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## Twelve Years a Slave

*Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and Rescued in 1853:*

Solomon Northup

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*Twelve Years a Slave, S. Northup*

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**TO  
HARRIET BEECHER STOWE:  
WHOSE NAME,  
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, IS IDENTIFIED WITH THE  
GREAT REFORM:  
THIS NARRATIVE, AFFORDING ANOTHER  
*Key Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition to Uncle Tom's Cabin,*  
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED**

"Such dupes are men to custom, and so prone  
To reverence what is ancient, and can plead  
A course of long observance for its use,  
That even servitude, the worst of ills,  
Because delivered down from sire to son,  
Is kept and guarded as a sacred thing.  
But is it fit or can it bear the shock  
Of rational discussion, that a man  
Compounded and made up, like other men,  
Of elements tumultuous, in whom lust  
And folly in as ample measure meet,  
As in the bosom of the slave he rules,  
Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition Should be a despot absolute, and boast  
Himself the only freeman of his land?"

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Cowper.

## Narrative Of Solomon Northup

Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition

### Chapter I.

*INTRODUCTORY—ANCESTRY —THE NORTHUP FAMILY— BIRTH AND PARENTAGE—MINTUS NORTHUP—MARRIAGE WITH ANNE HAMPTON—GOOD RESOLUTIONS—CHAMPLAIN CANAL—RAFTING EXCURSION TO Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition CANADA—FARMING—THE VIOLIN—COOKING—REMOVAL TO SARATOGA—PARKER AND PERRY— SLAVES—AND SLAVERY —THE CHILDREN—THE BEGINNING Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition OF SORROW*

Having been born a free man, and for more than thirty years enjoyed the blessings of liberty in a free State—and having at the end of that time been kidnapped and sold into Slavery, where I remained, until happily rescued in the month of January, 1853, after a bondage of Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition twelve years—it has been suggested that an account of my life and fortunes would not be uninteresting to Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition the public.

Since my return to liberty, I have not failed to perceive the increasing interest throughout the Northern States, in regard to the subject of Slavery. Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition Works of fiction, professing to portray its features in their more pleasing as well as more

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repugnant aspects, have been circulated to an extent unprecedented, and, as I understand, have created a fruitful topic of comment and discussion.

I can speak of Slavery only so far as it came under my own observation—only so far as I Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition have known and experienced it in my own person. My object is, to give a candid and truthful statement of facts: to repeat the story of my life, without exaggeration, leaving it for others to determine, whether even the pages of fiction present a picture of more cruel wrong or a severer bondage.

As far back as I have been able to ascertain, my ancestors on the paternal side were slaves in Rhode Island. They belonged to a family by the name of Northup, one of whom, removing to the State of New York, settled at Hoosic, in Rensselaer County. He brought with him Mintus Northup, my father. On the death of this gentleman, which must have occurred some fifty years ago, Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition my father became free, having been emancipated by a direction in his will.

Henry B. Northup, Esq., of Sandy Hill, a distinguished counselor at law, and the man to whom, under Providence, I am indebted for my present liberty, and my return to the society of my Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition wife and children, is a relative of the family in which my forefathers were thus held to service, and from which they took the name I bear. To this fact may be attributed the persevering interest he has taken in my behalf.

Sometime after my father's liberation, he removed to the town of Minerva, Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition Essex County, N. Y., where I was born, in the month of July, 1808. How long he remained in the latter place I have not the means of definitely ascertaining. From thence he removed to Granville, Washington county, near a place known as Slyborough, where, for some years, he labored on the farm of Clark Northup, also a relative of his old master; from thence he Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition removed to the Alden farm, at Moss Street, a short distance north of the village of Sandy Hill; and from thence to the farm now Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition owned by Russel Pratt, situated on the road leading from Fort Edward to Argyle, where he continued to reside until his death, which took place on the 22nd day of November, 1829. He left a widow and two children —myself, and Joseph, an elder brother. The latter is still living in the county of Oswego, near the city of that name; my mother died during the period of my captivity.

Though born a slave, and laboring under the disadvantages to which my unfortunate race is

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subjected, my father was a man respected for his industry and integrity, as many now living, who well remember him, are ready to testify. His whole life was passed in the peaceful pursuits of Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition agriculture, never seeking employment in those more menial positions, which seem to be especially allotted to the children of Africa. Besides giving us an education surpassing that ordinarily bestowed upon children in our condition, he Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition acquired, by his diligence and Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition economy, a sufficient property qualification to entitle him to the right of suffrage. Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition He was accustomed to speak to us of his early life; and although at all times cherishing the warmest emotions of kindness, and even of Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition affection towards the family, in whose house he had Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition been a bondsman, he nevertheless comprehended the system Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition of Slavery, and Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition dwelt with sorrow on the degradation of his race. He endeavored to imbue our minds with sentiments of morality, Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition and to teach us to place our trust and confidence in Him who regards the Twelve Years a Slave: Illustrated Edition humblest as well as the highest of his creatures. How often since that time has the recollection of his paternal counsels occurred to me, while lying in a slave hut in the distant and sickly regions of Louisiana, smarting with the undeserved wounds which an inhuman master had inflicted, and longing only for the grave which had covered him, to shield me also from the lash of the oppressor. In the church yard at Sandy Hill, a humble stone marks the spot where he reposes, after having worthily performed the duties appertaining to the lowly sphere wherein God had appointed him to walk.

Up to this period I had been principally engaged with my father in the labors of the farm. The leisure hours allowed me were generally either employed over my books, or playing on the violin—an amusement which was the ruling passion of my youth. It has also been the source of consolation since, affording, pleasure to the simple beings with whom my lot was cast, and beguiling my own thoughts, for many hours, from the painful contemplation of my fate.

## **Twelve Years A Slave Illustrated Edition**

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