

## Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero By Kate Clifford Larson

Harriet Tubman is one of the giants of American history—a fearless visionary who led scores of her fellow slaves to freedom and battled courageously behind enemy lines during the Civil War. Drawing from a trove of new documents and sources as well as extensive genealogical research Larson reveals Tubman as a complex woman—brilliant, shrewd, deeply religious and passionate in her pursuit of freedom. The descendant of the vibrant matrilineal Asanti people of the West African Gold Coast, Tubman was born into slavery on the Eastern Shore of Maryland but refused to spend her life in bondage. While still a young woman she embarked on a perilous journey of self-liberation—and then, having won her own freedom, she returned again and again to liberate family and friends, tapping into the Underground Railroad. Stripping away myths and misconceptions, Larson presents stunning new details about Tubman's accomplishments, personal life, and influence, including her relationship with Frederick Douglass, her involvement with John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, and revelations about a young woman who may have been Tubman's daughter. Here too are Tubman's twilight years after the war when she worked for women's rights and in support of her fellow blacks, and when racist politicians and suffragists marginalized her contribution.

**Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero** by Kate Clifford Larson is a bestselling author of critically acclaimed biographies including *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero* and *Rosemary: The Hidden Kennedy Daughter*. Praised for her research and insights as a biographer, Larson digs deep into Harriet's history, uncovering her family roots, personal life, and reclaims Harriet's faith as a centerpiece of her survival and appeal. An award-winning author, Kate Clifford Larson is a bestselling author of critically acclaimed biographies including *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero* and *Rosemary: The Hidden Kennedy Daughter*. Praised for her research and insights as a biographer, Larson digs deep into Harriet's history, uncovering her family roots, personal life, and reclaims Harriet's faith as a centerpiece of her survival and appeal. This book is a fantastic in-depth resource that covers the full scope of Tubman's life and accomplishments, including her lesser-known feats as a Civil War spy and nurse, women's suffrage activist, and humanitarian. (In fact, when we went to church in Lake Placid that Sunday, we ended up being right down the road from John Brown's home and burial site.) I found this book in the little shop at the museum and appreciated learning more about 'Minty' Harriet Tubman (we had studied her in the 2nd Grade ELA common core curriculum) what a strong woman she was! Fought for the rights of African Americans and women of all races. She served the country that condoned the enslavement of her people as a spy and a nurse during the Civil War, in the course of which she brought nearly 100 slaves out of slavery. I was the conductor on the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can't say—I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger. People deserve to know about Harriet's time as a nurse and spy during the Civil War, her fight for women's rights, the poverty that she dealt with for much of her later life, and the home for the aged that she opened and then resided in for the last years of her life. While painting compelling pictures of Tubman's life, she also describes the difficulty of locating primary sources such as letters, court records, property deeds, and interview texts that would lend credibility to any one account. As if that's not enough, she also demonstrates the elisions and conflation in previous biographies (both those contemporary with Tubman's life and those that came after) that narrowed and restricted the popular view of this passionate, strong, and religiously devoted person. But did you also know about her time as a scout for the Union Army? Or her work building a hospital and hospice for former slaves in the North? I didn't!

**Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero** by Kate Clifford Larson is an excellent biography of Harriet Tubman. Paperback — "I was the conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can't say — I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger. It's not uncommon to hear people classed as 'heroes' because of their occupation: teachers, nurses, police, firefighters, and the military are frequently labeled 'heroes' solely because of their jobs. In her book *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero*, historian Kate

