

6-21-1905

Secrets Along the Niagara; The Underground Railroad in Western New York; 1999

Young Yonkers Club of Eggert Elementary

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/ur-research>

Recommended Citation

"Secrets Along the Niagara; The Underground Railroad in Western New York; 1999." Batchelor, Lillion | Buffalo Quarters Historical Society Papers. Digital Collections. Monroe Fordham Regional History Center, Archives & Special Collections Department, E. H. Butler Library, SUNY Buffalo State.

<http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/ur-research/29>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Buffalo Quarters Historical Society Papers | Batchelor, Lillion at Digital Commons at Buffalo State. It has been accepted for inclusion in Underground Railroad Research by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at Buffalo State. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@buffalostate.edu.

Dear
Lilliane,
Thanks for history
making this for the next
generation! What an inspiring
Rachelle
Frances

Secrets Along the Niagara: The Underground Railroad in Western New York

by the Young Yorkers Club
of Eggert Elementary
1999

**Written & Illustrated by the
Young Yorkers Club of Eggert Elementary
Orchard Park, New York**

**Alex Besecker
Jessy Buczkowski
Alice Buskus
Kaveh Farahmand
Melissa Ford
James Gibson
Amy Klosowski
Carolyn Randle
Kellianne Roessler
Caitlin Schmitt
Larry Seivert
Stacey Sisson
Johnny Sisti
Brent Solina
Cullen Wear**

**© May, 1999, Eggert Young Yorkers Club
Advisor and Editor, Rachelle Moyer Francis**

Foreword

Western New York in the 1800s was a key gateway from New York City and the Erie Canal to the growing Western Frontier. From the 1830s to 1865, our Niagara Frontier was also another kind of special and secret gateway for those who sought escape from the "peculiar institution" of slavery. Buffalo and Niagara Falls were the last stops, the mighty Niagara River the last boundary to the freedom promised in Canada. Many enslaved blacks traveled along a unique transportation system called the Underground Railroad (UGRR).

Old stories suggest that the UGRR got its name in 1833 when a slave escaped mysteriously across the Ohio River. The slave's owner was confused about his disappearance and said that the slave "must've escaped on some kind of underground road."

It was like magic. People of every race worked together in this cause for justice and against slavery. Buffalo's leader in the UGRR awareness movement, Kevin Cottrell, calls it "the country's first multi-cultural humanitarian effort." Learning about it not only teaches a key era in Western New York history; it also teaches the values of courage, cooperation, faith, and the triumph of good over evil. Buffalo's own Art Eve sponsored the bill in Albany which now mandates that New York State schools teach the history of the Underground Railroad.


Our Young Yorkers have been on a year-long quest to learn as much as possible about the UGRR in Western New York, partly because we live in a community founded by the Quakers. Their beliefs put

them in the middle of this law-breaking movement. We also were intrigued

with the adventure and mystery of secret rooms and hushed midnight rides. The challenge in researching these stories has been that almost nothing was put into writing at the time, because everyone involved would have been arrested.

We did learn that many hold incorrect ideas about the UGRR. First, underground meant "illegal, secret," not tunnels! There were very few tunnels. The engineering involved would have been daunting in those days. Secret rooms in basements, barns and attics served well to hide runaways. Second, it was not a railroad—just a network of homes and people who would help. Railroads were spreading all over America, especially the North; in those days. So this popular new iron-railed transportation network gave its name to the secret one.

Escaped slaves were usually single young men. Experts say that family flights were rare because of the risks and dangers all along the way; travel was mostly by foot for weeks and weeks. Most of those who traveled our UGRR routes were from "up South" (North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland) who came North to Pennsylvania or Ohio and then to New York and freedom. The travelers came through year-round, walking at night, following the Big Dipper to find North.

Whatever the details, the UGRR was a splendid example of rare courage and conscience, of people showing kindness to strangers in need. —RMF 

"The truth is, liberty and slavery cannot, both, live long in juxtaposition. They are antagonist elements, and when roused into strife, know neither truce nor reconciliation. They have met, fiercely disputing each other's reign."

--James Birney, editor of The Philanthropist, 1836,
an Ohio abolitionist newspaper

To learn to be historians and interviewers, we chose an elder to interview about the past. This first chapter is the result of those conversations.

