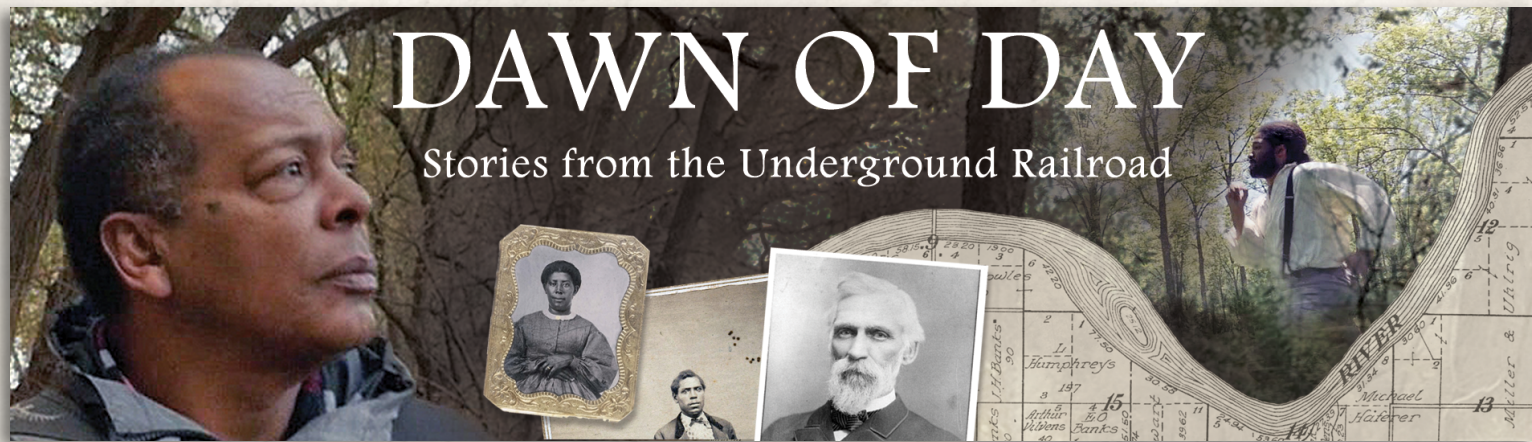


DAWN OF DAY

Stories from the Underground Railroad



*Research ideas to complement your study of the Underground Railroad in Kansas.

Download “The Last Train that passed over the Underground Railroad from Kansas Territory”.

<https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221986/text> (transcribed typed text version)

This journal was used to construct a few of the stories in the documentary “Dawn of Day: Stories from the Underground Railroad.” There are several additional stories (not included in the film that your students can read about) detailed in the journal. They include an escape from proslavery men, hijacking a ferryboat, and an encounter with a tornado. This journal was compiled in 1870 by the first-hand account of Polish-American abolitionist Charles Leonhardt. In the journal, he describes an organized expedition to transport several fugitive slaves from Kansas to Iowa. This was the furthest known western loop of the Underground Railroad. While the journal is written primarily in first person, it includes second-hand accounts of fugitive slaves, abolitionists, and travelers they met on their two-month journey from Lawrence, Kansas, to Iowa City, IA.

(A WORD OF CAUTION): The use of the N-word and other derogatory terms appear in the journal. We recommend teachers read the journal beforehand to carefully select stories and passages for your students and to avoid derogatory terminology.

1- Plan out a series of short research projects that your students could do based on particular individuals mentioned in the journal. For example, of the slaves who are named in the journal, very little is known about what happened to them. But, there are abbreviated histories near the end of the journal that could open up a lot of research opportunities. There are also several abolitionists who are mentioned traveling with them. Of those, five or more are well documented. Encourage your students to use internet archives and websites like kansasmemory.org and findagrave.org to locate more information about them. The approximate travel dates of this group are from June 13th 1860 – August 1860.

2- Create a detailed google map linking the towns and way stations where the “last train” traveled on the way to Iowa City. (More than a dozen locations are mentioned in the journal.)

3- Create a piece of art work visualizing some of the adventures on their way.

4- Create a word map with each person’s name and what role they played on the journey.

5- Research any of the following names mentioned in Leonhardt’s journal or in the film: John Brown (1800-1859) - William Quantrill (1837-1865) - Rev. John E. Stewart - Charles Leonhardt (1827-1884) - Captain William Mitchell (1825-1903) - Agnes Mitchell - Maude Mitchell (1875-1957) - Jireh and Sarah Platt (1798-1870) or their sons Enoch, Jeremiah, Evert, Luther) - Joshua Smith (1806-1893) - Samuel R. Weed (1831-1909) - John Smith (1832-1915) - Charles B. Lines