Clifford Larson (*Rosemary: The Hidden Kennedy Daughter*) doesn't hesitate to call Harriet Tubman a hero. Until three biographies of Harriet Tubman were published in 2003 and 2004 there had not been a book-length adult biography of the extraordinary woman known as "Moses" in nearly sixty years (since Earl Conrad's *Harriet Tubman* in 1943). While working on a doctoral dissertation Larson drew upon a store of valuable new documents such as court records contemporary local newspapers wills and letters legal transactions as well extensive genealogical research. As she was doing errands when she was around 12 years old an overseer hit her in the head with a two-pound weight after she refused to help restrain a field hand who had left his plantation without permission. When the Civil War broke out Tubman returned to the South to serve as a scout to nurse the wounded to recruit freed blacks for the Union Army and to spy for the Northern army. Larson adapted this book from her graduate thesis and while it's pretty readable on the whole and I appreciated her more comprehensive analysis (and inclusion of maps) there are some repetitive and abstract passages that put me in mind of academic writing. Unfortunately it seems like there isn't a great adult biography of Tubman out there; amusingly both biographers emphasize that there had been no adult biography of her since the 1940s then published their own in the same year! Despite the relative dearth of information about Tubman's personal life (both authors engage in a lot of "might have felt" type speculation) I did learn a lot from reading this book; both authors rightly identify that Tubman has become a quasi-mythological figure about whom we don't actually know that much. She was born into slavery on Maryland's Eastern Shore in probably the early 1820s (Clinton devotes some time to the arguments behind the various potential birth dates while Larson just pegs it at 1822 and moves on) and was "hired out" beginning apparently around age 5-7 to perform work for various families who seem to have been mostly abusive. In adolescence she was struck by a piece of metal an overseer threw at a fleeing slave and suffered a serious head injury that was likely the cause of health problems throughout her life including sudden sleeping spells. Although Maryland bordered "free" states Tubman became active around the time the Fugitive Slave Act came into effect meaning fugitives had to flee to Canada before they could truly be safe. Tubman was also active during the Civil War the highlight being her leading a Union raid in South Carolina to burn some plantations and rescue about 750 slaves though she also spent a lot of time nursing cooking and laundering for cash. She never learned to write but was reportedly an excellent public speaker and used that to raise money for various causes: Underground Railroad excursions helping freedmen get on their feet women's suffrage and later in life starting a home for the elderly and poor. She probably never had children of her own though a bizarre episode involving her "kidnapping" a young girl from a well-to-do free black family in Maryland leads both authors to speculate that this was perhaps her daughter left behind when she fled slavery. There's also a lot of interesting information about the times here: as you might expect the reality of 19th century slavery in Maryland seems to have been both more lenient (there was a fair amount of absenteeism people running away temporarily and then returning and people hiding out to avoid being sold all apparently carried on without life-altering consequences) and more cruel (young children being hired out to live away from their families and abused and underfed while there) than our common stereotypes would have you believe. Before this book I hadn't thought about rendering speech phonetically as potentially a form of condescension/racism but Larson is convincing on that point showing how later editions of the biography printed during Tubman's life and at her request rendered her speech in an increasingly phonetic and folksy way playing into stereotypes of black people while simultaneously playing down the brutality of slavery: And yet in the nine decades since her death next to nothing has been written about this extraordinary woman aside from juvenile biographies, The truth about Harriet Tubman has become lost inside a legend woven of racial and gender stereotypes: Now at last in this long-overdue biography historian Kate Clifford Larson gives Harriet Tubman the powerful intimate meticulously detailed life she deserves: Yet despite her success her celebrity her close ties with Northern politicians and abolitionists Tubman suffered crushing physical pain and emotional setbacks: Harriet Tubman her life and her work remain an inspiration to all who value freedom, Now thanks to Larson's breathtaking biography we can finally appreciate Tubman as a complete human

being—an American hero yes but also a woman who loved suffered and sacrificed, Bound for the Promised Land is a magnificent work of biography history and truth telling, Her latest work Walk With Me: A Biography of Fannie Lou Hamer tells the remarkable story of one of Americas most important civil rights leaders of the 20th century: Larson accessed recently opened FBI records secret Oval Office tapes new interviews and to reveal never before seen details about Hamer's life: Her latest work Walk With Me: A Biography of Fannie Lou Hamer tells the remarkable story of one of America's most important civil rights leaders of the 20th century. Larson accessed recently opened FBI records secret Oval Office tapes new interviews and to reveal never before seen details about Hamer's life: An award winning consultant for feature film scripts documentaries museum exhibits and public history initiatives Larson is frequently interviewed by national and international media outlets. Larson is a Brandeis University Women's Studies Research Center Visiting Scholar.

