condition in society, is lower than justice demands it should be, and feeling our inability, individually, to ward off from ourselves and families those numerous evils which result from an unequal and very excessive accumulation of wealth and power into the hands of a few, are desirous of forming an Association, which shall avert as much as possible those evils with which poverty and incessant toil have already inflicted, and which threaten ultimately to, overwhelm and destroy us...”
Up until the mid-19th century, a person could be put in jail if they could not pay back money owed. Early unions pushed to have debtors jails abolished.

Child labor was widespread in the 19th and early 20th centuries, for example, in New England about 30% of workers were children under 16.
In the late 1820s, unions entered politics with the Working Men's Party. It was made up of craftsmen, skilled journeymen, and reformers who sought a 10-hour workday, free public education, abolition of debtor imprisonment, and an end to prison contract labor.

The party ended in the 1830s, and several New York members joined the Locofoco Party, a radical faction of the New York State Democratic Party.

Many of the early labor unions were destroyed by the economic collapse caused by the Panic of 1837. Nearly 30% of U.S. workers lost their jobs.

Labor unions made a comeback in the 1840s and 1850s but were again devastated by the economic crisis of the Panic of 1857.

Unions came back strongly after the Civil War.
In 1840, President Van Buren established a ten hour work day for all federal employees.

In 1842, the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that labor unions were not illegal conspiracies.

In 1842, children were prohibited from working over ten hours a day.

In 1847, New Hampshire made ten hours the legal workday.

In 1848, Pennsylvania passed a law to make 12 the minimum age for child workers.

In 1848, Pennsylvania passed a ten hour work day.
Average workday was 11 hours per day.

From a report on Lowell, a mill in Massachusetts, working conditions in 1846:

“Thus thirteen hours per day of close attention and monotonous labor are exacted from the young women in these manufactories. . . So fatigued—-we should say, exhausted and worn out but we wish to speak of the system in the simplest language—are numbers of the girls, that they go to bed soon after their evening meal? and endeavor by a comparatively long sleep to resuscitate their weakened frames for the toils of the coming day. “

From March 20th to September 19th, inclusive.
COMMENCE WORK, at 6.30 A.M. LEAVE OFF WORK, at 6.30 P.M., except on Saturday Evenings.
BREAKFAST at 6 A.M. DINNER, at 12 M. Commence Work, after dinner, 12.45 P.M.

From September 20th to March 19th, inclusive.
COMMENCE WORK at 7.00 A.M. LEAVE OFF WORK, at 7.00 P.M., except on Saturday Evenings.
BREAKFAST at 8.30 A.M. DINNER, at 12.30 P.M. Commence Work, after dinner, 1.15 P.M.

Bells.

From March 20th to September 19th, inclusive.
Morning Bells.
First bell, 4.30 A.M.; Ring out, 6.00 A.M.
Second, 6.30 A.M.; Third, 6.20.

Dinner Bells.
First bell, 12.00 M.; Ring out, 12.35 P.M.
Second, 12.30 P.M.; Third, 7.00 P.M.

Evening Bells.
First bell, 1.05 P.M.; Ring in, 7.00 P.M.
Second, 7.00 P.M.; Third, 8.00.

From September 20th to March 19th, inclusive.
Morning Bells.
First bell, 5.00 A.M.; Ring out, 6.30 A.M.
Second, 6.00 A.M.; Third, 6.50.

Dinner Bells.
First bell, 1.05 P.M.; Ring out, 7.00 P.M.
Second, 7.00 P.M.; Third, 8.00.

Evening Bells.
First bell, 12.30 P.M.; Ring in, 6.30 A.M.
Second, 6.30 A.M.; Third, 8.30.

Saturdays.
DURING APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST, RING OUT AT 6.00 P.M.
The remaining Saturday Evenings in the year, ring out as follows:

SEPTEMBER.
First Saturday, ring out 6.00 P.M.
Second “ 5.45 “
Third “ 5.50 “
Fourth “ 5.20 “

OCTOBER.
First Saturday, ring out 5.05 P.M.
Second “ 4.55 “
Third “ 4.45 “
Fourth “ 4.55 “
Fifth “ 4.25 “

NOVEMBER.
First Saturday, ring out 4.15 P.M.
Second “ 4.05 “
First Saturday, ring out 4.10 P.M.
Second “ 4.15 “

YARD GATES will be opened at the first stroke of the bells for entering or leaving the Mills.

