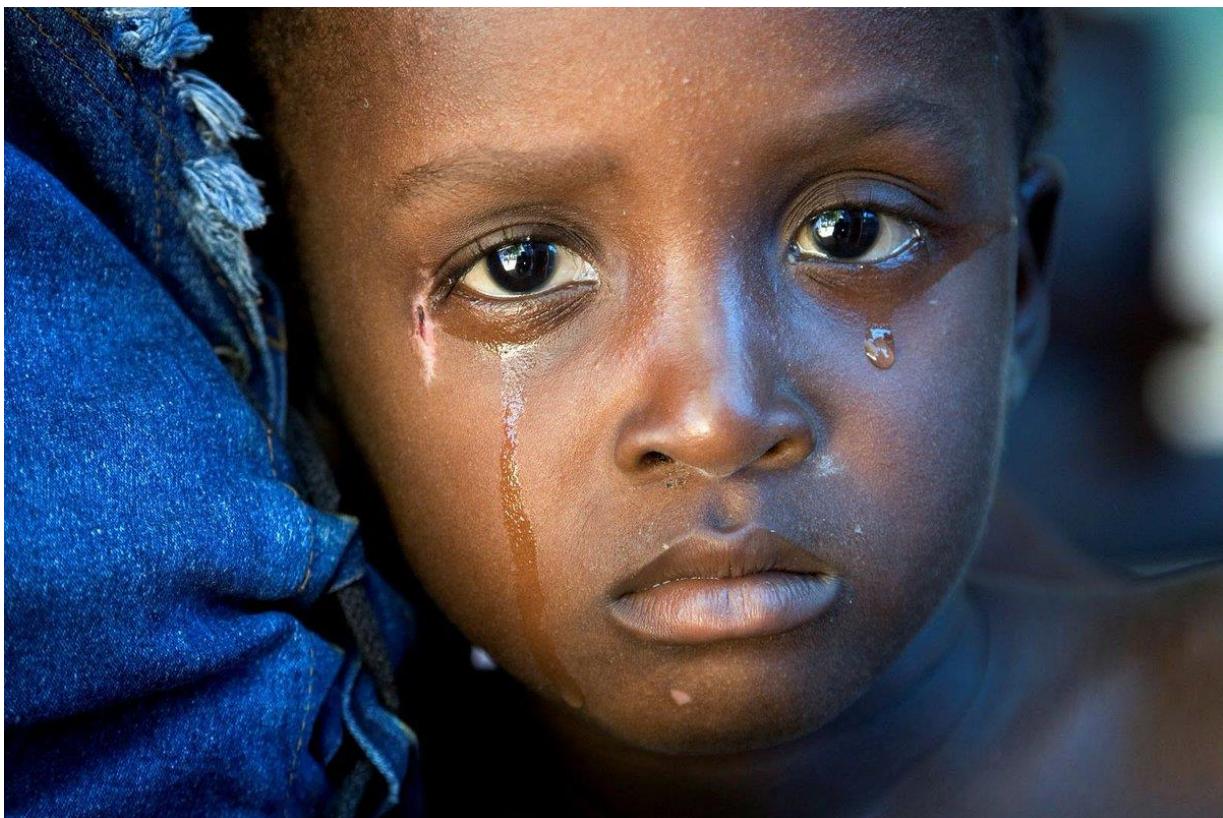


November 2024



"It's your New York!"

The Rondout Reader



My Quest to Free Him

"TRUTH IS POWERFUL AND IT WILL PREVAIL."

Sojourner's Truth – Part III

Established 2024



"It's your New York!"

THE RONDOUT INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY



therondoutinternationallibrary.blog

Presents

My Quest to Free Him

Conceived, produced and directed by

KEVIN AHEARN

For Erica

Book by

Bradley B. Rymph

Resources

Google/Bing

On location

Rondout Valley

Debra Michals

cpsitsolutions.com

Ulster County

Jacqueline Hubbard

Wikipedia

New York

DR DAISY CENTURY IS ISABELLE VAN WAGENEN

Plus an all-star supporting cast



NEGROES FOR SALE.

By virtue of a decree of the Honorable Circuit Court for Robertson County, made at its June Term, 1857, in the cause of E. F. MALLOY and others, to sell slaves, I will on Saturday, 25th day of July next, at

CROSS PLAINS,

Tennessee, sell to the highest bidder, on a credit till the first day of May, 1858,

TWO NEGROES

Dick, aged about 50 years, and Lydia, about 14 years of age, the property of the late David Malloy, deceased. Cash for costs.

