



Crusade Against Slavery: Edward Coles, Pioneer of Freedom

Kurt E. Leichtle, Bruce Carveth

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Edward Coles was a wealthy heir to a central Virginia plantation, an ardent emancipator, the second governor of Illinois, the loyal personal secretary to President James Madison, and a close antislavery associate of Thomas Jefferson. Yet never before has a full-length book detailed his remarkable life story and his role in the struggle to free all slaves. In *Crusade Against Slavery*, Kurt E. Leichtle and Bruce G. Carveth correct this oversight with the first modern and complete biography of a unique but little-known and quietly influential figure in American history.

Rejecting slavery from a young age, Coles's early wishes to free his family's slaves initially were stymied by legal, practical, and family barriers. Instead he went to Washington, D.C., where his work in the White House was a life-changing blend of social glitter, secretarial drudge, and distasteful political patronage. Returning home, he researched places where he could live out his ideals. After considerable planning and preparation, he left his family's Virginia tobacco plantation in 1819 and started the long trip west to Edwardsville, Illinois, pausing along the Ohio River on an emotional April morning to free his slaves and offer each family 160 acres of Illinois land of their own. Some continued to work for Coles, while others were left to find work for themselves. This book revisits the lives of the slaves Coles freed, including a noted preacher and contributor to the founding of what is now the second-oldest black Baptist organization in America.

Crusade Against Slavery details Coles's struggles with frontier life and his surprise run and election to the office of Illinois governor as well as his continuing antislavery activities. At great personal cost, he led the effort to block a constitutional convention that would have legalized slavery in the state, which resulted in an acrimonious civil suit brought on by his political enemies, who claimed he violated the law by not issuing a bond of emancipation for his slaves. Although initially convicted by a partisan jury, Coles was vindicated when the Illinois Supreme Court overturned the decisions of the lower courts. Through the story of Coles's moral and legal battles against slavery, Leichtle and Carveth unearth new perspectives on an institution that was on unsure footing yet strongly ingrained in the business interests at the economic base of the fledgling state.

In 1831, after less than a decade in Illinois-and after losing a bid for Congress-Coles left for Philadelphia, where he remained in correspondence with Madison about the issue of slavery. Drawing on previous incomplete treatments of Coles's life, including his own short memoir, *Crusade Against Slavery* includes the first published analysis of Madison's failure to free his slaves despite his plans to do so through his will and a fascinating exploration of Coles's struggle to understand Madison's inability to live up to the ideals both men shared.

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Charlotte Cooper:

Why? Because this Crusade Against Slavery: Edward Coles, Pioneer of Freedom is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap it but latter it will surprise you with the secret it inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who have write the book in such wonderful way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining means but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of positive aspects than the other book get such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking means. So , still want to delay having that book? If I were you I will go to the guide store hurriedly.

Wanda Sousa:

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Earl Casey:

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