

Radical Republicanism. Lane became Senator Lane of Kansas, served as head of security in Lincoln's White House, and then returned to Kansas to initiate "one of the first campaigns to enlist black soldiers" (152). Organized as the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry, these mainly former slaves saw combat before the more famous Massachusetts 54th. Before the war, Richard Hinton went East to raise money to buy guns for the ongoing Kansas fight, and after war was declared, served with the Kansas volunteers. Hinton wrote about his experiences and his papers are on deposit at the Kansas Historical Society. Martin Stowell was forced to flee Kansas for Nebraska, where he farmed and engaged in local Republican politics until Lincoln called for volunteers. Stowell lost his life while serving with the Fifth Iowa Cavalry.

With these stories, *When It Was Grand* is a welcome addition to the always growing body of scholarship about the Civil War.

Organizing Freedom: Black Emancipation Activism in the Civil War Midwest, by Jennifer R. Harbour. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2020. xviii, 185 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$27.00 paperback.

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As the Civil War raged, prominent Chicagoan Sattira Douglas opined in the *Christian Recorder* on the role of African Americans and what they expected to come from their service. "This war is to teach us, regardless of sex or complexion, hard lessons of sacrifice, of courage, and of fortitude," she argued; "Colored men have everything to gain in this conflict: liberty, honor, social and political positions are now placed within their grasp." Douglas was comparatively prosperous, lived in a state where slavery was illegal, and could not join the military, but she saw liberty as greater than freedom from slavery, the war effort as more expansive than wearing the blue uniform, and the overall emancipation effort as inclusive of the entire black community. Such is the subject of *Organizing Freedom*, which examines black community activism in Illinois and Indiana before and during the Civil War (1).

Harbour, an associate professor of black studies and of women's and gender studies at the University of Nebraska Omaha, greatly adds to the growing body of work on the nineteenth-century black Midwest. She also broadens concepts of emancipation beyond freedom from chatteldom, exploring how black midwesterners engaged in "emancipation activism" against southern slavery and their own region's antiblack laws,

racist attitudes, and threats of kidnapping (6). They defined freedom as the rights of citizenship and the ability to control their own families and homes, and they fought for it through work, churches, schools, the law, and the war. Additionally, although black women were often overlooked at the time and by historians since then, Harbour moves away from the traditional focus on white abolitionists and black men, telling this story through black newspapers, church records, letters to black publications and white political leaders, and to a lesser extent white-created documents. Through what is both written and implied, she explores Northern migration, churches and other institutions that became central to the emancipation struggle, the effort to fight in the military and to support both the war and black families, and the struggle to abolish explicitly racist laws after the war.

Harbour's work expands our historical knowledge in many vital ways. Her emphasis on institutions and women—not simply as a supplement but by reconceptualizing black activity as fundamentally about families and communities overall—goes beyond the individualized “great man” perspective that often dominates historical understandings, especially of war and politics. Her exploration of how the Midwest was foundationally and institutionally racist provides an essential context for the activism of that time and beyond. The very reimagining of the word “emancipation” challenges common conceptions of slavery as purely a Southern problem. Enthusiasts of Iowa history will be able to draw many parallels to the Hawkeye State and use Harbour's methodological innovations in their own work. At the same time, although it is understandable that she sometimes uses documents from the South and Northeast to fill documentary gaps and exemplify midwestern trends, this also runs the risk of challenging her arguments about midwestern distinctiveness. Readers may also wonder about connections between communities throughout each state and across state lines, especially as African Americans moved and built broader institutions. To that end, although Harbour explores the class differences among black women, less examined is the impact of real and/or perceived distinctions between people in large cities, smaller towns, and rural areas. Overall, though, her manuscript is essential for scholars of nineteenth-century American history and of women's and African American history in any historical era. Given its short length and accessible prose, it can and should find a place in college-level surveys and more specific courses on the black Midwest.