***“Each life has a story to tell—
if only someone would ask,
if only someone would listen.”***

CHAPTER ONE

Interviewing Our Elders

My Grandpa

by Caitlin Schmitt

My grandpa's full name is Robert Mathias Schmitt. My grandpa has moved five times within this country.

He is part of a religious group; he is Catholic since he was born.



My grandpa votes regularly. He is not happy with our America economic system. He is a dedicated mem-

ber of a political party; he is a Republican.

My grandpa has been in three wars. He has been in World War II, the Korean War and Viet Nam. He was not changed in any way as a result of this war.

My grandpa has been in bowling throughout his life.

Back then my grandpa had the first radio that has been out. You would have to put ear phones on your head to hear. The technology has changed a lot!

Georgette Cunha Plukas

by Alexandra Besecker

Georgette's full name is Georgette Marie Therese Saint Denis Cunha Plukas. She was born on August 2, 1929 at her home. She lived in Lachute, Quebec, Canada. She came to the United States in 1955 to learn better English.

Georgette's favorite thing to do was read and play piano. She liked to do that the most because she had a sickness called rheumatic fever and could not walk. Her favorite pets were a dog and a horse.

The president who captured her attention the most was Clinton because he is intelligent and is always getting into trouble.

Organizations that she has participated in during her life are the Garden Club Federation of New York State, the Women's Educational and Industrial Union and the Art Museum and Science Museum in Rochester, to name a few.

Georgette went to boarding school at age six. She had nuns as teachers. Georgette could only come home on holidays because there were slow cars and it was a long trip. She went to four years of college at DeSillery, Quebec.

She met the first person she married through friends. His name was Harold Cunha. They met in New York

City. They dated for one year by going to museums and dancing.

She met my grandpa at the Atheneum, a program for people over 55 years old, at RIT in Rochester, NY. With my grandfather, they had a regular courtship of going out to dinner, to theaters and other activities. They were married on June 13th, 1998. All 17

grandchildren (14 on our side, 3 on Georgette's side) got to be in the wedding. It was a fun day.

In Georgette's lifetime, she feels computers are an important invention because they reach all over the world and are very enriching. Another great thing during her lifetime was watching the first man on the moon. She thinks it was fantastic and still is.

Georgette did not raise her children the same way she was raised because she changed countries and the times were different. She raised her children in a more family setting instead of sending them to a boarding school.



When she was growing up, she lived in a private home that was very large. The home needed to be large because she had a father, mother, a maid and ten other siblings in the house. Her father's job was being a builder.

The highlight of her life was coming to the United States. Having her two children, Christine and Paul, was also very important to her. She also said meeting my grandfather was a highlight.

The major problem in her life was getting over rheumatic fever. She learned from this that you have to accept sickness as gracefully as you can because you can't escape it.

Georgette's dream for her life is to be accomplished at one thing. She would like that one thing to be painting.

I hope Georgette gets to be a painter someday and I'm glad she is part of our family. ■

Stacey's Papa, Vern Sisson

by Stacey Sisson

I grew up on a farm, a rural quarter mile from any neighbors. We had many animals on our farm.

For World War II, everything was rationed. We needed coupons for sugar and flour. I remember turning in license plates so that we could get ice

cream cones. The metal from the license plates was used for making war machinery. We collected milkweed pods to be used for parachutes. Great Grandma went to the "Look Out Station" to look for bomber planes.

I was drafted, but failed my physical. Then I was drafted again and still failed the physical, due to a bad disc in my back.

Life was not much different for young boys and girls, as they both had to help on the farms where we grew up. Kids helped their parents to stock shelves, feed cattle, and had to help milk the cows.

Dwight D. Eisenhower did a lot of good things for our country. He served as a general in the Army and also was the president. During his presidency, I feel that our country was truly at peace as the other countries really knew that Dwight should be respected because of his military experience.

We got our first TV in 1953. We were able to watch the news on our new toy. We were also able to see John Glenn go to the moon.

President John F. Kennedy was killed in 1963. Everyone remembers what he or she was doing when that event happened. I was plant manager in a milk processing plant in Cohocton, NY. I was working in my office and I couldn't believe that someone could do such a thing. The entire plant came to a screeching halt when the employees



Vern Sisson on the left with his brother

Aunt Mary

by Brent Solina

My name is Mary Sophie Solina Martin. I was born at home, in the city of Lackawanna, New York, on August 9, 1923. My father's name was Ivan (John) Solina. My father moved to the United States alone, then he sent for my mother, Barbara. Barbara did not like the United States so she went back to their homeland in Austria/Hungary. My brother, their first child, Ruddy, was born in their homeland. They lived in Austria/Hungary until Ruddy was nine years old, then they both came to

live with my father in the United States.

