

John Brown the Abolitionist -- A Biographer's Blog

History, Research, and Current Themes

It would have been as easy to drive a shadow into the centre of a block of granite as to force a pro-slavery falsehood into his brain or heart.

James Redpath

 Search

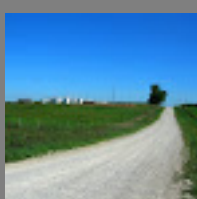
Select Language (Select Language) Powered by Google Translate

Popular Posts



[\(no title\)](#)

John Brown in "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" A.L. in the ILL Although both John Brown and Abraham Lincoln have been frequent...



[\(no title\)](#)

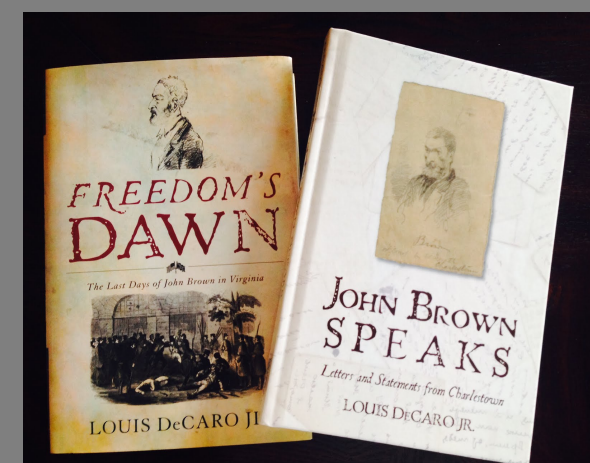
From the Field-- FARMER MAXSON'S NEWEL POST: A PIECE OF HISTORY by H. Scott Wolfe* I revisited the spot last week, and it remains a diff...



[\(no title\)](#)

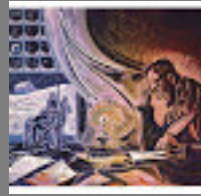
A recent discussion thread on a Calvinist website, The Puritan Board , fairly well demonstrates how the

FREEDOM'S DAWN and JOHN BROWN SPEAKS



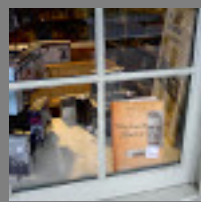
...for the first time since 1859!

Blog Archive



[\(no title\)](#)

Opinion From Jeremiah Wright to Terry Jones: The Sport of John-Browning Yet another writer, this time a Canadian, has dragged John Bro...



[\(no title\)](#)

From the Field-- "SOUTHERN SMOKE": THOUGHTS ON LUKE, DIXIE, HAYWARD AND THE BACKWARDS ENGINE HOUSE

...

Total Pageviews



345257345263

Thursday, December 30, 2010

Mary Ellen Pleasant Grave Restoration in California: "She was a friend of John Brown"

Special submission by Jean Libby, scholar, documentarian, and editor of Allies for Freedom

DEC. 28--Well over one hundred years after Mary Ellen Pleasant's burial in the Tulocay Cemetery in Napa, California, the grave of the Mother of Civil Rights in California is going to be restored from damage caused by the E Clampus Vitus fraternal organization.



Mary Ellen Pleasant led a long and active life in support of enslaved African Americans, fugitives and freedom-seekers, and the pioneer black community in San Francisco through the institutional churches. Her role with John Brown was to bring donations from the black community to Chatham, Canada

West, Committee of Vigilance that included Mary Ann Shadd and Osborne Anderson in 1858. According to research by Gwen Robinson of the Black Heritage Museum, Mary Pleasant purchased property which was to be used by the liberated people settling there. Chatham and Buxton were already settled by African Americans who were self-liberated, and by free people who wanted to live in a country where they had the rights of citizens.

During the time of the John Brown raid, October 16 – 18, 1859, Mary Ellen Pleasant was an agent for freedom in the Roanoke River area of Virginia and North Carolina.