JOHN S. HUTCHISON,

June 18, 1857.

Comm'r.



*“I don’t have to explain myself to anyone.
I’m there because it’s where I’m supposed to be.”*



“In my family, it took just one generation to go from segregation to the Supreme Court of the United States.”



*“I can make you laugh, make you cry,
and still throw a punch like the best of them.”*



*“New York justice is blind, ‘they’ say.
Unless you’re a black woman, then it’s deaf,
dumb and invisible! Can’t find any anywhere!*



*“So ‘they’ better wake up and see the light!
‘Cause Isabella Van Wagener, blessed by
God, is coming to get her baby back!”*



OUTSIDE NEW PALTZ, NEW YORK



“I woke up and started crying, but what I had to do was God’s will!

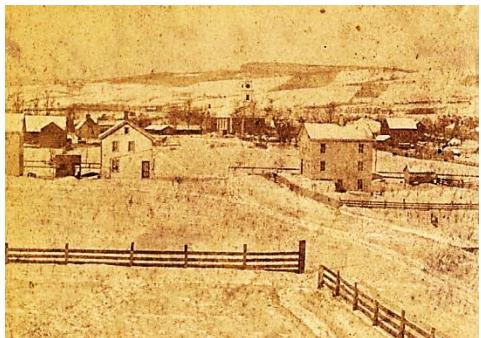
“I left the Van Wagenen’s home. took up my beautiful baby and started walkin’.



“I got to the Peterson’s house in a couple of hours and left sweet Sophia with them.”

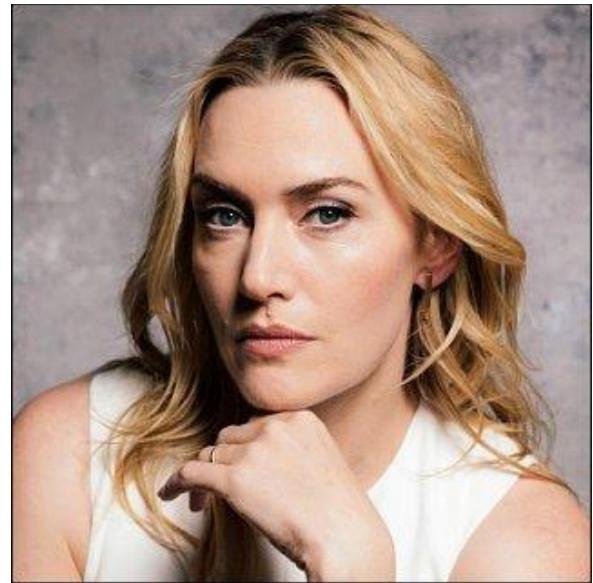


*“Next stop – the estate of my
former master Dumont! Time we
went eye-to-eye!”*



*“But he was not at home.
Instead I faced his high-and-mighty wife.”*





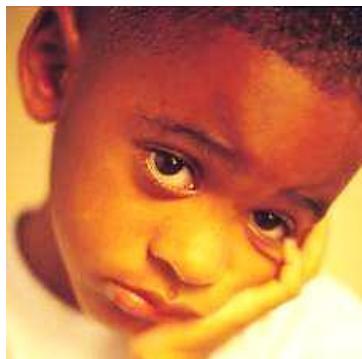
*“What are you doing here?
You ain’t gettin’ nuthin’ from us!”*



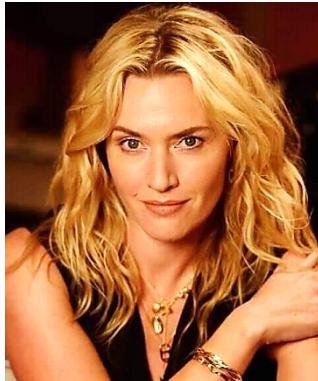
“But I am and I will! Your husband sold my five-year-old Peter to a Dr. Gedney, who took him to New York city, on his way to England; but finding the boy too small for his service, he sent him back to his brother, Solomon Gedney. This man disposed of him to his sister’s husband, a wealthy planter, by the name of Fowler, who took him to his own home in Alabama - an illegal and fraudulent transaction!”



