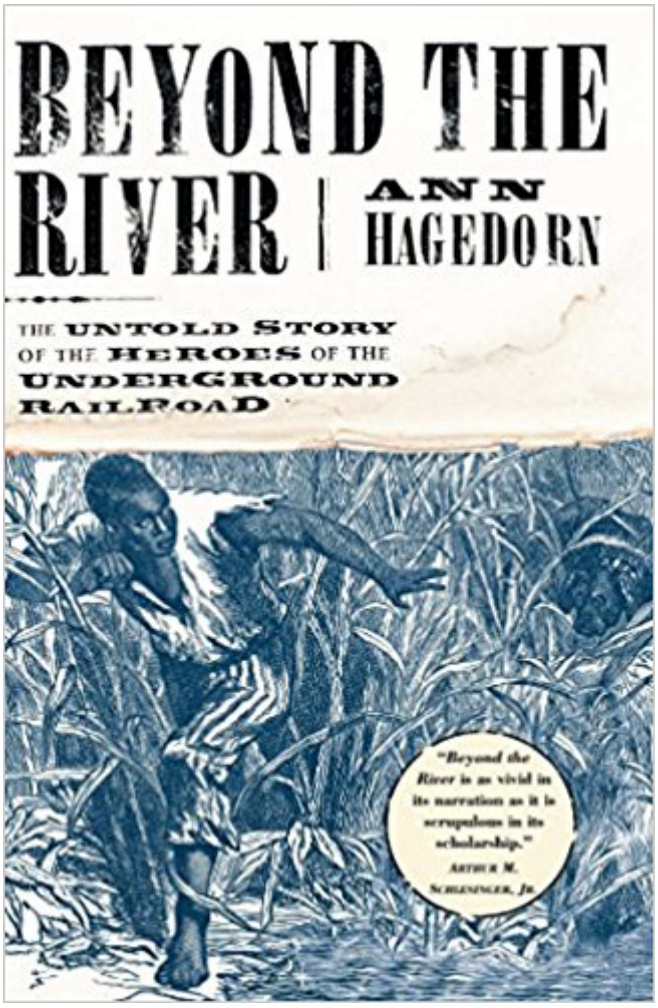
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Beyond The River: The Untold Story Of The Heroes Of The Underground Railroad



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Synopsis

Beyond the River brings to brilliant life the dramatic story of the forgotten heroes of the Ripley, Ohio, line of the Underground Railroad.From the highest hill above the town of Ripley, Ohio, you can see five bends in the Ohio River. You can see the hills of northern Kentucky and the rooftops of RipleyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s riverfront houses. And you can see what the abolitionist John Rankin saw from his house at the top of that hill, where for nearly forty years he placed a lantern each night to guide fugitive slaves to freedom beyond the river. In Beyond the River, Ann Hagedorn tells the remarkable story of the participants in the Ripley line of the Underground Railroad, bringing to life the struggles of the men and women, black and white, who fought Ã¢â ¬Å“the war before the warÃ¢â ¬Â• along the Ohio River. Determined in their cause, Rankin, his family, and his fellow abolitionistsÃ¢â ¬â •some of them former slaves themselvesÃ¢â ¬â •risked their lives to guide thousands of runaways safely across the river into the free state of Ohio, even when a sensational trial in Kentucky threatened to expose the Ripley Ã¢â ¬Å“conductors.Ã¢â ¬Â• Rankin, the leader of the Ripley line and one of the early leaders of the antislavery movement, became nationally renowned after the publication of his Letters on American Slavery, a collection of letters he wrote to persuade his brother in Virginia to renounce slavery. A vivid narrative about memorable people, Beyond the River is an inspiring story of courage and heroism that transports us to another era and deepens our understanding of the great social movement known as the Underground Railroad.