▶ 2015 (26)

▶ 2014 (32)

▶ 2013 (46)

▶ 2012 (66)

▶ 2011 (111)

▼ 2010 (116)

▼ [December](#) (12)

[Mary Ellen Pleasant Grave Restoration in Californi...](#)

[FAKE Raiders and Other FRAUDS A. M. Ross: Liar, L...](#)

[F.Y.I.: American Uprising Chronicles Long Suppress...](#)

[Correspondence: Larry Lawrence, Chairman, The John...](#)

[F.Y.I.: BLACK PEOPLE ACCORDING TO THOMAS JEFFERSON...](#)

[UNDERGROUND RAILROAD AND THE COMING OF WARby Matth...](#)

[JOHN BROWN'S DESCENDANT ON "ANTIQUES ROAD SHOW" Th...](#)

[Did john brown boycott slave labor products?My an...](#)

[DESCENDANT OF HARPER'S FERRY RAIDER VISITS JOHN BR...](#)

[JOHN BROWN IN THE NEWS-- "TRUTH" STRANGER THAN FIC...](#)

[In Years Past: 1910 The year 1910 marked the 51st...](#)

[Jean Libby Writes- Mary Brown's Ordeal](#)

Disguised as a jockey, she would lead groups to the Allegheny Mountains, where Brown intended to establish forts and stations to move people through Pennsylvania and Ohio to the western territories for self-governing communities he called "Good Towns." Some would continue through Detroit into Canada to join the thriving cooperative settlements begun by missionary societies. When the Harpers Ferry entrance failed, Pleasant remained incognito in familiar St. Louis for a while, then returned to San Francisco and her burgeoning enterprises that made her one of the wealthiest women in California during the 1860s and 1870s. Her fortunes turned in the 1880s, and Mary Ellen spent the rest of her life in poverty. Her dying wish (at age 89) was to have her gravestone contain a single inscription beside her name: "She was a friend of John Brown."

For an excellent program about Mary Ellen Pleasant, see the [four-minute public television history by KVIE, Sacramento](#), that features Dr. Susheel Bibbs, a performance historian and biographer of Mary Ellen Pleasant.

But what of her grave at the Tulocay Cemetery in Napa, California, where she died in 1904? In the early 1970s, the San Francisco Negro Historical and Cultural Society placed a memorial plaque reading "Mary Ellen Pleasant, Mother of Civil Rights in California 1812-1904. She was a Friend of John Brown." This was done by arrangement with the cemetery, which is privately operated. In 1978, the E Clampus Vitus fraternity clamped a plaque over the headstone which declared this was the grave of "Mammy Pleasant, a remarkable woman of the Gold Rush." The damage to the grave was extensive.

Who are the Clampers of E Clampus Vitus? In my honest opinion, they are vandals who arrogantly portray themselves as historical humorists:

Modern-day Clampers typically dress up in garb reminiscent of the gold-rush -- usually a red miner's shirt, and black hat -- and they still hold their unique initiation ceremonies, but now specialize in putting up commemorative plaques of historical and hysterical interest. Along with serious sites that need more reverent commemoration, Clampers have been known to plaque places like saloons, bawdy houses, and other locations that have been "overlooked" by more serious historical societies. ([E Clampus Vitus website](#))

[Remembered...](#)

- ▶ [November](#) (10)
- ▶ [October](#) (12)
- ▶ [September](#) (10)
- ▶ [August](#) (12)
- ▶ [July](#) (6)
- ▶ [June](#) (8)
- ▶ [May](#) (12)
- ▶ [April](#) (7)
- ▶ [March](#) (12)
- ▶ [February](#) (9)
- ▶ [January](#) (6)

- ▶ [2009](#) (76)
- ▶ [2008](#) (23)
- ▶ [2007](#) (42)
- ▶ [2006](#) (25)
- ▶ [2005](#) (2)

Followers

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS



[e](#) [Louis A. DeCaro, Jr.](#)

is Associate Professor of church history at the New York City campus of Alliance Theological Seminary. Quite without intending to do so, Lou has become the most prolific John Brown biographer in 150 years, and his two latest contributions have been published by Rowman and

“Plaquing” Mary Ellen Pleasant’s grave with a racially derogatory term (used twice) is hardly reverent commemoration, especially when it was done without



permission and the grave damaged. Although there are many plaques from E Clampus Vitus in graveyards in California that have apparently obtained permission, and are not clamped directly on the burials, the intended purpose is to be “the comic strip on the page of California history.” Their arrogant slogan “Right wrongs nobody” can hardly be applied in the case of Mary Ellen Pleasant, a friend of John Brown and the Mother of Civil Rights in California.