*'Ugh! a fine fuss to make about a little nigger!
Why, haven't you as many of 'em left as you can see to,
and take care of? A pity 'tis, the niggers are not all
in Guinea!! Making such a halloo-baloo about
the neighborhood; and all for a paltry nigger!!!'*



"I will have my child again"

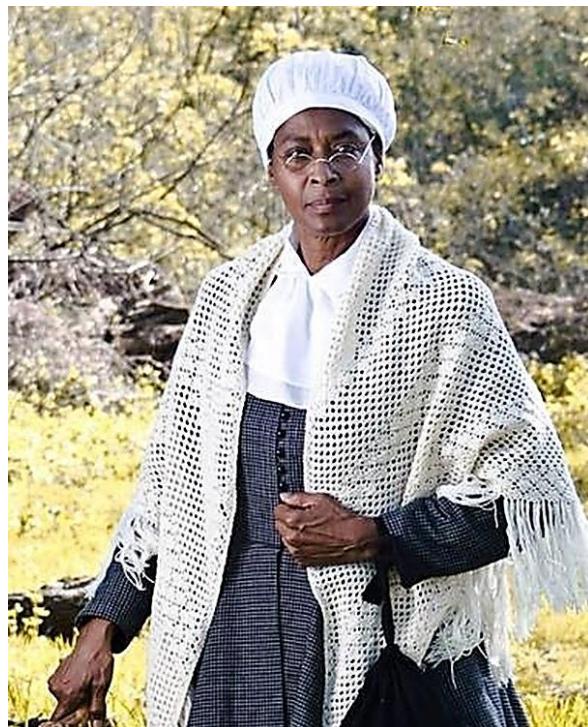


*"'Have your child again!' How can you get him?
And what have you to support him with, if you could?"*

"Have you any money?"



*'No,' I have no money, but God has enough,
or what's better! And I'll have my child again. Oh my God!
I know'd I'd have him agin. I was sure God would help me to
get him. Why, I felt so tall within—I felt as if the power
of a nation was with me!"*



*"I've got some walkin' to do. To the big city,
the first capital of New York and
this blessed valley..."*

"Kingston, on the Rondout"



SLAVERY IN OUR STATE



Slavery officially ended in New York 1827. When the Gradual Emancipation law was passed in 1799 it did not apply to persons enslaved at the time, but gradually emancipated children of enslaved mothers born after the enactment of the law.

However, in 1817 another law was passed to emancipate the enslaved people from before the enactment of the law in 1799. However, the 1830 census records 75 slaves in New York State. We believe that these are persons born to enslaved mothers some years after 1799 who were still completing their years of slave-like service required under the emancipation law.

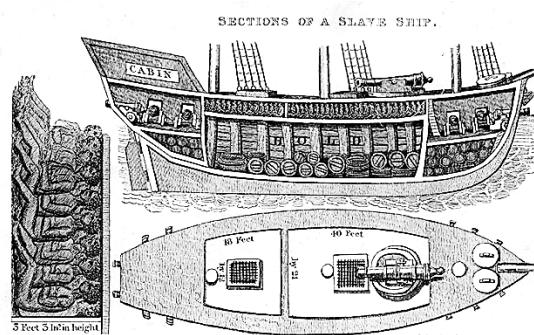
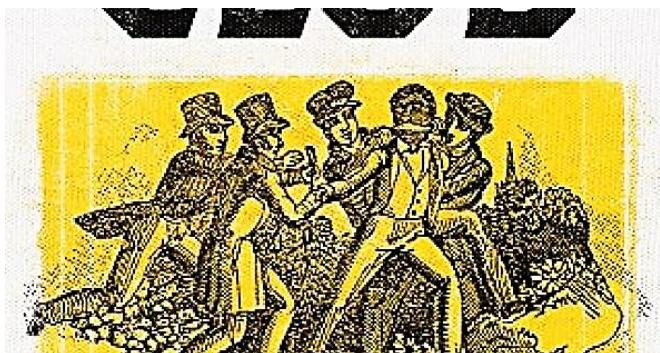


But slavery continued to exist in New York in other ways.

The 1817 law that eventually emancipated NY slaves in 1827, also permitted slave owners to bring enslaved people into New York State for up to 9 months, effectively recognizing enslavement based on the laws and practices of other jurisdictions.