As a child I lived in Lackawanna on Seal Place. When I turned six, I moved to Abbott Road in Lackawanna. The house was a big farmhouse. I lived there with my mother, father, two brothers and my sister. I miss living there with my family.

Life growing up for me was very nice. One of my earliest childhood memories is singing Christmas carols with my brother and sister. We didn't play any instruments; we just sang.

heard the awful news.

The greatest speech that I have ever heard was the speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream." It took somebody like Martin Luther King to take a stand for the minority groups so that all humans will realize that everyone should be treated equal.

My dad was my special role model because of his kindness to all people, his self-motivation and being a self-made man.

Also we played outside with our friends on the farmland which surrounded our house. There were also some animals on the farms. We would play in the fields behind the house.

One day I was walking and tripped and fell on a rake. I scraped some skin off of my arm. I didn't bother going home. Instead we spit on my arm and put the skin back in place. It wasn't until I took my bath when my mom noticed my arm. We always played outside, even in the winter. However, when we played inside, we played jacks and card games.

I didn't have any relatives so my favorite childhood memory is talking to my parents and listening to them tell fairy tales. I also remember that every Easter, my father brought us a chocolate rabbit and my brother always got the head with the solid chocolate ears and always got the largest piece. The boys were the important part of the family.

My brother and I both had childhood pets. My favorite pet was my cat. Her name was Squeaky. My brother's favorite pet was a chicken. The chicken was born crippled. So we put it in a box and brought it into the house. The box was placed next to the stove so the chicken would be warm. The chicken ate table scraps. The chicken got nice and plump. It spent the rest of her life in that box because she couldn't move.

Most of my values came from inside my family. My family taught me to work hard, to get along with other people and to be a good person. We all talked to each other and did not fight. We stuck up for each other.

I have lived through many hard and difficult times for the United States. I experienced the needs of the Depression and the hatred of World War II. I also felt the confusion of the Korean War and the Vietnam War. I also remember the Persian Gulf War. World War II affected my life the most. My brother and friends served in the war and I was married to Nicholas Martin during this time.

The technology that greatly affected people is the television. The television has allowed people to learn about people in other countries and health issues. Television has greatly affected the way we live.

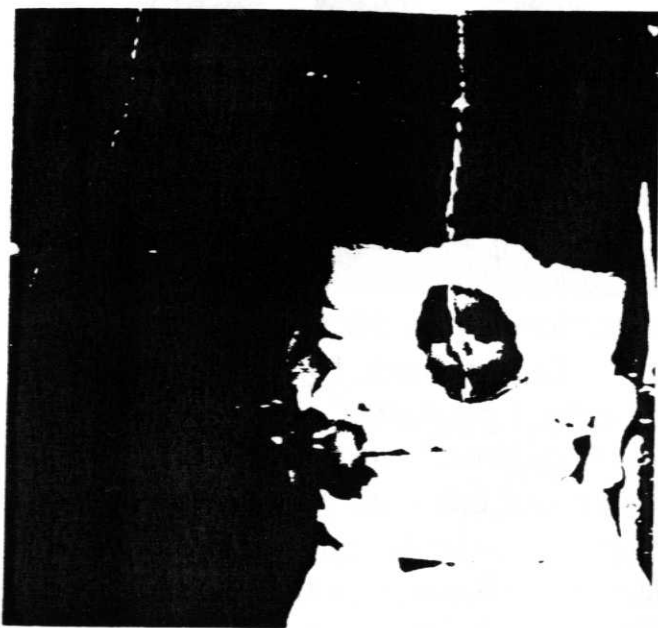
Thinking back, I was a good daughter. I got married and had two lovely children. I took care of my mother and father and had a happy marriage. Today I live behind the old family farmhouse, on a street named Firestone. My husband is recently gone, and my daughter Barbara (who is named for my mother) lives with me. The fields where I used to play are now all houses, but I have many warm memories of my childhood. ■



My Grandma Colarusso

by Melissa Ford

My grandma's full name is Geraldine Agnes Hill Colarusso. She was named after her Aunt Agnes Rose Dienzer. Geraldine was born on November 26, 1925. She was born in Deaconess Hospital in Buffalo, New York. My grandma's mother was German and her father was English. Her family always lived in the Buffalo area.



