Frederick Douglass

Frederick Bailey was born on a plantation in Talbot County, Maryland in February of 1818. His mother was a slave when he was born and he became one too!. Around age 12, his master's wife, Sophia Auld, began to teach Frederick the alphabet. Mr. Auld found out and forbid his wife from teaching Frederick more. However, Frederick taught himself secretly by observing others. In 1838, Frederick successfully escaped to New York to become a free man. It was at this time that he took the name Douglass and married his first wife, Anna Murray. Douglass was an excellent speaker and spoke about his experience as a slave. During the Civil War, he fought for the rights of black soldiers and asked President Abraham Lincoln to allow black men to join the army. He used his growing fame to promote the passage of the 14th and 15th amendments which gave all men equal rights. Douglass held high-ranking positions in the U.S. government. He was ambassador to the Dominican Republic and Haiti. He was also director of the Freedman's Bank. He died in 1895 in Washington DC.