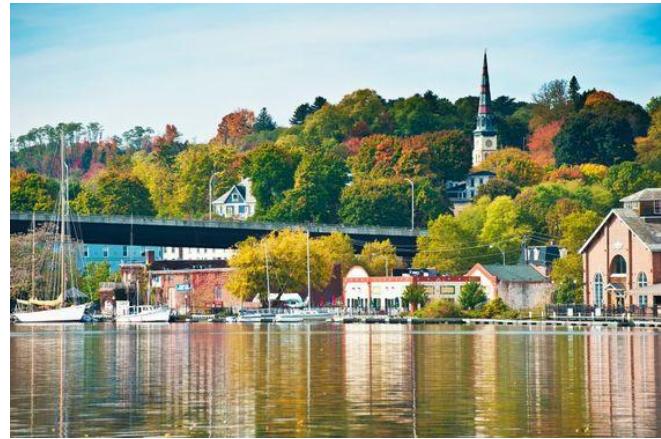
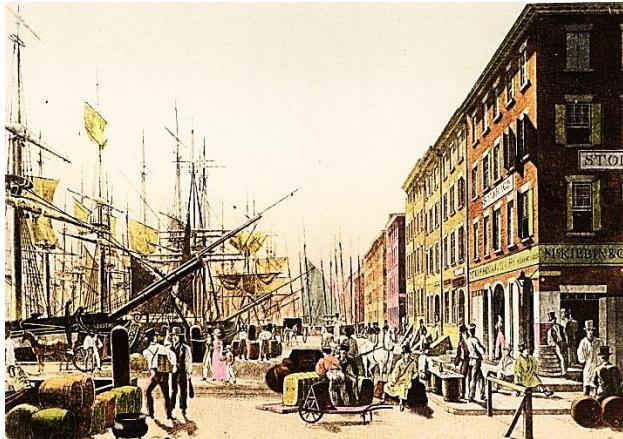
Fugitive slaves would be captured and be formally adjudicated by New York courts, under federal and state law, for return to the state the fled from. Agents representing southern plantations search for black persons resembling fugitives. They would take them south furtively, or, take them to NYC's Court of Special Sessions, presided over by former slave holder Richard Riker and his associates known as the "Kidnapping Club." We have assigned the tag "RIKER" to records of such cases.



While New Yorkers were not allowed to own slaves, the Port of New York allowed slave ships to anchor and restock. A Federal court case – U.S. v. Joas E. de Souza dated 12/16/1838, by Judge Thompson of the United States Circuit Court, found that a ship was permitted to carry slaves as long as there was no intent to sell or transfer them.

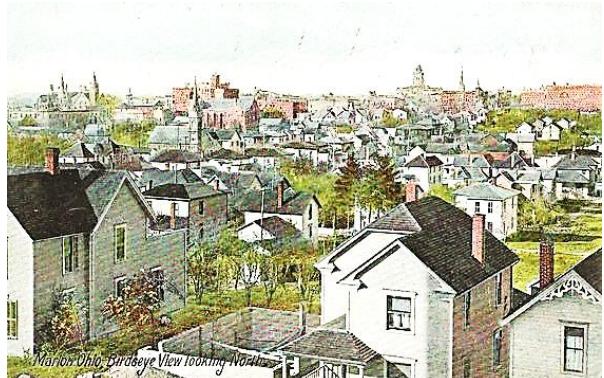


1828

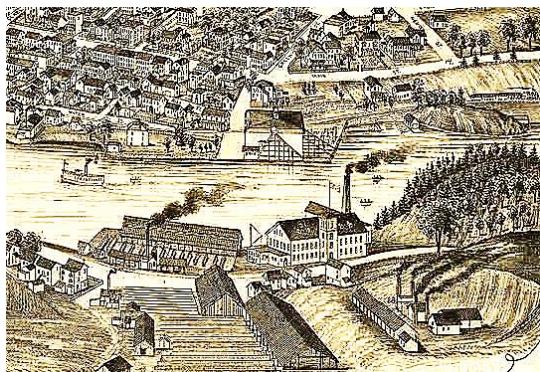
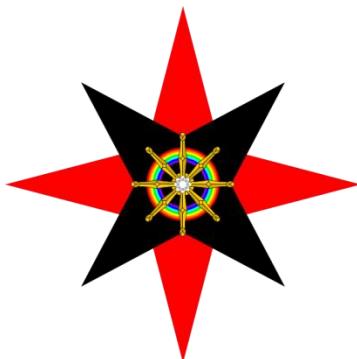