The name Colarusso means "neck red" ("red neck"). My Aunt Mary Ann found out what Colarusso meant when she was at an Italian store. Then when he saw her credit card, he said, "Oh, red neck."

"What?" said Mary Ann.

"Your name, 'Colarusso.' It

means 'red neck.'" That is how we found out what Colarusso means.

Geraldine's first home when she was little was in Buffalo, New York. What she misses now is the horses' hooves clabbering against the streets. She would hear them when they would deliver baked goods early in the morning. She also missed her grandmother's iron stove because she could burn coal or wood in it.

My grandmother remembers her big sandbox that she played in for hours. It sat in the back of her house. She also remembers going to the store and buying candy for only one penny. She used to go to the ice cream parlor with her brother, mother and her father. They all loved going to the ice cream parlor.

My grandma Colarusso also loved to draw and loved paper dolls. She still does. When she was little, she had many sets of paper dolls. Her most favorite toy was an electric dollhouse.

My grandfather went through college to be a dentist. He went to the University of Buffalo (UB). He also went to Columbia University in New York. My grandmother graduated from State Teachers College.

My grandfather was in the Second World War and my great-grandfather Telford Hill was in the First World War. Also my great-grandfather's brother, Mr. Roth, was in the Civil War.

MaryAnne Swiecicki, My Grandmother

by Kellianne Roessler

MaryAnne Barsukiewicz, named after her aunt, was born June 14, 1940, in Buffalo, NY. Her parents, Frances Barsukiewicz and Anna Lewandowski were Russian-Ukrainian and Polish. They lived in a Polish community on the east side of Buffalo, near the Broadway Market. This was a safe, close-knit community where everyone watched out for each other. MaryAnne liked the feeling of being safe, and being surrounded by people of the same ethnic and religious background.

MaryAnne is the middle child out of five--two older sisters and two twin brothers who are younger than she is. Her father was a baker and her mother sometimes worked part-time jobs to help pay the bills. This meant sometimes MaryAnne would have to help care for the twins.

As a child, MaryAnne liked listening to radio shows, since they didn't have a television. Her favorites were The Shadow and Amos and Andy. She also liked to jump rope and play with her homemade corn husk dolls. In grammar school, she took sewing lessons and was a crossing guard. She was very interested in art and still is.

MaryAnne's father's parents were the first in the family to settle in Buffalo. They lived in the area now known as the Fruit Belt (because all of the streets are named after fruit). Her grandfather was a blacksmith. When he came to this country, he had no last name. When he arrived at Ellis Island and registered, he was given the name "Barsukiewicz." "--iewicz" means "of the" and "Barsuk" represented the place he was born. MaryAnne was told it was the Island of Borsuk in Russia.

Her parents were religious (Catholic) and they always lived in a double when she was younger. A double is a house that has two apartments in it. Usually a relative lived above or below their apartment. She remembers the house was always decorated with religious paintings and pictures when she was growing up. Although religion didn't play a major part in her life, one of her twin brothers became a priest in the 1960s.

MaryAnne has lived in Buffalo her entire life. She has moved eight times, each time to a safer, more convenient place. She feels she is in the middle class right now; but when she was growing up, the family was very poor, probably lower class. After she got married, there was still a struggle to make ends meet and to feed her five children. She said that every time she was going to have a baby, her husband Eugene would get laid off from his job

at the steel plant.

Now she is working as a residents' assistant at a senior citizens' housing complex. She helps elderly residents with everyday things. She likes her job because it makes her feel like she is making a difference in people's lives. She used to work for the U.S. government--she was a mail handler at the postal service for thirteen years.

When asked about her favorite president, MaryAnne said John F. Kennedy really captured her attention because he was young, and he had fresh young ideas that seemed to draw the whole country to him.

MaryAnne lived during World War II. She had an Uncle Frank who served in World War II overseas. She remembers hearing a story when she was little, about how one night, Uncle Frank woke up and left the barracks he was sleeping in. Just then it was hit by a bomb and all of his friends were killed. He was the only survivor. When

he came home after the war, he would have flashbacks, especially during thunderstorms or during fireworks on the 4th of July. He would freak out and go under the table to hide. MaryAnne thought no human being should have to go through that.