{site\_link} I bought this book at the gift shop attached to the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Museum on the Eastern Shore of Maryland where Tubman was born and enslaved. The amount of work Larson did to unearth and assemble the details of Tubman's life particularly the early years is seriously impressive, I spent almost as much time reading through the endnotes as I did with the main text to discover where she found the information, An amazing life now well chronicled in this work of rigorous scholarship, Paperback Well-researched biography of a true American hero who for too long has been more myth than reality, So much of what I learned in school about Harriet Tubman just barely scratched the surface of who she really was: I had no idea about her seizures; that she was BFFs with John Brown; that she worked for the Union as a nurse and spy and was a later suffragist, I feel rather cheated school! Paperback When we were camping this summer we went to Ausable Chasm to hike around this beautiful canyon carved by the Ausable River, As we parked the car we notices a house marked as The North Star Underground Railroad Museum, When we bought our 1848 Home in Upstate NY I really hoped to find evidence that it had been a stop along the route from the South to Canada on the RR, There are other homes in the area that werebut we never found any sign of it here. After hiking the gorge we visited the museum which is quite small but very enlightening, we watched a video about the abolitionist activities that were been prevalent in that area: 5 Stars\*\*This book wasn't easy to get through not because of the subject content but because of the dry lackluster scholarly-style writing, This work was originally a dissertation which was then expanded into a book. Just once I wish that researchers would turn to actual writers before they bring their findings to the general public: They do such a disservice to both their body of work as well as their subject, If you can get through the first 3 chapters this book manages to actually start focusing on Harriet & her exploits. She needs to be remembered & honored as the fierce clever strong & formidable force that she was: Also gobsmacked to find out Dorothy Sterling's FREEDOM TRAIN which I adored as a kid wasn't quite nonfiction: WHY WOULD YOU FICTIONALIZE SOMEONE'S LIFE AND STILL MARKET IT AS NONFIC?? Ugh. But I guess it kind of explains why so many Harriet Tubman books are for juvenile readers rather than adults? Regardless this one was excellent, People need to remember that she had a full life and wasn't limited to being an escaped slave or one of the most famous conductors of the Underground Railroad. Paperback Kate Clifford Larson investigates the complicated history of a complicated person. Her work studies the history of Tubman studies as much as it studies the person herself: All the same the book is very convincing in so far as it relates to the effects of racism classism and sexism in erasing lives from history. But CAN I JUST TELL YOU what an amazing person Harriet Tubman was? Even with the spotty records and accounts what hard data we do have is just simply astounding. You probably know a lot about her time as The Moses of the South ferrying slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad: Harriet Tubman was one of the most important 19th Century Americans and is in the pantheon of heroic individuals. Larson has produced a fine well-researched book covering every phase of Tubman's life. Rating: 5 out of 5 stars Notes: Audiobook: Narrated by: Pam Ward Length: 12 hours and 26 minutes Unabridged Audiobook Release Date: 2015-11-12 Publisher: Blackstone Audio Inc: — Harriet Tubman at a suffrage convention NY 1896These days it seems that the word 'hero' suffers from overuse. Looking online I also found farmers veterinarians

