

0. LATER LIFE - Story Preface

1. A CHILD SLAVE

2. GET EDUCATED!!

3. ESCAPE!

4. ANNA MURRAY DOUGLASS

5. THE ABOLITIONISTS

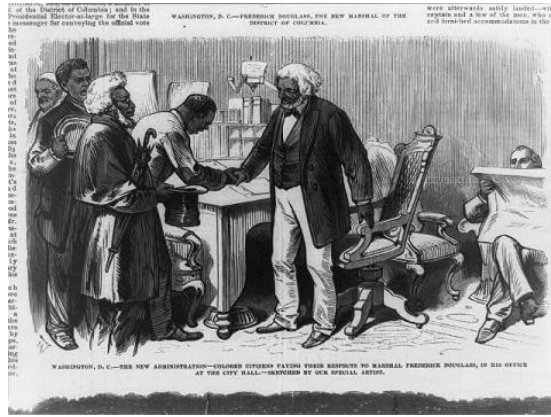
6. ABOLITIONIST LITERATURE

7. FAME

8. DOUGLASS AT HOME

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This drawing—published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* on April 7, 1877 (at page 85)—shows Frederick Douglass as a U.S. Marshall. Online, courtesy Library of Congress.

In 1881, Frederick was invited to the inauguration of President Garfield (who was assassinated a few months later). While chief executive, Garfield made Douglass recorder of deeds for the District of Columbia. Working in the recorder's office was a white woman named Helen Pitts. In 1884, she became the second Mrs. Douglass.

An article, published after Frederick died, provides the background of their romance:

The story of the second marriage was a romantic one. Miss Helen Pitts, whom he married, was a New England woman of middle age, a clerk in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of the District of Columbia, when Mr. Douglass was appointed to that office. She was a member of a literary society to which he belonged. They were thrown much together, and finally became engaged. Her relatives opposed the union bitterly on account of his color, but finally yielded to force of circumstances.

Frederick reportedly said: "My first wife was the color of my mother, my second is the color of my father." According to contemporary articles, however, his children also opposed the marriage.

During the last years of his life, he was known as "The Old Man Eloquent," and lived with Helen at Cedar Hill, his home in the eastern outskirts of D.C. He played the violin (this link depicts his instrument) and frequently invited young people to his home. One of those young people was his grandson, Joseph Douglass, a concert violinist.

Risking much to learn to read, Douglass never lost his love of books (as this first biography of him, by Benjamin Quarles, points out). He saw reading, and education, as the only way to move from slavery to freedom. His favorite book, according to a story published after his death, was *Les Misérables* * by Victor Hugo:

His favorite novel from the pen of his favorite author was "Les Misérables," which he had read and re-read till he had memorized most of it...Of American writers that one which claimed his greatest reverence was Theodore D. Weld, the author of "Slavery as it Is," and who preceded his admirer to the "unknown country" but a few days ago.

One might surmise that Frederick's favorite writing from his own pen was his signature - something his "master" had tried to prevent.

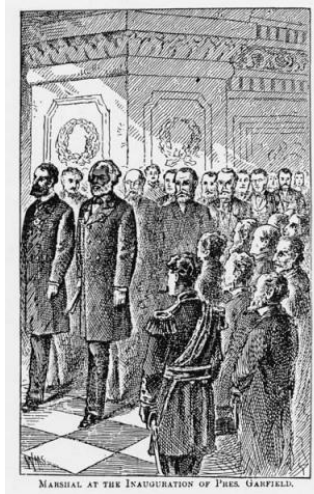
* Victor Hugo published *Les Misérables* in 1862. The novel is still one of the most popular stories in the world. It features Jean Valjean (imprisoned nineteen years for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his sister's seven children and trying to escape from the galleys several times). It also features Javert (a French police inspector who suspects the Mayor of Montreuil-sur-Mer is really Jean Valjean and will stop at nothing - including mistreatment of a young woman named Fantine - to denounce Valjean and return him to prison for breaking his parole). It is a story filled with themes which would have resonated with Frederick Douglass.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LATER-LIFE-Frederick-Douglass-From-Slave-to-Leader>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/LATER-LIFE-Frederick-Douglass-From-Slave-to-Leader>



Douglass at President Garfield's Inauguration

Image of Frederick Douglass, as a U.S. Marshall at the Garfield inauguration, online courtesy U.S. National Park Service (NPS).

