

# Twelve Years a Slave - [ Stolen into Slavery: The True Story of Solomon Northup ] [Annotated & illustrated] [Free Audio Links]

Solomon Northup



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Twelve Years a Slave (1853; sub-title: Narrative of Solomon Northup, a citizen of New-York, kidnapped in Washington city in 1841, and rescued in 1853, from a cotton plantation near the Red River in Louisiana), by Solomon Northup as told to David Wilson, is a memoir of a black man who was born free in New York state but kidnapped, sold into slavery and kept in bondage for 12 years in Louisiana before the American Civil War. He provided details of slave markets in Washington, DC, as well as describing at length cotton cultivation on major plantations in Louisiana.

Published soon after Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Northup's book sold 30,000 copies and was considered a bestseller. It went through several editions in the nineteenth century. Supporting Stowe's fictional narrative in detail, Northup's first-hand account of his twelve years of bondage proved another bombshell in the national political debate over slavery leading up to the Civil War, drawing endorsements from major Northern newspapers, anti-slavery organizations, and evangelical groups. After several editions in the 19th Century, the book fell into obscurity for nearly 100 years, until it was rediscovered by two Louisiana historians, Dr. Sue Eakin (Louisiana State University at Alexandria) and Dr. Joseph Logsdon (University of New Orleans). In the early 1960s they researched and retraced Solomon Northup's journey and co-edited a historically annotated version that was published by LSU Press in 1968. A 2013 feature film based on the story and directed by Steve McQueen was released by Fox Searchlight Pictures on October 18, 2013.

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