



# AM I NOT A MAN?

THE  
DRED  
SCOTT  
STORY

BY MARK L. SHURTLEFF  
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## Am I Not A Man The Dred Scott Story

**Henry Wallace**

## **Am I Not A Man The Dred Scott Story:**

Am I Not a Man? Mark L Shurtleff, 2021-01-14 On November 6 1860 the people of the United States elected the nominee of the infant Republican Party as their sixteenth president An obscure lawyer from Illinois Abraham Lincoln had lost his two prior forays into national politics as a candidate for the U S Senate but in a stunning turnaround that garnered 59% of the electoral votes Lincoln beat Senator Stephen Douglas and three other candidates including the incumbent vice president Many Lincoln scholars and historians believe as do I that the single greatest reason for his extraordinary victory was a notorious 1857 decision by the United States Supreme Court in Scott v Sandford In a brutal decision that has been called the worst in the history of the court Chief Justice Roger Taney ruled that a black man was not a man and had no rights a white man was bound to respect In the famous Lincoln Douglas debates of 1857 Lincoln made Taney's abhorrent decision the basis of his house divided speech A house divided against itself cannot stand I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free Douglas and the Democrats supported the Supreme Court decision In a speech on the case Lincoln said The Republicans inculcate with whatever of ability they can that the negro is a man that his bondage is cruelly wrong and that the field of his oppression ought not to be enlarged The Democrats deny his manhood deny or dwarf to insignificance the wrong of his bondage so far as possible crush all sympathy for him and cultivate and excite hatred and disgust against him Northern Democrats and Whigs agreed with Lincoln They flocked to the Republican Party in the next presidential election and chose the man who would become The Great Emancipator and fight a war to free the Negro Therefore it can be claimed with authority that but for the slave Dred Scott there would have been no President Abraham Lincoln Who was this illiterate slave Dred Scott born and raised as Sam Blow in southern Virginia and as a man barely passed five feet tall and a hundred pounds soaking wet who had the audacity courage and faith to persevere for ten years in state and federal court to gain his freedom What moved him to endure whippings and vile threats and stand erect before a jury of white slaveholders defiant in appealing the decisions of lofty appellate judges The life of Dred Scott is the story of America from the beginning of the 19th century through the Louisiana Purchase the War of 1812 the Missouri Compromise The War with Mexico Bloody Kansas and culminating in the War Between the States It is also a moving personal tale of the life of a slave who wanted to be treated as a man and when he became a husband and a father would stop at nothing in his quest for freedom for the girls he loved more than his own life I have watched with dismay the fracturing of our great Nation along deep political racial ethnic gender and socio economic lines Hate is strong Healing of the divisions seems hopeless But I believe that we can learn from the past and the story of Dred Scott at a time when our country was similarly splitting apart is a lesson of hope for us today This story does not just highlight the courage and determination of Dred in the face of all obstacles but notably it is also a daring story of the grown children of his first master who loved Dred and knew of his humanity and risked losing everything in fighting for his freedom against the most powerful pro slavery families in America

all the way to the United States Supreme Court and beyond Dred Scott s history is a positive lesson for our time of great political cultural and racial division An example of what we once were and can become again if we focus on our common humanity which is so much greater than those things that divide us as a nation    Uncle Henry's Own Story of His Life, Personal Reminiscences Henry Wallace,1917    The Story of a Great Conflict: a History of the War of Secession Rossiter Johnson,Oliver Otis Howard,John Brown Gordon,1894    Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858 Albert Jeremiah Beveridge,1928

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