



# American Legends: The Life of John Brown

*Charles River Editors*

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A lot of ink has been spilled covering the lives of history's most influential figures, but how much of the forest is lost for the trees? In Charles River Editors' American Legends series, listeners can get caught up to speed on the lives of America's most important men and women in the time it takes to finish a commute, while learning interesting facts long forgotten or never known.

Throughout the 1850s, American politicians tried to sort out the nation's intractable issues. In an attempt to organize the center of North America - Kansas and Nebraska - without offsetting the slave-free balance, Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois proposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The Kansas-Nebraska Act eliminated the Missouri Compromise line of 1820, which the Compromise of 1850 had maintained. Settlers could now vote whether they wanted their state to be slave-free. The primary result was that thousands of zealous pro-slavery and anti-slavery advocates moved to Kansas to influence the vote, creating a dangerous and ultimately deadly mix. The most famous and infamous of them all was John Brown, one of the most controversial men in American history. A radical abolitionist, Brown organized a small band of like-minded followers and fought with the armed groups of pro-slavery men in Kansas for several months, including a notorious incident known as the Pottawatomie Massacre, in which Brown's supporters murdered five men.

"I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood. I had, as I now think vainly, flattered myself that without very much bloodshed it might be done." - John Brown the day of his execution

This audiobook includes Brown's jailhouse interview and courtroom statement after being convicted and sentenced to death. It also discusses the relationships Brown had with famous contemporaries like Frederick Douglass, Henry David Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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