scientists social workers activists computer scientists and stay-at-home moms referred to as heroes: It is such a ridiculously overused word that it has become little more than shorthand for accomplishment. The word 'hero' has been so overused that it's losing its meaning: To give the word 'hero' value again we should refuse to use it lightly: The textbook definition of a hero is a person noted for feats of courage or nobility of purpose especially someone who voluntarily risks or sacrifices their life for others: If anybody deserves to be called a hero it is Harriet Tubman. She risked her life to return to her home on Maryland's Eastern Shore numerous times to rescue relatives and friends from slavery some 50 people in all: She was a master of disguise sometimes disguised as an old man. On a couple occasions she encountered people who knew her including her slave owner Edward Brodess without detection. The majority of books written about her over that time were children's books—at least 30 of them: The explanation for the lack of biographies for this amazing woman is somewhat simple. Most of the information about Tubman was based on stories passed down orally for generations. Like most slaves Tubman was uneducated and could neither read nor write. For many of our American historical figures we have correspondence diaries and other historical records from which to draw. Larson reveals Tubman as a complex woman—intelligent shrewd deeply religious and passionate in her pursuit of freedom: Growing up in southeastern Virginia I don't recall learning anything about Tubman in my history classes: Virginia's state government adopted a policy of Massive Resistance in the 1950s (within my lifetime) to block the desegregation of public schools mandated by the U. But there's more to Harriet Tubman's story than we learned in school—no matter what state you're from, I was surprised at the many things I learned about this woman. Born into slavery on the Eastern Shore of Maryland Tubman refused to spend her life in bondage: She suffered severe trauma from the event and experienced headaches and seizures for the rest of her life, — "The weight broke my skull and cut a piece of that shawl clean off and drove it into my head: I had no bed no place to lie down on at all and they laid me on the seat of the loom and I stayed there all day and the next, "— Harriet Tubman In her early 20s Harriet Tubman left her family to escape to Philadelphia. There she became the first and only female fugitive slave to work as a conductor on the Underground Railroad: She was so successful in leading slaves to freedom that the state of Maryland put a \$40000 bounty on her head: Before long fellow slaves and Northerners began referring to Tubman as 'Moses' because of how many people she led to freedom. She worked tirelessly behind the scenes to raise money to continue her work and support fugitive slaves: She was so successful in these efforts that she was often called "General" Tubman. Even after the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation this remarkable woman continued to work for social justice and to provide for the indigent among her. In the 48 years that she lived after the end of the Civil War Tubman devoted her final years to family public speaking and assorted social causes: While Larson's biography provides much interesting information about an individual deserving of recognition Larson's prose never quite equals Tubman's achievements. Still this is a work of history deserving of our attention: There's so much more to Harriet Tubman than we learn in school. Paperback I picked this up alongside Catherine Clinton's Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom and wound up choosing this book instead though the reality is both are somewhat dry, (Larson's best guess is that Tubman had temporal lobe epilepsy; Clinton's is narcolepsy, ) However she stuck around until 1849 when her slaveowner died creating concerns about being sold south (which had already happened to two of her sisters). Then she struck out for Philadelphia and later made many trips back to rescue relatives friends and others who wanted to go working with the Underground Railroad. She ferried her brothers parents and many others there most of whom seem to have eventually relocated to upstate New York: Before that she was also a strong supporter of John Brown and his Harpers Ferry raid: She never had enough money probably because she wanted to help everyone she met and usually had about 6-8 needy people living in her house at once on top of her family. She married twice first as a slave to a local freedman (who didn't feel like leaving Maryland) and second to a much younger veteran. (She then passed the kid on to some wealthy white friends to educate. ) She was very religious believed God spoke to her and sometimes impressed others with her prophetic powers. The discussion of the increasing racism in the years

after the Civil War in the interest of national reconciliation is also interesting: At any rate I certainly learned from this book though I can't claim it to be among the most engaging of nonfiction I've read. Of the two adult bios currently available it seems to me the better one: And at just 295 pages of text in hardcover (followed by more than 100 pages of endnotes etc: ) it's not the time commitment the overall page count might have you believe. From the Hardcover edition. Dr. Paperback I'm glad I read this book. This really intrigued me. Paperback \*\*2. Had I known that going in I would've taken a pass. That being said. What an unbelievable woman. She was tough as nails with a heart of gold. The world needs more heroines like her. Paperback Absolutely necessary read for anyone. She contained multitudes. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in U.S. History slavery or heroic lives. It's more than a little bit overdone. However not all accomplishments are heroic accomplishments. True heroes are rare. She gives Tubman the intimate detailed biography she deserves. That's not necessarily surprising.S. Supreme Court. She began having seizures following a traumatic head injury. They carried me to the house all bleeding and fainting. Sadly she was never adequately compensated for her work. Paperback

