Ida B. Wells was born into slavery during the Civil War on July 16, 1862, in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Just a few months before her birth, the Congress passed the Second Confiscation Act, which declared 'forever free' the slaves of anyone engaged in rebellion against the United States, a precursor to the Emancipation Proclamation. Wells' experience of slavery was brief, as the war ended in 1865, but the racial injustices she witnessed left a lasting impact on her life and work. She grew up during Reconstruction and faced the challenges of the post-war South where African Americans were struggling for equality and dealing with the rise of Jim Crow laws. Wells became a teacher at the age of 16 after both her parents and her youngest sibling died in the yellow fever epidemic of 1878. This tragedy thrust her into the role of caretaker for her remaining five siblings. To prevent the family from being split up, she lied about her age to secure a job as a teacher. She split her time between working and attending Rust College, which was partly founded by her father. This early experience of responsibility and her determination to keep her family together foreshadowed her lifelong commitment to justice and activism. In 1884, Wells filed a lawsuit against a train car company in Memphis for unfair treatment, after she was forcibly removed from her seat for refusing to move to a segregated car. Her resistance predated Rosa Parks' similar act of defiance by 71 years. Wells won the case at the local level, gaining widespread black community support, but the decision was overturned by the Tennessee Supreme Court. This incident and the court's decision fueled Wells' resolve to fight against racial injustice and led her to journalism as a means of speaking out. Ida B. Wells became a co-owner and editor of 'The Memphis Free Speech and Headlight' newspaper. In her writings, she was a fearless advocate against lynching, using her investigative journalism skills to expose the lies and justifications that were often used to support the practice. Her anti-lynching crusade began in earnest after the lynching of three of her friends in 1892, which she believed was due to their economic success that challenged white supremacy. Her articles were incendiary, leading to her being threatened and her newspaper office being destroyed. Wells' anti-lynching campaign took her to England on two speaking tours, in 1893 and 1894, where she worked to raise awareness and garner international support against the practice. Her efforts were instrumental in the formation of the British Anti-Lynching Committee. The international pressure and embarrassment she brought to the United States played a significant role in drawing attention to the country's racial violence and the need for anti-lynching legislation. In 1895, Ida B. Wells married Ferdinand L. Barnett, a widower with two sons, and had four children of her own. Despite the norms of the time, she continued her activism and journalism after marriage and motherhood, even hyphenating her name to Wells-Barnett, which was unusual for the time. Her husband supported her work, and together they formed a powerful partnership in the fight for civil rights. She balanced her personal and professional life, demonstrating that women could be both mothers and activists. Wells was one of the founding members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. However, her name was not initially included in the list of founders, possibly due to gender and ideological conflicts. Despite this, she was a crucial figure in the organization's early years, working tirelessly to advance the rights of African Americans. Her role in the NAACP, although sometimes under-recognized, was pivotal in shaping the civil rights movement. Apart from her anti-lynching campaign, Wells was also a passionate advocate for women's rights, particularly suffrage. She founded the Alpha Suffrage Club among African American women in Chicago, one of the first and most important black suffrage organizations. When white suffragists asked her to march at the back of the 1913 suffrage parade in Washington, D.C., Wells refused and instead joined the parade in the middle, marching with her state delegation, challenging both racism and sexism. Throughout her life, Ida B. Wells was a prolific writer and used various platforms to disseminate her views. She authored numerous articles, pamphlets, and reports on civil rights and women's issues. One of her most notable works is 'Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases,' which provided a detailed account of lynching in the South and was instrumental in publicizing the extent of the violence. Her writing was a powerful tool in her lifelong battle against injustice. Ida B. Wells passed away on March 25, 1931, at the age of 68. Her legacy endured beyond her lifetime, influencing generations of civil rights activists. In 2020, she was posthumously awarded the Pulitzer Prize special citation for her outstanding and courageous reporting on the horrific and vicious violence against African Americans during the era of lynching. The Pulitzer Board recognized her as a trailblazer for civil rights and women's empowerment, solidifying her place in history as a pioneering journalist and activist.