On January 15, 2011, from 5-7 p.m. the Napa Valley Museum will hold a Benefit Reception to raise matching funds from the Tulocay Cemetery to replace the damaged Mary Pleasant grave site monument. A wine-tasting by the Black Coyote Winery, hors d'oeuvres, and brief talk and film screening with Susheel Bibbs are planned. The talk is titled: "Before Martin There Was Mary," Screening: The Legacy of Mary Ellen Pleasant, (Bibbs' Telly Award winning TV short). The museum is at 55 Presidents Circle in Yountville, California. Contact: Pat Alexander, pat@napavalleymuseum.org, telephone 707-944-0500 ext. 106. A \$35 donation is asked. If attendance is not feasible but you would like to support the restoration, please mail your donation to the Napa Valley Museum, P. O. Box 3567, Yountville, CA 94599.

More programs in store by Susheel Bibbs, Ph.D., who has been researching, performing, and writing about Mary Ellen for many years: www.mepleasant.com/

OAKLAND PREMIERE SCREENING OF AWARD-WINNING FILM, January 16, 2011

The second event is Oakland's first public screening of Meet Mary Pleasant, Mother of Civil Rights. Did you know Pleasant briefly lived in Oakland and was (of course) the richest African-American resident? We want everyone who missed it on TV in the Bay Area to see this inspiring film there, and it's a perfect time to be inspired by the legacy of Pleasant and MLK. Please pass the word

Littlefield. FREEDOM'S DAWN: THE LAST DAYS of JOHN BROWN in VIRGINIA, is the first full length narrative of the abolitionist's last days, with its companion, JOHN BROWN SPEAKS: LETTERS and STATEMENTS from CHARLESTOWN (2015). Lou's "FIRE from the MIDST of YOU": A RELIGIOUS LIFE of JOHN BROWN (NYU Press, 2002), was the first full length bio of Brown in the 21st century. In 2007, he published a corrective monograph, JOHN BROWN--THE COST of FREEDOM (International Publishers). He has also produced two essay collections, JOHN BROWN: THE MAN WHO LIVED, in honor of the sesquicentennial of the Harper's Ferry raid (Lulu, 2009), and JOHN BROWN, EMANCIPATOR (Lulu, 2012). He has also contributed chapters and reviews for scholarly books and journals.

[View my complete profile](#)

H. Scott Wolfe



H. SCOTT WOLFE is the Historical Librarian of the Galena (IL) Public Library District. For over thirty years, he has roamed the country...from the Kennebec Valley of Maine

-- ask others to do the same.

Details: The Oakland Museum, January 16, 4:30-6 pm, Lecture Hall, Free (graciously sponsored by Rhodes Scholars and the Museum), 1000 Oak St (at 10th St.), Oakland, CA 94607, (510) 238-2200. History Dept., Contact: Carolee Smith

Program: Brief talk by Dr. Susheel Bibbs entitled "Before Martin Their Was Mary"; Oakland Premiere screening of Bibbs' award winning PBS feature documentary Meet Mary Pleasant (Mother of Civil Rights), Lecture Hall, Oakland Museum (space is limited).

SHE WAS A FRIEND OF JOHN BROWN February 5, 2011

February 5, 2 p.m., African-American Museum and Library at Oakland-- Exhibit: "Mother of Civil Rights" and a lecture with visuals: "Mary Ellen Pleasant: A Friend of John Brown," Come to learn about Susheel's latest research on Mary Pleasant with abolitionist John Brown. Contact: Rick Moss, rmoss@oaklandlibrary.org

at 12:48 PM Posted by [Louis A. DeCaro, Jr. . . .](#) 

  Recommend this on Google

No comments:

[Post a Comment](#)

Links to this post

[Create a Link](#)

[Newer Post](#)