KINGSTON, NEW YORK

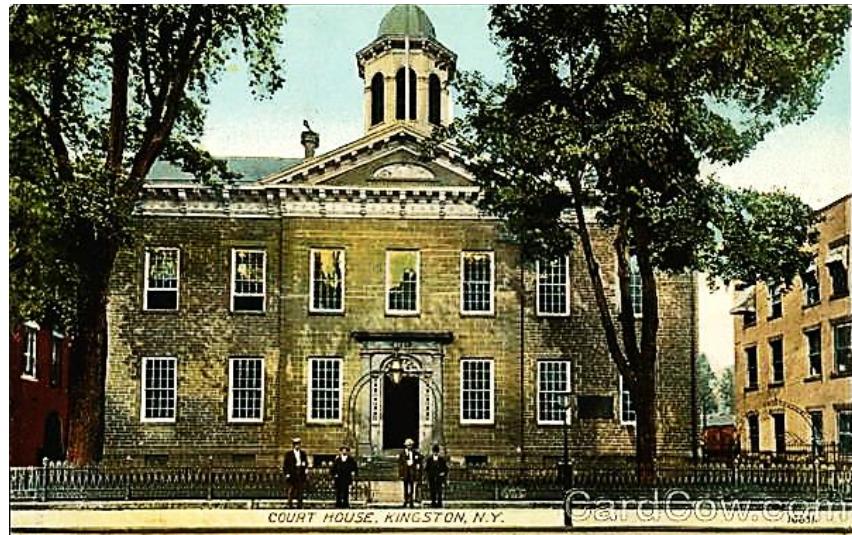
ON THE RONDOUT



“Now to find a lawyer!”



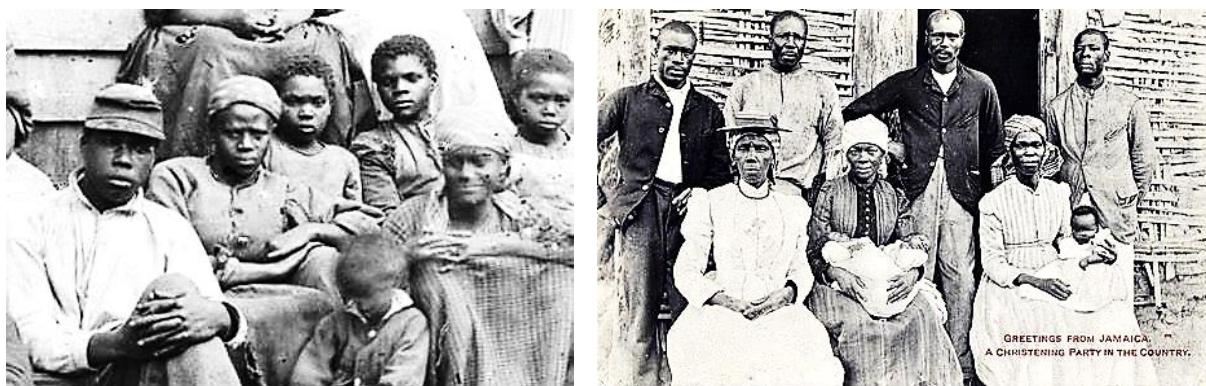
*“God showed me the way to Quakers who
put me up and then directed me to city hall!
The fight for Peter’s freedom was about to begin!”*



“I entered the Kingston Court House, this ‘Castle of Justice’ and prayed that God would show me the way to those who could help me!



“I walked ‘round n’ ‘round till I came to what looked like a firm as desperate as I was. In I went, met an old man and then a much younger one and I told them my story about Peter and they listened. They really listened.”



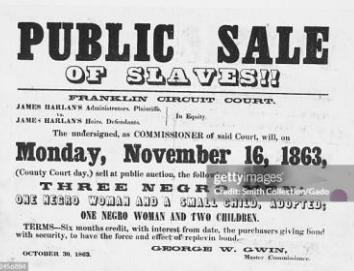
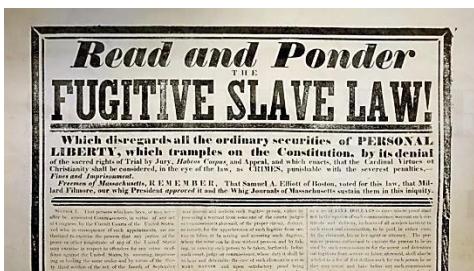


“But did they believe me, this penniless, illiterate black mother whose five children were enslaved and she wanted just one of them back?”