View this asset at:

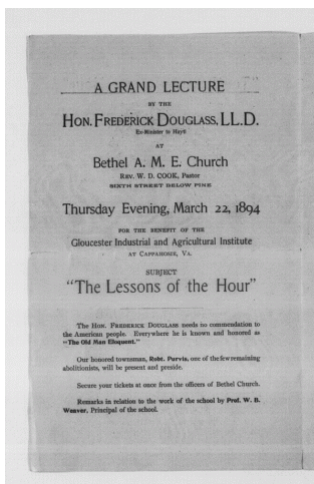
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Helen Pitts

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Park Service (NPS).

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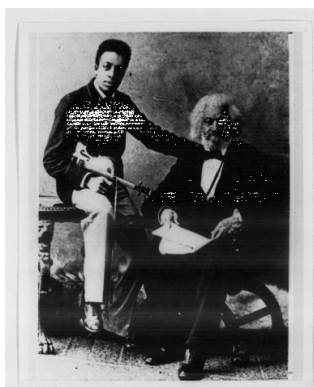


Lecture Notice: The Lessons of the Hour - by Frederick Douglass

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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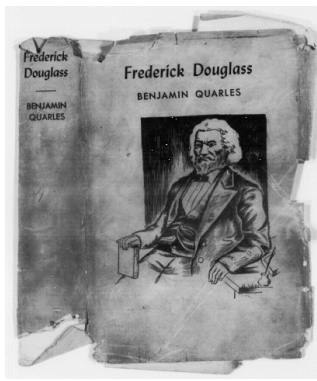
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Joseph Douglass

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Park Service (NPS).

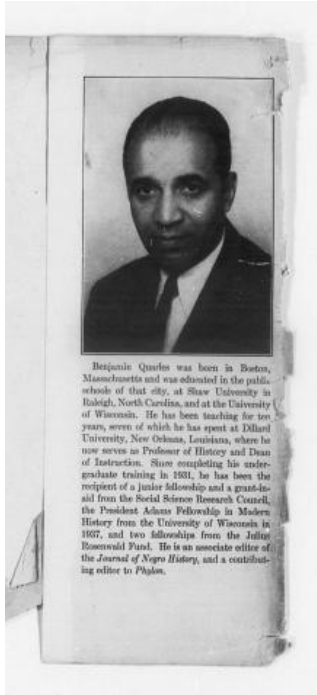
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Frederick Douglass - by Benjamin Quarles

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

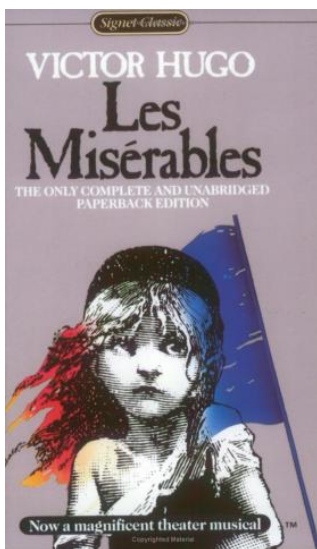
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Benjamin Quarles

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

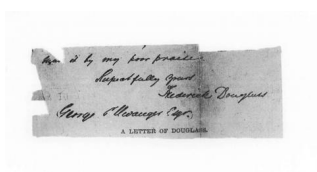
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Les Miserables - by Victor Hugo

Image of book cover online, courtesy Amazon.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Les-Miserables-by-Victor-Hugo>



Signature of Frederick Douglass

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

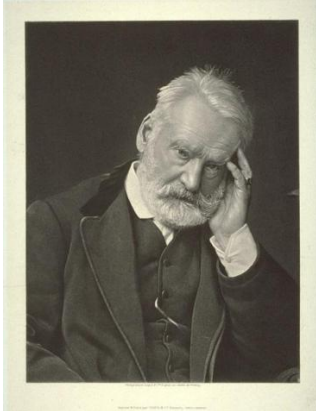
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Theodore D. Weld

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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Victor Hugo

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