SPEED GATES commence hoisting three minutes before commencing work.
Growth in manufacturing jobs including textile factories, 1820-1860

total manufacturing jobs
Dorothea Dix

In the mid-1820s, she discovered the mentally ill in Massachusetts were kept locked in prisons in unsanitary, unheated cells chained to the walls. They were naked, filthy, underfed, and sleeping on stone floors.

Began a lifelong campaign to improve conditions for mentally ill persons.

Instrumental in getting Massachusetts to build a mental hospital and later went on to work for mental institutions in other states.
The Second Great Awakening inspired women to do things they had never done before. Many women, for the first time, became active in activities outside their home and family.

Women became active in temperance and abolition as well as other humanitarian causes.

Women were considered inferior to men. They were not allowed to attend college, vote, or control their own property. Legally, women were their husband’s property.

Many women were angry at their second class status and began organizing.

The primary focus of the antebellum women's rights movement was obtaining civil rights for women. Women wanted equal property rights, divorce reform, custody of their children, and the right to vote.
A protest against the uncomfortable and constricting women's clothes began in 1851 when Libby Miller developed what became known as the bloomer style.

Called “Bloomers” after *The Lily* magazine editor Amelia Bloomer promoted the new style.

Women were harassed and bloomers disappeared until the end of the 19th century.
BLOOMERISM—AN AMERICAN CUSTOM.
In 1840, the World Antislavery Convention was held in London. While women were encouraged to take an active part in American antislavery societies, they were not allowed to be delegates at the London Convention. This so angered American delegates Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott that they decided to hold their own meeting to promote women’s rights. The meetings took place in 1848 in New York.
Seneca Falls Convention  New York 1848: the beginning of the women’s movement in the U.S.

Organized by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Their purpose was to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of women. They wanted to publicize the second class status of women and begin the fight to remedy it.

Over 300 attended.

A series of declarations was passed. The issue of female suffrage met serious opposition until a speech by Frederick Douglass convinced the delegates to pass a declaration demanding it.

Only one Convention attendee, 19 year old Charlotte Woodward lived to see women win the vote in 1920.
The Declaration of Sentiments was based on the Declaration of Independence:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights...The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. ...He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners...RESOLVED, That it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.”

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, author of the Declaration. Photo with two of her seven children.
In 1851 Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton became partners in the suffrage movement. Although their efforts directly led to passage of the 19th amendment, neither lived to see it.
The women's rights movement grew out of the anti-slavery movement. In 1851 at a convention in Akron, Ohio, former slave, abolitionist, and women's rights advocate Sojourner Truth gave a stirring speech titled "Ain't I a Woman?".

Quotes from her speech
"Well, children, where there is so much racket, there must be something out of kilter, I think between the Negroes of the South and the women of the North - all talking about rights - the white men will be in a fix pretty soon...
"That little man in black( a minister) there! He says women can't have as much rights as men. 'Cause Christ wasn't a woman. "Where did your Christ come from?", From God and a Woman! Man had nothing to do with him!"
"If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back and get it right-side up again. And now that they are asking to do it, the men better let them."
Margaret Fuller

Lucretia Mott

E. Cady Stanton

Mary A. Livermore

Lydia Maria Child

Susan B. Anthony

Grace Greenwood

Anna E. Dickinson

Lucy Stone
Higher education for women did not exist before 1821. In 1821, Emma Hart Willard founded the Troy Female Seminary in New York, the first endowed school for girls. Oberlin College became the first coeducational college in the United States in 1833. In 1837, Mount Holyoke College, the first established for women opened.
1859 print shows a group of women in a hall listening to a woman speaker pointing to the men sitting in an upper gallery. Usually women were made to sit in upper galleries away from the action below.
The abolitionist movement organized in 1833, when William Lloyd Garrison, Arthur and Lewis Tappan, and others formed the American Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia. Abolitionists believed slavery was a national sin, and it was the moral obligation of every American to help eradicate it.
Through his newspaper, *The Liberator*, Garrison spoke out against slavery and for the rights of black Americans. From the very first issue in 1831, Garrison made it clear he would be a strong advocate for the total abolition of slavery and full citizenship for African Americans.