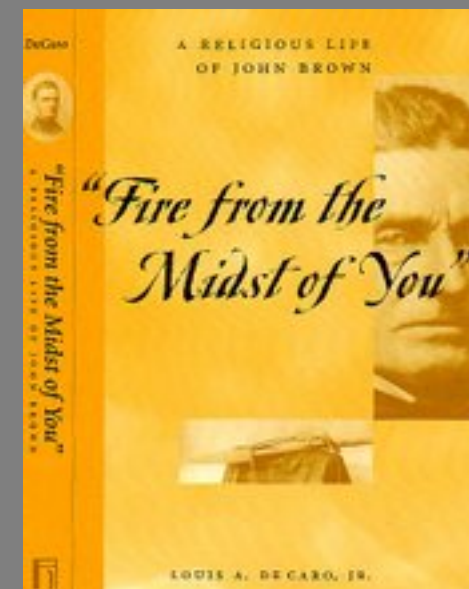
[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)

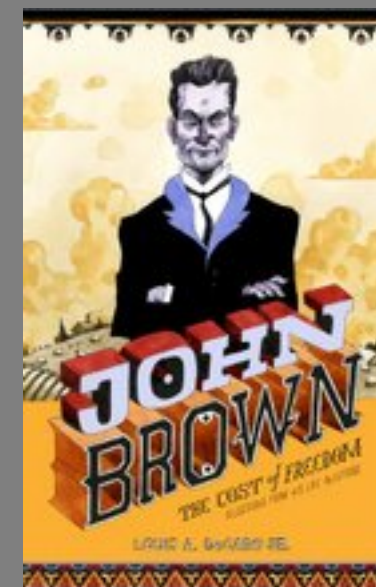
to the plains of eastern Kansas...in pursuit of the stories of John Brown and his men. He is a frequent contributor to this blog.

"Fire from the Midst of You": A Religious Life of John Brown



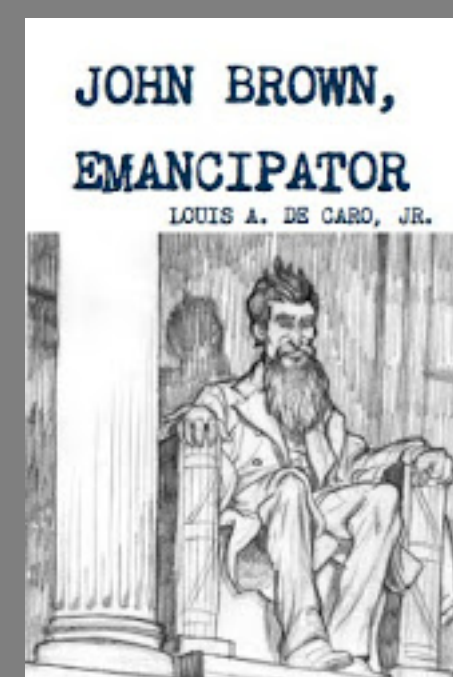
New York University Press

JOHN BROWN--THE COST OF FREEDOM



New research, new insights!

Now available

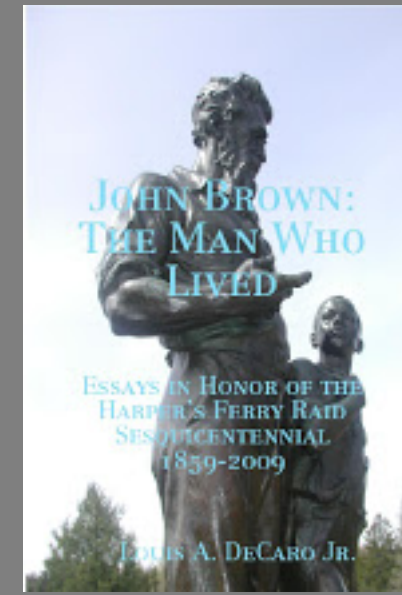


Blog selections and a new critical essay

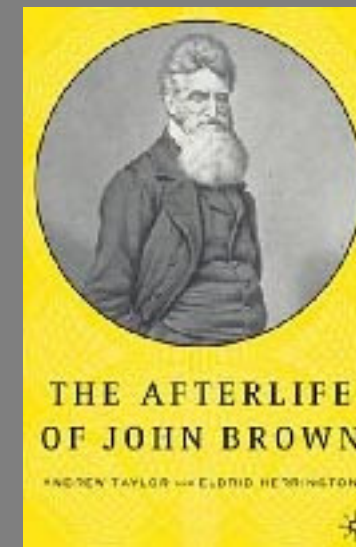
Buy "John Brown, Emancipator"



JOHN BROWN: THE
MAN WHO LIVED



Also a contributor to . . .



