

Primary Resource 3

In March 1854, Anthony Burns, a slave owned by Charles Suttle of Alexandria, Virginia, escapes from slavery and heads toward Boston, Massachusetts as a fugitive slave. With his new found freedom, Burns accepts a job at a clothing store which is owned by Lewis Hayden, an abolitionist. Unfortunately, under the authority of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Burns is seized by his owner, Charles Suttle on May 24, 1854. Two days later, white and African-American abolitionists, including Lewis Hayden, storm the courthouse to free Burns. Violence erupts and results in the death of one marshal and the arrest of thirteen people. President Franklin Pierce sends in federal troops to help the guards watch over Burns.

On June 2, 1854 Burns is convicted of being a fugitive slave and is ordered to return to Virginia. A large crowd of about 50,000 people line the streets of Boston to watch a shackled Burns walk to the waterfront to the ship that will transport him back to slavery. By February 1855, Reverend Leonard Grimes of Boston sponsors an effort to raise money to purchase Anthony Burn's freedom for \$1300.00. Remarkably, less than a year later, Burns arrives back in Boston as a free man. Eventually, Burns studies at Oberlin College in Ohio and becomes a minister in Canada.

Anthony Burns' Notice 1854

Several days after Burn's arrest, notices like this appeared in Boston.

A MAN
KIDNAPPED!

A PUBLIC MEETING AT
FANEUIL HALL!
WILL BE HELD

THIS FRIDAY EVEN'G,
May 26th, at 7 o'clock,

To secure justice for A MAN CLAIMED AS A SLAVE by a
VIRGINIA
KIDNAPPER!

And NOW IMPRISONED IN BOSTON COURT HOUSE, in
defiance of the Laws of Massachusetts, Shall be plunged into the
Hell of Virginia Slavery by a Massachusetts Judge of
Probate!<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h1566b.html>
BOSTON, May 26, 1854



Primary Source: The Granger Collection, New York

This notice contains anti-slavery sentiment. For example, the author of this notice uses the phrase, “**a man kidnapped**,” to describe the imprisonment of Anthony Burns in Boston. Why do you think some of the words in this notice appear larger and bolder than other words?