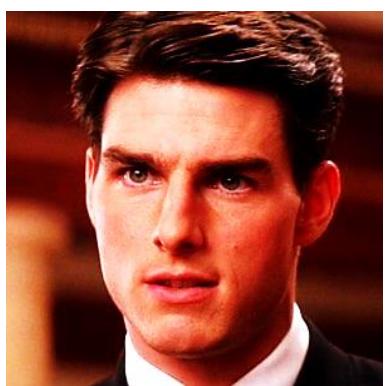
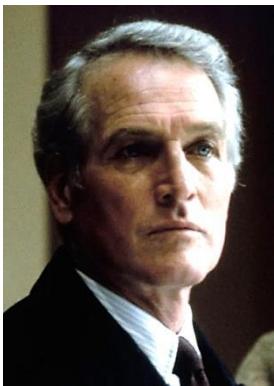
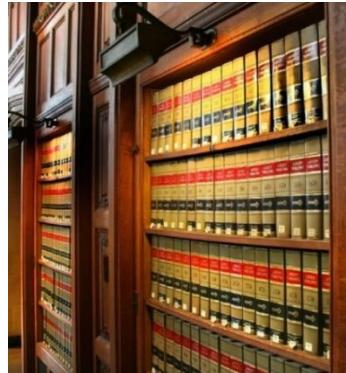
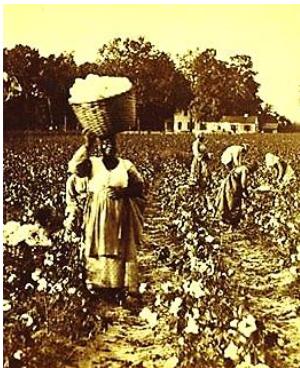
“Belle, the law is on your side. Unfortunately, reality is not.”

“Dumont knows he broke the law. He will rally his Southern cohorts to block us!”



“It'll be a bitter brawl!”

“And when we win, America wins!”



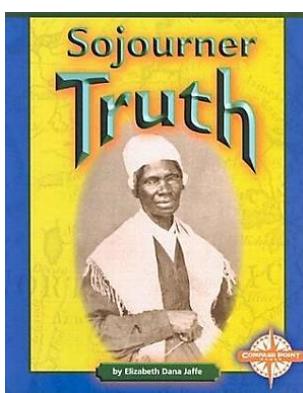
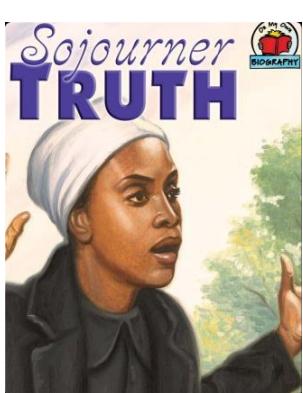
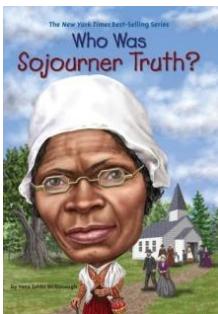
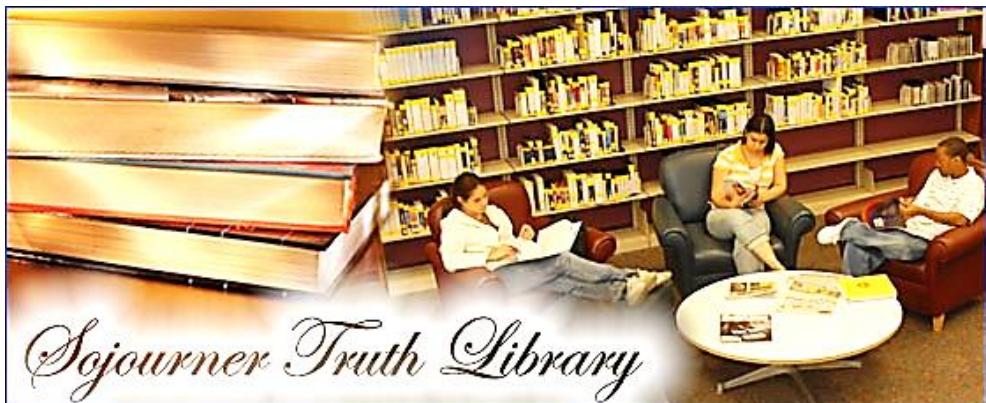
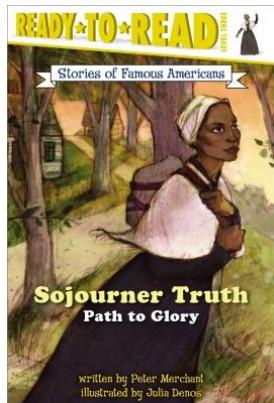
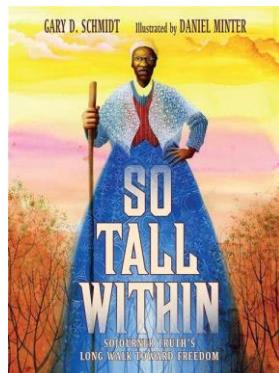
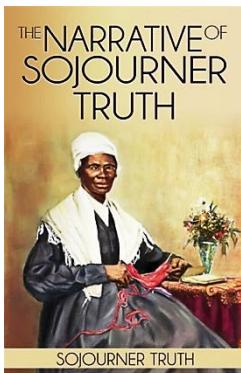
*"We'll take your case,
Belle, pro-bono!"*

