



Harriet Beecher Stowe

Harriet Elisabeth Beecher was born in Litchfield, Connecticut on June 14, 1811. She was the daughter of a Congregational minister named Lyman Beecher & Roxana Foote Beecher.

When she graduated from the Hartford Female Seminary, which was owned and operated by her sister, Catherine Beecher. Harriet began teaching at the seminary shortly after graduation.



Harriet Beecher Stowe

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In 1832, Harriet and her family moved to Cincinnati, Ohio and started teaching at the Lane Theological Seminary, where her father served as president. While working at the seminary, Harriet met Calvin Stowe, a professor at the school. The two eventually married. The couple had seven children. She began writing to supplement her husband's small salary.

Stowe became an abolitionist while living in Cincinnati during the 1830's. Many runaway slaves traveled through Cincinnati as they made their way along the Underground Railroad. During this time Stowe heard many stories from runaway slaves and conductors from the Underground Railroad.

In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law. This enabled the government to assist slave owners in reclaiming their runaway property in Northern states. This upset many abolitionists, including Stowe.

Stowe realized that many white Northerners had never witnessed slavery nor did they know how brutal slavery was. She wanted to educate them about it. That is why she wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Stowe worked very hard to make sure she correctly portrayed slavery. She spoke with former slaves and those that helped the Underground Railroad. But some people thought her novel was inaccurate.

The National Era, an abolitionist newspaper, published *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a serial in 1851 and 1852. The story was published in book form in 1852. The first five years it was in print it sold more than 500,000 copies and became a bestseller.

Uncle Tom's Cabin did show Northerners how bad slavery was. Many of them committed to ending slavery. This made the Southerners stand strong to defend slavery. With the growing tension between the North and the South, the stage was set for the start of the Civil War.

Uncle Tom's Cabin was published in many languages and Ms. Stowe became a sought-after speaker not only in America but in Europe as well.

She continued to author many books up until she died in 1896. She spent her remaining years in Hartford, Connecticut where she was neighbors with fellow writers Mark Twain and Oliver Wendell Holmes. She died July 1, 1896 and is buried in Massachusetts. When he met Stowe, President Lincoln reportedly said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this big war!" The Harriet Beecher Stowe House is open to the public in Cincinnati.