She also remembers having drills in school, where the children would

have to go under their desks when the siren went off. The teachers were showing the students how to act if a bomb was dropped on the city. It was very scary.

MaryAnne feels that America has changed from

all wars fought. War has made the country stronger, but at the same time war has ruined many lives and destroyed many families.

MaryAnne has a tenth grade education. She quit school to get married, so that financially things would be easier for her parents without her.

She married Eugene by accident. The tavern his family owned for forty



years, Swiecicki's Tavern, was near the Central Terminal. MaryAnne used to walk past there every day on the way home from school. One day while passing by, she thought she saw a boy she knew inside the tavern, so she waved. Well, out came Eugene instead, and the rest is history.

They enjoyed going to dances at the Delaware Park Casino and the Glen Park Casino. But they especially liked the Grand Ballroom at Crystal Beach. After they were married, they lived above the tavern for a few years until they could afford their own place.

MaryAnne's role as a wife changed when her husband Eugene had a major stroke at the age of 46. She was suddenly the head of the household, in charge of everything. It was a very devastating time for her.

For the most part, MaryAnne raised her children the same way she was raised, but not as strict. She said her father used *the belt* to teach the children right from wrong. Values came from within the family, but also from the neighbors, possibly the Polish culture itself. Her parents taught her honesty and hard work. She feels the source of today's values comes too much from the television set and not enough from the parents.

The highlight of MaryAnne's life was having children, and then grandchildren. It is special to her to see family traits in her grandchildren as they

grow up. She feels the theme to our family tree would have to be *creativity*. So many family members are painters, photographers, crafters, dancers and musically inclined.

Finally, MaryAnne's dream is to travel. She especially wants to visit Egypt. Of course, she would also love to win the lottery! ■

Gilbert Bill Geissler

by Cullen S. Wear

I interviewed my grandfather for this report and would like to tell you a little bit about his life and his ancestors.

He was born May 16th, 1926, in Harrah, Oklahoma. Harrah is a small farm town in Oklahoma County.

He lived in a small farmhouse that had no electricity or running water! His home, a five bedroom farmhouse, was *six miles* from the town on a dirt road. He hardly had anything like what we have today--refrigerators, computers, cars and even phones. He lived in the farmhouse with eight brothers and sisters and his parents.

To my grandfather the farm was very good, quiet and just something he could enjoy. One of his earliest memories in childhood was seeing all the dust that accumulated in the house because of all the dust that blew into the house. You see, he lived in the Dust

Bowl.

When he was on the farm he loved to play with the family, meet for ball games, to have family picnics, and to hunt with the wolfhounds.

The first of his ancestors ever to come over to America was Max Geissler. Gilbert thinks Max came over for a better way of life. Max first arrived in Texas in 1882, and probably with only clothing to put on his back. Max probably then made his living by farming.

My grandfather has moved 17 times. He kept on moving place to place because of the Navy. He thinks that the farms, towns, cities and suburbs he was in were average size. He thinks the most supportive of a humane life was farm life.

He used to be a Lutheran, which is the name of a group of religious people. He thinks he was in that group of religious people because of family.

He thinks that he is about a middle class person. Gilbert thinks he is better off both economically and socially than his parents.

My grandfather votes every four years. The president who most captured his attention was FDR because Gilbert says he knew what he was doing.



My grandfather went through World War II. In that war he had a piece of shrapnel fly into his leg. This happened while he was on an LCI (a small troop landing boat), watching the Battle of Iwo Jima. He actually saw them raise the flag on Mt. Serabachi. He says he wasn't changed in any way by the war though.

He had twelve years in school and Mrs. Fardice was his favorite teacher. She was a good teacher. He has been able to obtain the knowledge he needed, but he says that age is taking it away.

He fell in love with Rita through a friend. Later wars took him away from family. His role as husband has only changed by age. He says everything else doesn't matter.

He thinks that his family wasn't

affected very much by the Great Depression since they lived on a farm and sold produce. He was too young to notice any real difference.

