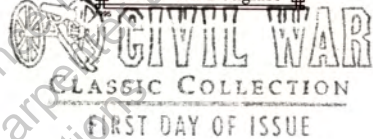


Frederick Douglass

Devoted to the abolition of slavery,
noted author, speaker and former slave.



Rodney Lawren
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Special Collections



FREDERICK DOUGLASS

In 1817, Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was born a slave in Tuckahoe, Maryland. When he was only eight, he was sent to Baltimore to work for one of his master's relatives. Encouraged by his new master's wife, he began to educate himself. He worked in a shipyard caulking wooden ships to make them watertight until 1838, when he ran away to New Bedford, Massachusetts, changing his name to Frederick Douglass to avoid capture. At first he found work in New Bedford as a caulker, but when other men refused to work beside a black, he took whatever work he could get, mostly collecting rubbish and digging cellars. By 1841, Douglass had grown into a tall, handsome, intelligent, spirited and articulate man. When he gave a speech at a meeting of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, he so impressed

his audience that he was hired to lecture about his experiences as a slave. Douglass used his lecture earnings to aid fugitive slaves and also headed the Rochester station of the Underground Railroad. In 1845, he published *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, an autobiography that revealed his master's identity and threatened the former slave's freedom. He fled to England that same year, where his stirring antislavery oratory motivated British friends to raise enough money to buy his freedom. Douglas returned to America in 1847 and founded an antislavery newspaper, the *North Star*, in Rochester, New York. During the Civil War, he helped recruit blacks for the Union Army and met with President Abraham Lincoln on several occasions to discuss the problems of slavery.