*"I believe you, gentlemen. I can't
read books, but I can read people!"*

*"And I've never been in a real
library before!"*

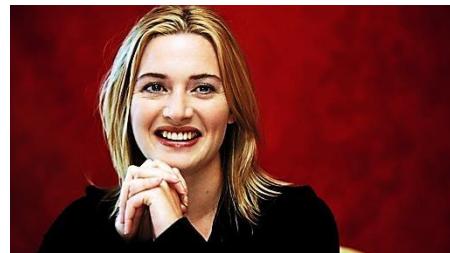
*"It's take time, but we'll
get your son back to you!"*

New Paltz, New York



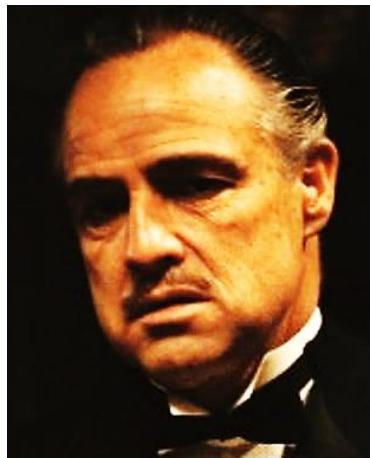
library.newpaltz.edu/

NOT MORE THAN TEN MILES AWAY...



"We come to you, sir, a man known to solve situations threatening our very way of life!"

"And to fix that illiterate slave woman who dares defy our sacred laws!"

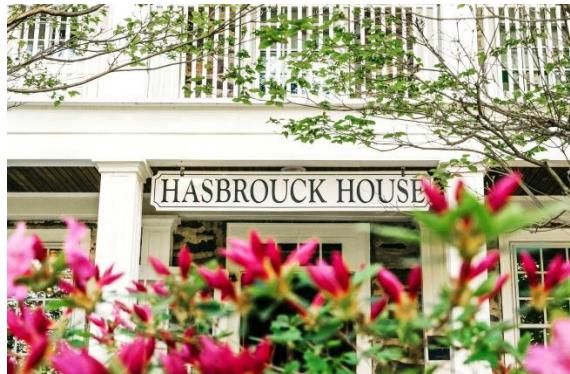
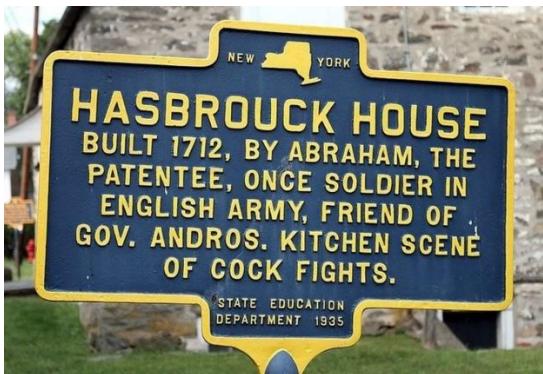


*"I agree, dear lady, but we must be very careful.
Time is ticking in favor of the Negroes! We cannot allow
this case to go beyond the Rondout!"*



*"Selling slaves South is a business getting
bigger every day. Belle won't stop it!"*

*"That stupid niggar-wench! We are
her superiors. She cannot beat us!"*



History meets Luxury



<https://www.hasbrouckhouseny.com/#welcome>

Romantic Retreat on the Rondout!



*"I highly recommend the Hasbrouck House,
but please don't tell anyone that I did so."*

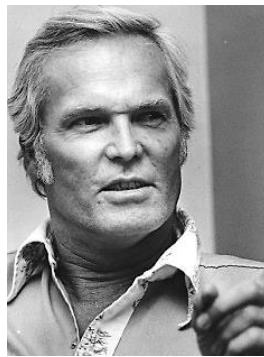
MEANWHILE, ISABELLE VAN WAGENEN WAITED...



