

DOCUMENT #4

Timeline of slave rebellions in the United States

1663: First serious slave conspiracy in Colonial America. *White servants and black slaves conspire to revolt in Gloucester County, VA, but are betrayed by a fellow servant.*

1739: The Stono Rebellion. *The deadliest revolt in Colonial America takes place in Stono, SC. Armed slaves start marching to Florida and towards freedom, but the insurrection is put down and at least 20 whites and more than 40 blacks are killed.*

1800: Gabriel Prosser's rebellion. *In the spring of 1800, Prosser, a deeply religious man, begins plotting an invasion of Richmond, Virginia and an attack on its armory. By summer he has enlisted more than 1,000 slaves and collected an armory of weapons, organizing the first large-scale slave revolt in the U.S. On the day of the revolt, the bridges leading to Richmond are destroyed in a flood, and Prosser is betrayed. The state militia attacks, and Prosser and 35 of his men are hanged.*

1811: Louisiana revolt. *Louisiana slaves revolt in two parishes near New Orleans. The revolt is suppressed by U.S. troops.*

1816: Fort Blount revolt. *Three hundred slaves and about 20 Native American allies hold Fort Blount on Apalachicola Bay, Florida for several days before being attacked by U.S. troops.*

1822: Denmark Vesey's revolt. *A freed man, Vesey had won a lottery and purchased his emancipation in 1800. He is working as a carpenter in Charleston, South Carolina when he starts to plan a massive slave rebellion—one of the most elaborate plots in American history—involving thousands of slaves on surrounding plantations, organized into cells. They would start a major fire at night, and then kill the slave owners and their families. Vesey is betrayed and hanged.*

1831: Nat Turner's revolt. *Nat Turner plans a slave revolt in Southampton County, Virginia, the only effective, sustained slave rebellion in U.S. history. Sixty whites are killed before Turner and his followers are captured and hanged.*

1831–1862: The Underground Railroad. *Approximately 75,000 slaves escape to the North and to freedom via the Underground Railroad, a system in which free African American and white "conductors," abolitionists and sympathizers help guide and shelter the escapees.*

1838: Frederick Douglass escapes. *Frederick Douglass escapes from slavery in Baltimore. He later publishes his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself*, and becomes a leading abolitionist.*

1839: The Amistad mutiny. *Led by a West African named Cinque, slaves transported aboard the Spanish ship Amistad stage a mutiny, killing the entire crew except for the captain and first mate and demanding to be sailed back to Africa. Instead, the captain sails to New York. The rebels eventually win their freedom in a landmark Supreme Court case.*

1841: Creole revolt. *Slaves revolt on the Creole, a slave trading ship sailing from Virginia to Louisiana. The rebels overpower the crew and successfully sail to the Bahamas, where they are granted asylum and freedom.*

1849: Harriet Tubman escapes. *Harriet Tubman escapes from slavery in Maryland. She becomes one of the best-known "conductors" on the Underground Railroad, returning to the South 19 times and helping more than 300 slaves escape to freedom.*

1859: Harper's Ferry Attack. *Led by abolitionist John Brown, a group of slaves and white abolitionists stage an attack on Harper's Ferry, Virginia. They capture the federal armory and arsenal before the insurrection is halted by local militia. Brown and the other captives are tried and executed. The raid hastens the advent of the Civil War, which starts two years later.*