The Afterlife of John
Brown

Links to John Brown Sites

[Boyd B. Stutler Collection
- West Virginia State
Archives](#)

[Kansas Memory](#)

[John Brown Papers -
Kansas State Historical
Society](#)

[Territorial Kansas -
Kansas State Historical
Society](#)

[Kansapedia](#)

[Kansas Genealogical Web-
-Digital Library](#)

[The Gilder Lehrman
Institute of American
History](#)

[Ohio Historical Society](#)

[Hudson, Ohio, Historical
Society](#)

[Library of Virginia: John
Brown's Raid](#)

[John Brown and the Valley
of the Shadow \[Univ. of
Va.\]](#)

[The John Brown Tour--
Adirondack History Center
Museum](#)

[John Brown and the Valley](#)

[of the Shadow](#)

[Chatham-Kent Black
Historical Society Page on
John Brown](#)

[John Brown in
Washington County
Maryland 1859](#)

[John Brown and the
Kennedy Farmhouse](#)

[Harper's Ferry National
Park Site](#)

[John Brown's Farm in
Lake Placid, N.Y.](#)

[Blackjack Battlefield](#)

[The Life, Trial, and
Execution of John Brown
\(1859\)](#)

[Historical Marker Data
Base: John Brown sites
\[not all are our JB\]](#)

[The John Brown Trial](#)

[Allies For Freedom](#)

[John Brown Kin Blog](#)

[The History Dump \(blog
about antebellum slavery\)](#)

[House Divided: The Civil
War and Dickinson
College Draft Edition](#)

[The Mayhew Cabin](#)

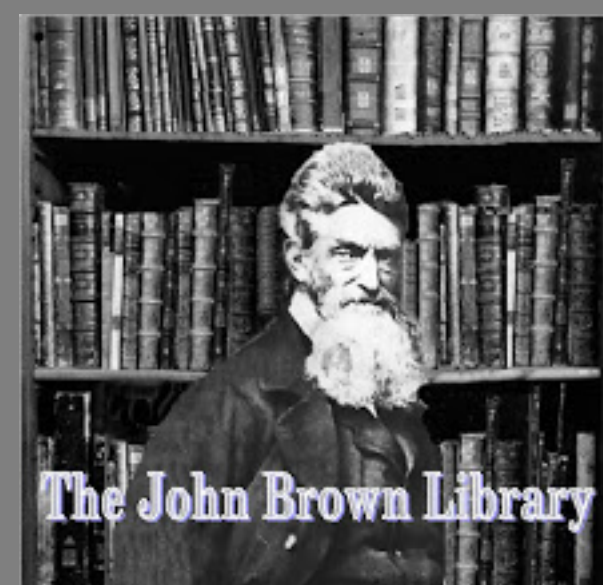
[Frederick Douglass's 1881
Speech on John Brown](#)

[Ohio's Yesterdays: from
the Curator of the
Rutherford B. Hayes
Presidential Center,
Manuscript Division](#)

[Random Thoughts on
History](#)

[John Brown Lives! Friends
of Freedom facebook page](#)

Classic Articles and Books



from the John Brown
Library

[Atkinson, Eleanor. "The Soul of John Brown" \[interview with John Brown, Jr.\] American Magazine \[New York\] \(October 1909\): 633-43](#)

[Brown, Owen \[Letter\], The Atlantic Monthly \(July 1874\): 101](#)

Brewster, O. Byron. "John Brown of North Elba." New York History [Cooperstown] (October 1952): 406-12

