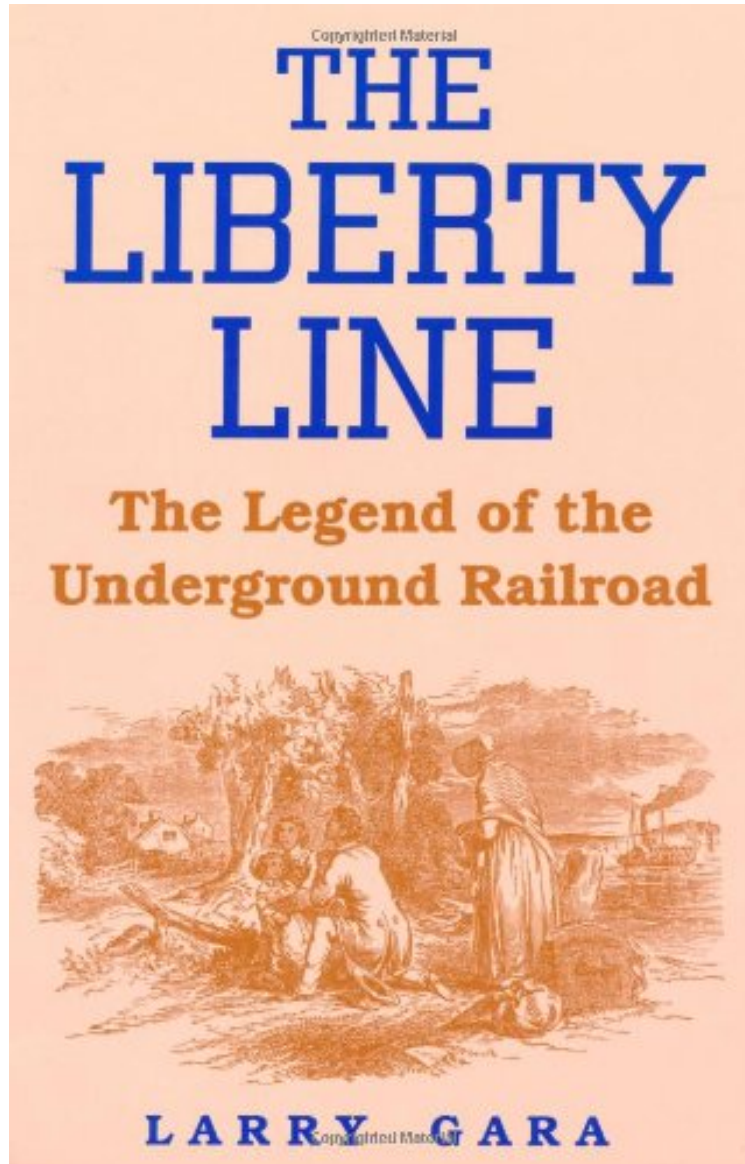


[Download] The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad

The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad

Larry Gara

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Larry Gara : The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Liberty Line is must reading for scholars of 19th century American history By Thyra Russell This book effectively shows that most of the information circulated about the UGRR is based on folklore; exaggerated accounts magnified by telling; and faulty memories of those who furnished

early data to earlier historians of the UGRR. It is a pleasant antidote to late 20th century political correctness views of history. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A level-headed masterpiece
By bibliophile
The truth about the Underground Railroad is difficult to establish, because the operators were violating federal law and consequently kept few records. Most of the early books about it were based on recollections of participants or their children, collected long after Emancipation, and most of these reflected the perspectives of the whites who helped the escaping slaves. It is to Gara's book and his other writings that we owe the major reexamination of the entire phenomenon. He refocuses the discussion on the fugitives themselves, giving a much more balanced picture of how it all happened. It is true, of course, that thousands of whites helped to spirit the fugitives to safety; but it was the slaves themselves who risked everything, who traveled hundreds of miles on foot, in the dark, through swamps and rivers and fields, in search of freedom. The whites--at great personal risk, too--simply helped. Gara has revolutionized our understanding of the UGRR, and his little book is a genuine classic.

" The underground railroad?with its mysterious signals, secret depots, abolitionist heroes, and slave-hunting villains?has become part of American mythology. But legend has distorted much of this history. Larry Gara shows how pre-Civil War partisan propaganda, postwar reminiscences by fame-hungry abolitionists, and oral tradition helped foster the popular belief that a powerful secret organization spirited floods of slaves away from the South. In contrast to much popular belief, however, the slaves themselves had active roles in their own escape. They carried out their runs, receiving aid only after they had reached territory where they still faced return. The Liberty Line puts slaves in their rightful position: the center of their struggle for freedom.

"History has been utterly wrong in ascribing to the abolitionist movement a thoroughgoing and smoothly run underground transportation system for runaway slaves. In *The Liberty Line*, the legend's ghost is fortunately and finally exorcised, and about time." Saturday ""The book is an unusually valuable piece of academic research. Well written, on an important subject, it provides salutary correction to a well-entrenched myth." Chicago Tribune""A classic." New York Times""From the Back CoverThe underground railroad - with its mysterious signals, secret depots, abolitionist heroes, and slave-hunting villains - has become part of American mythology. But legend has distorted much of the history of this institution, which Larry Gara carefully investigates in this important study. Gara show how pre-Civil War partisan propaganda, postwar reminiscences by fame-hungry abolitionists, and oral tradition helped foster the popular belief that a powerful secret organization spirited floods of slaves away from the South. In contrast to that legend, the slaves themselves had active roles in their own escapes from slave states. They carried out their runs to the North, receiving aid only after they had reached territory where they still faced return under the Fugitive Slave Law. Thus, *The Liberty Line* places fugitive slaves in their rightful position: the center of their struggle for freedom.