

Bloody Dawn Review Questions

- 1) Given the deep moral divisions regarding the legitimacy of slavery as a social institution in the United States circa 1850, **what explains the cooperation** of the abolitionist Northern states in the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850? And what explains Pennsylvania Governor Johnston's open encouragement of compliance with the provisions of this Act?
- 2) What in the world was **Edward Gorsuch** thinking when he so casually rode up to the house where he knew his four escaped slaves were hiding out and demanded that they surrender their freedom and return with him to his slave plantation in Maryland? In your opinion was Gorsuch a deranged lunatic, excessively naïve, or was he exceptionally brave?
- 3) What **specific** provisions of the **Fugitive Slave Act of 1850** were the most prejudicial in supporting the interests of the slave-owners?
- 4) Why was it that Castner Hanway was charged with **the high federal crime of "treason"** as opposed to simply obstructing the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850? Wasn't Castner Hanway clearly guilty of violating the Fugitive Slave Act provisions? So why wasn't he charged with this crime so much easier to prove than the crime of treason?
- 5) And why was it that no one besides Castner Hanway (out of the hundred plus involved in the Christiana riot) was ever charged with the high crime of treason?
- 6) So on what basis might it be argued that the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was a dismal failure of social engineering legislation?