*“American justice is like a shell game!
My dear son passed around like a rented mule!
And the three enslavers stay free as birds!”*



Dumont



Dr. Gedney



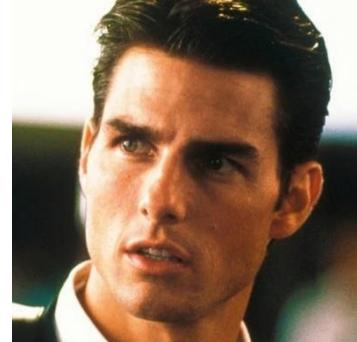
Solomon Gedney



*“Rondout justice is as frozen as the Crick in January!
Days turned into weeks, then months.*

*“Delay, delay, delay! Oh, God, make the heavens intervene!”
“What! wait another court! wait months?*

*Why, long before that time, he can go clear off,
and take my child with him—no one knows where.
I cannot wait; I must have him now, whilst he is to be had.'*



*"Well, if he puts the boy out of the way,
he must pay the \$600—one half of
which will be yours."*

*"That \$300 would pay for
a 'heap of children.'"*

*"For just a moment, I was tempted. I had never
had a dollar to my name...and now a fortune!
All the pretty things I could buy! They'd be
calling me 'Belle of the Rondout!'"*

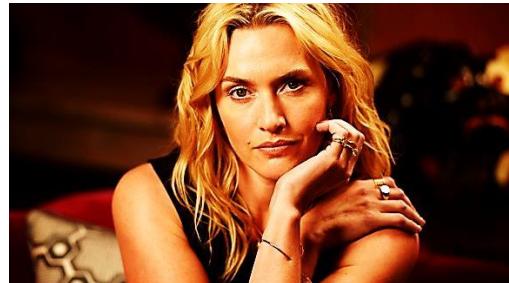


*"No, No, NO! All the money in the world cannot buy me!
I want my son and I want him NOW!"*

FINALLY...

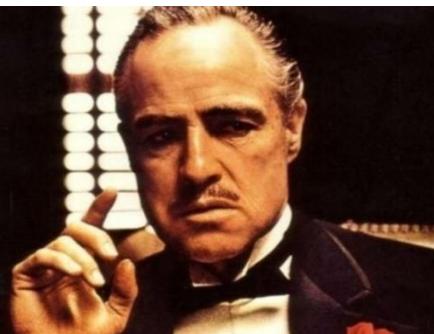


"The People of the State of New York by the Grace of God free and independent. We command Solomon Gedney, you that you have the body of Peter, a boy of color, detained in your custody and by your falsely and unjustly imprisoned as if said by whatever name he may be called together with the day and cause of the taking and detaining the said Peter before our trusty and honorable Abraham Bruyn Hasbrouck a Commissioner to perform certain duties of a Judge of the Supreme Court be at his office in the town of Kingston in the County of Ulster, immediately after the receipt of this our writ to do submit to and receive all and singular those things which shall then and there be considered of him in this behalf."



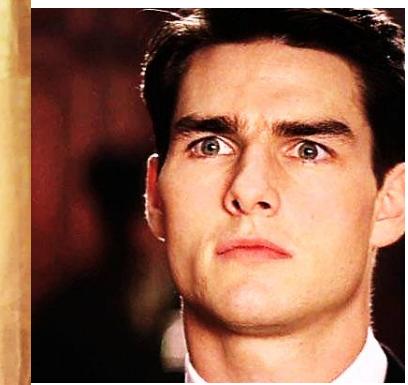
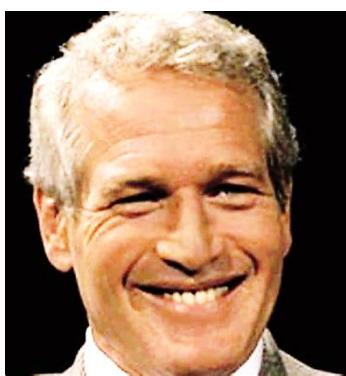
"Ourageous!"

"That black bitch!"



"Our United States has become like old Europe, its gang of governors trembling atop the powderkeg that is slavery!"

"And that illiterate nigger of yours wants to light the fuse!"



*“At last, my beautiful boy! I was about to start
crying tears of joy, but from the crown of his head
to the sole of his foot, the callosities and indurations
on his entire body were most frightful to behold.*

“Then things went worse...”



“No, this lady ain’t my Mama!”