Brown, Salmon. "My Father, John Brown." The Outlook (January 25, 1913): 212-17

Brown, William Wells. "John Brown and the Fugitive Slave Law." The Independent (March 10, 1870)

[Butler, E. S. "A Woman's Recollections of John Brown's Stay in Springdale," Midland Monthly \(Dec. 1898\): 576](#)

[Chapin, Lou V. "The Last Days of Old John Brown." Overland Monthly \(April 1899\): 322-32](#)

[Dana, Richard H., Jr. "How We Met John Brown." Atlantic Monthly \(July 1871\): 1-9](#)

Darrow, Clarence. "John Brown." The Crisis [NAACP] (May 1926): 12-16

Eby, Cecil D. [ed.] "The Last Hours of the John Brown Raid: The Narrative of David Strother." Virginia Magazine of History and Biography (April 1965): 169-77

Featherstonaugh, Thomas. "The Final Burial of the Followers of John Brown." New England Magazine (April 1901): 128-34

Fletcher, Robert S. "John Brown and Oberlin." Oberlin Alumni Magazine (February 1932).

Gould, Elizabeth Porter.

"John Brown at North Elba." Outlook [New York] (November 21, 1896)

[Gue, B. F. "John Brown and His Iowa Friends." Midland Monthly \[Des Moines, Iowa\] \(Feb. 1897\): 103-12](#)

[Gue, B. F. "John Brown and His Iowa Friends." Midland Monthly \[Des Moines, Iowa\] \(Mar. 1897\): 267-77](#)

Halstead, Murat. "The Tragedy of John Brown." The Independent (December 1, 1898): 1543-48

Hamilton, James Cleland "John Brown in Canada." Canadian Magazine (December 1894): 119-40

Harris, Ransom L. "John Brown and His Followers in Iowa." Midland Monthly (October 1894): 262-68

[Higginson, Thomas W. "Cheerful Yesterdays VII: Kansas and John Brown." The Atlantic Monthly \(May 1897\): 665-78](#)

[Ingalls, John J. "John Brown's Place in History." North American Review \(February 1884\): 138-50](#)

[Keeler, Ralph. "Owen Brown's Escape From Harper's Ferry." The Atlantic Monthly \(March 1874\): 342-65](#)

Land, Mary. "John Brown's Ohio Environment." Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly (January 1948): 24-47

Landon, Fred. "From Chatham to Harper's Ferry." The Canadian Magazine [Toronto] (October 1919): 441-48

Lockley, Fred. "John Brown's Son Talks About His Father." The American Magazine (May 10, 1919): 49-50

[Macy Smith, Narcissa, "Reminiscences of John](#)

[Brown," Midland Monthly \[Des Moines, Iowa\] \(September 1895\): 231-36](#)

M.H.R. "A Brave Life." [re Mary Brown] The Overland Monthly (October 1885): 360-67

[Phillips, William A. "Three Interviews with Old John Brown." The Atlantic Monthly \(December 1879\): 738-44.](#)

[Richman, Irving B. John Brown Among the Quakers and Other Sketches. Des Moines: The Historical Department of Iowa, 1904. \[pp. 11-59\]](#)

Sanborn, Franklin B. "John Brown and His Friends." The Atlantic Monthly (July 1872): 50-61

Sanborn, Franklin B. "John Brown in Massachusetts." The Atlantic Monthly (April 1872): 420-33

[Sanborn, Franklin B. "Notes and Comments II," North American Review \(January 1886\): 115-16](#)

Sanborn, Franklin B. "The Virginia Campaign of John Brown." The Atlantic Monthly (January-May 1875)

Smith, Narcissa Macy. "Reminiscences of John Brown." Midland Monthly [Des Moines, Iowa] (September 1895): 231-36

Spring, Rebecca Buffum. "How I Brought First Aid to Wounded John Brown." The New York Press (October 13, 1907)

Stearns, Frank P. "John Brown and His Eastern Friends." New England Magazine (July 1910): 589-99

Stutler, Boyd B. "John Brown Postmaster." American Philatelist (March 1953): 443-49