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Customer Reviews

Although the title suggests otherwise, this book could serve as a biography of John Rankin, one of

Ohio’s most active "conductors" on the Underground Railroad. Rankin (1793-1886), a Presbyterian minister and abolitionist in Ripley, where the Ohio River separated the free state of Ohio from the slave state of Kentucky, was equally well-known among the enslaved and their enslavers. To runaway blacks, Rankin’s house was a gateway to freedom atop Ripley’s highest hill. To slaveholders in Kentucky, Rankin was a formidable force in the borderland war with Ripley, that "abolitionist hellhole," on the other side of the river. One of the earliest leaders in the antislavery movement, Rankin published his Letters on American Slavery in 1823, which became standard reading for American antislavery advocates. Hagedorn (Ransom: The Untold Story of International Kidnapping) brings to life the story of Rankin, his family, free blacks and the other forgotten heroes on the front line who assisted hundreds of blacks on the trek to freedom. Rankin’s story is inspiring, but often not as captivating as those of the other heroes who are secondary characters here. The author brilliantly chronicles threats of midnight assassins, riots in Cincinnati and a pivotal trial in Kentucky in the 1830s, and a slave woman’s nighttime escape across the icy river with her two-year-old (and the woman’s risky return across the Ohio three years later to rescue her daughter and seven grandchildren from a Kentucky slaveholder). Hagedorn’s decision to relocate to Ripley during the book’s completion no doubt inspired her immediate and vivid prose, bringing these historical figures to a wider audience. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

The town of Ripley, located on the Ohio River between the slave state of Kentucky and the free state of Ohio, was the site of clashes between abolitionists and slave hunters long before the start of the Civil War. Hagedorn brings to life lesser-known activists in the abolitionist movement who led double lives in a small town torn up over the issue of slavery. She focuses on the Reverend John Rankin, spurred by religious fervor to become a leading abolitionist, helping escaped slaves travel on to Canada during the early 1820s. Using historical documents, newspapers, and letters, Hagedorn captures a fervent era, when the Missouri Compromise, the invention of the cotton gin, and growing slave revolts all set the stage for roiling debate on slavery. Rankin and his family were part of a network of abolitionists that included Harriet Beecher Stowe and John Parker, a free black man who ventured south to guide slaves to freedom. Readers interested in the history of the abolitionist movement in the U.S. will appreciate this look at unsung heroes of the era. Vanessa BushCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

This is such a powerful story of the heroes we've never heard about. The people who built hidden chambers and false bottoms under fireplaces to hide fugitives. The gun battles that happened between conductors on the Underground Railroad and slave catchers. The pastors who were thrown out of their pulpits for daring to call slavery a sin. The college student who was publicly whipped for possession of antislavery pamphlets in Nashville, TN. There's so much more packed into this incredible book. Ann Hagedorm is a strong writer who knows how to weave a story that you can't put down. She makes historical facts come alive as you find yourself cheering for these brave people. This is one of the most well written books on Civil War history and is simply a joy to absorb.

Ann Hagedorn did an excellent job of research for Beyond the River. It is clearly written and well presented. I ordered it because my ancestors were personally involved in the abolitionist movement in Ohio and other places. I found many accounts in her book of my great-grandfathers and their work near Ripley, and Sardinia. I thank her and you for making it available.

By reaching back to pre-Civil War newspapers, letters and court documents, Hagedorn paints a vivid picture of what it felt like living on the knife edge between slavery and freedom. She makes a reader actually understand the bravery of these Ohio abolitionists by showing us their daily lives, and what it was like to risk your life to help another person to freedom. Once I got into the story, I could not stop reading this compelling history, and I'm usually a reader of fiction rather than non-fiction. Hagedorn's gift for research is matched only by her ability to weave those facts into a fascinating story of these people, this town and a momentous era in our nation's history.

This is a powerful story . . . providing much need understanding and insight into the foundations of slavery, the underground railroad and the abolitionist movement. Read it! 2 Thumbs Up.

A must read if you enjoy reading about historical events on the "Underground Railroad".

Reading this book about Ripley, Ohio and the role its citizens played in the success of the Undergtound Railroad. Talk about putting your money where your mouth is....

This is a wonderful book for anyone interested in the underground railroad. It also provides much history of the Ohio River Valley. I have long been aware of Ripley and the Rankin house but this provides an in-depth picture of the activities and people involved. I had already read a copy of this

book borrowed from a friend but ordered a copy for my library so I could encourage others to read it. The heroism of the people invoived (every day people like you and I) is unbelievable.

It was great!!! Great purchase!!

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