

CHAPTER 8 Section 2 (pages 248–253)

Slavery and Abolition

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about different religious movements in the United States in the 1800s.

In this section, you will learn about the movement to end slavery.

AS YOU READ

Use this chart to take notes about the antislavery and proslavery actions that happened from 1820 to 1850.

TERMS AND NAMES

abolition Movement to outlaw slavery

William Lloyd Garrison Abolitionist leader

emancipation The freeing of slaves

David Walker A free African American who urged blacks to take their freedom by force

Frederick Douglass Escaped slave who became a noted abolitionist leader

Nat Turner Leader of a violent slave rebellion

antebellum Pre-Civil War

gag rule A rule limiting debate on an issue

ANTISLAVERY ACTIONS	PROSLAVERY ACTIONS
<i>William Lloyd Garrison publishes The Liberator.</i>	

Abolitionists Speak Out

(pages 248–250)

What did abolitionists want?

Free African Americans had urged the end of slavery for years. Gradually, more and more whites began to support **abolition**, the movement to end slavery. Some were encouraged by Charles Finney and other preachers who called slavery a sin.

One of the more significant abolitionists was **William Lloyd Garrison**, a newspaper publisher. In his newspaper, *The Liberator*, Garrison called for immediate **emancipation**, or freeing of the slaves. He changed the abolitionists' goal from a gradual end of slavery to an immediate end.

David Walker was a free black who moved from the South to the North. He urged African Americans to fight for their freedom. Another important abolitionist was **Frederick Douglass**, a former slave. Born a slave in 1817, Douglass had been taught to read and write by the wife of one of his owners. In 1838, Douglass held a skilled job as a ship caulker in Baltimore. He excelled at his job and earned high wages. However, Douglass's slave owner took his pay each week. As a result, Douglass escaped and went to New York.

In New York, Douglass became an eager reader of *The Liberator*, and an admirer of William Lloyd Garrison. Soon, Douglass became a leader in the abolitionist cause. He wrote and spoke

powerfully in favor of achieving emancipation through nonviolence. He founded an antislavery newspaper called *The North Star*.

1. How did Walker's and Douglass's views differ?

Life Under Slavery (pages 250–252)

What was life like under slavery?

As the debate over slavery grew, the number of slaves in the United States also increased. The nation's slave population doubled between 1810 and 1830—from 1.2 million to about 2 million.

The institution of slavery had changed substantially since the 18th century. In those days, most slaves were male. Most had recently arrived from the Caribbean or Africa and spoke one of several non-English languages. Most of these slaves worked on small farms.

By 1830, however, the majority of slaves had been born in America and spoke enough English to communicate with other slaves. The rise of the plantation system brought further changes to slaves' lives.

Most slaves worked on large plantations. They worked from dawn to dusk in the fields. Some slaves worked in the plantation owner's house as butlers, cooks, and maids.

Many African American slaves also supplied the labor needed in cities. They worked in textile mills, mines, and lumber yards. Some slaves were skilled workers, such as blacksmiths or carpenters.

In 1831, a Virginia slave named **Nat Turner** led a violent slave rebellion. He and his followers attacked five plantations. They killed several people. Turner and his followers eventually were captured and executed.

2. Where did most slaves work?

Slave Owners Defend Slavery

(pages 252–253)

How did Southerners react to the Turner rebellion?

The Turner rebellion frightened white Southerners. Some argued that the only way to prevent rebellions was to abolish slavery. Virginia lawmakers introduced a bill that abolished slavery in the state. After a heated debate, the bill was defeated by a close vote. That loss ended the debate on slavery in the **antebellum**, or pre-Civil War, South.

Others in the South argued that placing tighter restrictions on slaves would keep them from revolting. Across the South, state legislatures passed laws known as slave codes, restricting blacks' rights even further. Under these new laws, slaves could not preach, testify in court, own property, or learn to read.

Despite the *controversy* surrounding slavery, many Southerners defended it. They argued that slavery actually benefitted blacks by introducing them to Christianity. Southern white Christian churches gradually shifted their positions on slavery during this period. While some ministers had attacked slavery in the early 1800s, by the 1830s, most agreed that slavery and Christianity could coexist.

Southerners also invented the myth of the happy slave—a beloved member of the plantation family. They argued that, unlike Northerners who fired their slaves, Southerners cared for their slaves for a lifetime.

Despite these claims from Southerners, the abolitionist movement continued. Northern legislators tried to introduce bills in Congress to abolish slavery. Southern representatives responded by getting Congress to adopt a **gag rule** in 1836. Under this rule, legislators could limit or ban debate on any issue—including slavery. The rule was *repealed* in 1845. But until then, Southerners were able to limit the debate over slavery in Congress.

3. In what ways did Southerners further restrict slaves' rights?