Stutler, Boyd B. "John Brown's Last Visit to Western Virginia." The

West Virginia Review
(April 1926): 228-29, 240-41

Stutler, Boyd B. "John Brown's Letter." West Virginia History [Charleston, West Va.] (October 1947)

Stutler, Boyd B. "John Brown's Letters And Documents: A Scholarly Survey." Manuscripts (Fall 1954): 4-12

Stutler, Boyd B. "John Brown's Lost Carpet Bag." Manuscripts (Summer 1959): 2-7

Wright, Harry A. "John Brown in Springfield." New England Magazine (May 1894)

Classic John Brown
Biographies & Studies

[James Redpath-The Public Life of Capt. John Brown \(1860\)](#)

[The Life, Trial, and Execution of Captain John Brown \(1861\)](#)

[Richard D. Webb-The Life and Letters of Capt. John Brown \(1861\)](#)

[American Anti-Slavery Society-Annual Report of the John Brown Year \(1861\)](#)

[Franklin B. Sanborn: The Life and Letters of John Brown \(1885\)](#)

[Hermann Von Holst-John Brown \(1888\)](#)

[Richard J. Hinton-John Brown and His Men \(1894\)](#)

[Thomas Featherstonaugh-A Bibliography of John Brown \(1897\)](#)

[William E. Connelley-John Brown \(1900\)](#)

[Oswald G. Villard-John Brown: A Biography 1800-1859 \(1910, 1929\)](#)

10 Things You Need to Know about Human Trafficking

[Download this valuable information on human trafficking from World Vision . . . *John Brown would!*](#)

Still Fighting Slavery After All These Years

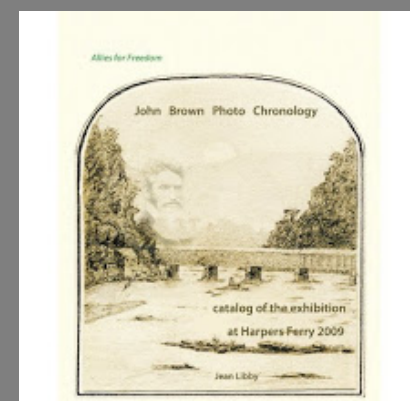


FREDERICK DOUGLASS
FAMILY INITIATIVES

Exposing the Confederacy
and Neo-Confederates

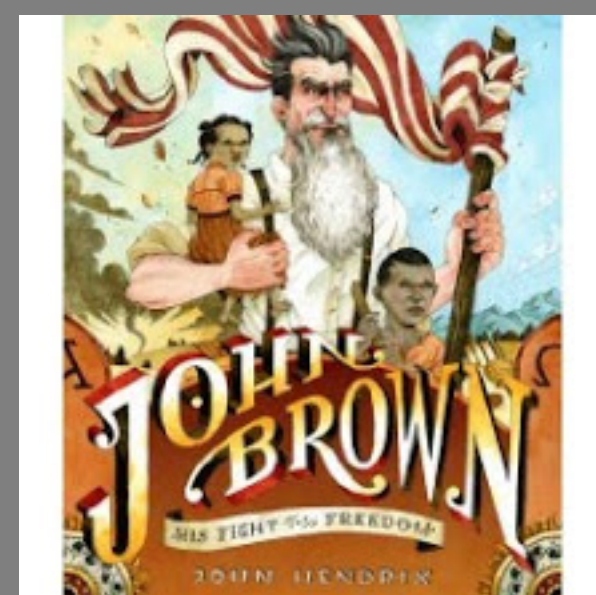


John Brown Photo
Chronology; catalog of the
exhibition at Harpers
Ferry 2009 (Paperback)



Order Your Copy Here
from Amazon.com

John Hendrix's



John Brown: His Fight for
Freedom

John Brown: Trumpet of
Freedom--Norman

Marshall Brings John
Brown back to life on stage



click on picture for more
information

Magpie



Sword of the Spirit

John Brown Addresses the
Court: Greg Artzner as
John Brown

Check out Michele
Sweeting's Gospel
Recordings



"She's my wifey"

Michele's Facebook Page



2010. Picture Window template. Template images by Josh Peterson. Powered by [Blogger](#).