“On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hand of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen; -- but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch -- AND I WILL BE HEARD.”
Anti-slavery societies sprung up all over the north and west including the Salem, Massachusetts Female Anti-Slavery Society, the first to be founded by a black woman.
Abolitionists faced hostility and violence in the early years of the anti slavery movement.

In the early 1830s, Amos Dresser, a minister in Memphis, Tennessee, was arrested and publicly whipped by a committee of prominent citizens of Nashville, Tennessee for being a member of an Ohio anti-slavery society and possessing and disseminating anti-slavery materials.
Who were some of the prominent Abolitionists?

Gerrit Smith (1797-1874) was a wealthy New York abolitionist. He was the president of the New York Anti-Slavery Society for three years. Smith served as a Station Master on the Underground railroad. One of the Secret Six who gave financial assistance to John Brown for his raid at Harper’s Ferry. Smith ran for president three times and was the only abolitionist to hold a congressional office.

Samuel J. May (1797-1871) was Unitarian minister. A pacifist who acted as a general agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society and sheltered slaves on the Underground Railroad.

William Seward (1801-1872), governor of New York from 1838-1842. He was elected to the U.S. Senate as a Whig party member in 1847. During the Civil War Lincoln made Seward his Secretary of State, and asked him to help write the Emancipation Proclamation. Seward also sheltered slaves on the Underground Railroad.
Lucretia Mott (1793-1880) was a Quaker pacifist who was committed to black emancipation and women’s rights. After slavery was abolished in 1865, Mott supported the rights of Black Americans to vote.

Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880) in 1833, wrote “An Appeal to that Class of Americans Called Africans,” an anti-slavery tract in which she declared her willingness to battle for emancipation. She was the editor of the National Anti-Slavery Standard, the American Anti-Slavery Society’s newspaper.

Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) was one of the best known and respected black women of the nineteenth century. Born a slave in New York, she escaped to New York City in 1827. She was a tireless worker in the abolition crusade and helped recruit Black soldiers during the Civil War.
Sarah and Angelina Grimke were American feminists and social reformers who spent their lives working and leading in both the abolitionist and suffrage movements. They were refined, wealthy southern women, their speeches and writings against slavery attracted considerable attention.

Sarah and Angelina Grimke were born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1792 and 1805 respectively. They were the daughters of John F. Grimke and Mary Smith Grimke. Their father was a slave-holding judge and their mother came from a family prominent in South Carolina politics. In 1821, Sarah left Charleston because of her strong antislavery views and moved to Philadelphia. Angelina joined her in Philadelphia in 1829 and together they set out to end the evil of slavery in our nation.

Both sisters gave antislavery lectures in several Northeastern states and were some of the first women to lecture in public in the United States. Angelina appealed to the women of America to support their fight against slavery in her works "Appeal to the Christian Women of the South", published in 1836 and "Appeal to Women of the Nominally Free States", published in 1837. Sarah, too, began to write to gain support for abolition and in 1836 she published "Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States". Because of these and other writings, both were threatened with imprisonment if they were ever to return to South Carolina. Regardless, they freed their family's slaves that were left to them as part of their father's estate.

This article is an excerpt from HISTORY'S WOMEN - THE UNSUNG HEROINES by Patricia Chadwick available for $15.95 at https://www.wmsecure.com/~ftymes/form.html
The abolitionist movement turned to politics

Abolitionists tried various means to bring the slavery question to the federal government. The government, fearful of sectional strife, refused to deal with the slavery issue. The Liberty Party formed in 1840 to secure emancipation though the political process and repeal all racial discriminatory legislation.

James G. Birney from Michigan, the executive secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, was the party's candidate for president in 1840 and 1844.