

Teaching the U.S. Antislavery Movement through Music

Curriculum created for public use by Rebecca Edwards, Vassar College, under auspices of the Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project, Poughkeepsie, NY
mhantislaveryhistoryproject.org

Lesson 3: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Depicts a Dramatic Escape from Slavery

Song: Have students read, listen to, or sing “Eliza’s Flight,” available online at the Lester S. Levy Sheet Music Collection of The Johns Hopkins University Library. The sheet music includes a cover illustration of Eliza escaping across the ice with her infant son (attached, courtesy the Lester S. Levy Collection).

Students could use this musical piece to explore the story of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) and consider why it became both popular and controversial.

A search of the Levy sheet music collection, above, will find many other pieces of music drawn from the musical stage version of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Advanced students may be interested in exploring the ways in which George Aiken’s *stage* version of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* drew on blackface minstrel traditions and reflected racist stereotypes, while at the same time popularizing the antislavery cause.

Additional resources:

Widely available (\$20) is a wonderful 2011 stage production of Aiken’s 1852 play, condensed to 50 minutes for classroom use, with additional resources on the DVD. (Search “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin* George Aiken National Endowment for the Humanities” for listings.)

See also “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin* on the Antebellum Stage”:
<http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/interpret/exhibits/frick/frick.html>

ELIZA'S FLIGHT,



"God helping me, I crossed the river on the ice; for they were behind me - right behind - and there was no other way." Uncle Tom's Cabin, Vol. 1, p. 126.

A SCENE FROM

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

WRITTEN BY

Miss M.A. COLLIER Music by E.J. LODER.

BOSTON.

Price 25 cts. net.

Bufford's Lith. Boston.

Published by OLIVER DITSON, 115 Washington St.

COULD & BERRY. S. BRAINARD & CO. H. D. HEWITT. G. W. BRAINARD & CO. C. C. CLAPP & CO.
New York. Cleveland. N. Orleans. Louisville. Boston.

Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1852 by Oliver Ditson in the Clerks office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

ELIZA'S FLIGHT.

mf *sf* *p*

The ice is floating in the stream, The

Ad lib. *p*

wint'ry day is wild; . . . Hope lights with her un - dy - ing gleam The wand'rer and her

child. . . . She clasps him close-ly to her heart, Her on-ly one - her joy; . . . For

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nought but death the two shall part, The mother and her boy! . . . She sees the cold and

Espress.

rushing tide, Her feet are bleeding - bare; . . She lin - gers not, nor turns a - side, Yet

fp

breathes one heartfelt prayer. She lingers not, nor turns a-side, Yet breathes one heartfelt prayer.

mf

mf

She pres-ses on - she pres-ses on, Nor heeds the i - cy flood; . . Thus on - ly may her

rest be won, So helper, mighty God!... The mother gains the further shore, Her babe is on her

breast, The race is past, the per-il o'er, One moment is she blest... Thus on-ly may her

Espress.

rest be won, So help her, mighty God!.. The mother gains the fur-ther shore, Her

fp

babe is on her breast, The race is past, the per-il o'er, One moment is she blest!...

mf