In his life he has accomplished 21 years in the Navy, becoming a chief petty officer. These years gave him the chance to travel to major seaports. He is still working on a successful marriage. ■

Joan M. Angelli

by Amy Klosowski

My grandmother was named after her mother. Her last name means "angel" in Italian. She was born on July 23, 1931, in a hospital in Buffalo, New York. She is half Irish and half German. In her spare time she likes to read books; when she was a child she was a girl who liked to read books a lot.

The game she liked to play was a game that she called "Clap Ball." You would throw the ball into the air and clap your hands. She would also play Hide and Seek with her sisters and friends. She didn't play an instrument. She had a dog named Judy and she had a favorite doll named "Tee-Tee."

The Irish were the first people to settle in America; they came here because of the economy. She moved eight times in her life. She doesn't

know why she moved; she said she would move one more time and it would be to a townhouse.

She is a member of the Roman Catholic church. She thinks that she was lower middle class. She moved up to upper middle class.

She does all different things in her life. She isn't happy about the American economic system; she also votes regularly. She is not a part of a political party. Her favorite president was FDR, because he got them out of the Great Depression.



She finished twelfth grade; she liked her teacher because she was nice and beautiful. She always did what she was supposed to do.

Her friend fixed her up with her husband. They liked to go see movies. Her boyfriend was in the Korean War.

Family and God are important to

her. Her kids were the highlight of her life; they are very special to her. Her major accomplishments were raising her kids.

She would like to travel all over the world. Her dream is to win the lotto. ■

My Aunt Betsy

by Carolyn Randle

I am interviewing my Great Aunt Betsy! Her full name is Betsy Berdena Skinner. She was named after her two grandmothers—Betsy Haight when she was married to a Skinner and Berdena Fay Foller. She was born at home in Portland, New York, USA, an American citizen.

She went to a little red school-house number 8. She remembers her uncle took her to the school. Her favorite teacher was the one from the little red school house. Her name was Mrs. Ruth MacSadden.

She went to a Methodist church and she knew all the people because they were all cousins.

Christmas was fun for her because on Christmas Eve she would be going to one side of the family and

Christmas they would spend with the other side. She played piano when she was ten. Her teacher was her aunt. One year her aunt got her a doll, a beautiful doll, and she left her outside in the carriage when it started to rain.

The first person in the family to come over to the USA was a boy named John, the doctor's nephew.

She remembers reading a book about the war and she was a naval recruit in World War II. She voted regularly and she was on the Board of Elections.

Her favorite president was President Franklin Roosevelt because of his good soul.

When she was 13 during the Great Depression the train used to stop to get more coal. The hobos used to walk up to her farm and ask her mom for food and her mom always had a job for them. She used to read about people killing themselves.

Her biggest accomplishment is having three kids and marrying Uncle Art and taking care of her family. She met Uncle Art at a naval training center in San Diego, California.

She is a member of the Women's Fellowship. I love my Aunt Betsy and cannot wait to learn more.



CHAPTER TWO

Slavery in America

Africa to America

by Cullen Wear

If you think that the blacks who were shipped to America on slave boats had fun running around the boat playing games, you are wrong. Really it was a brutal experience. We will never really know how frightening it was for the slaves, unless we relive the lives of the slaves. So let me tell you a story about a young boy named Olaudah who was captured by the English for the slave trade. The year is 1673 and the location is a place called Whydah on the Gulf of Guinea on the West Coast of Africa.

It was late at night when I was awakened by the sound of clanking armor. Before I

could get up I was grabbed by a large figure and carried away. When my eyes adjusted to the darkness, I could make out a white man.

I could hear yelling from other members of my tribe. It was terrifying to hear people running for their lives. Not many escaped. We were then chained together to begin a forced march. The white men gave us little to eat and not nearly as much water as we needed. After a day one of the blacks fell over and the English unleashed him. He was left to die and be eaten by the animals. No one knew where we were being taken, but even the

youngest of us tried to be brave.

We walked for many days until we reached a ship. By this time we were all very weak and tired. Before we

Some little known facts about early slavery in America

- ◆ Spain and Portugal began slave trade in the 1400s.
- ◆ Columbus had six slaves with him on his voyages to the New World
- ◆ Jamaica was used as a "seasoning" port. The slaves were used to harvest sugar cane.
- ◆ South Carolina was the "Ellis Island of the South" for slaves.
- ◆ Slave ships often had ironic names such as *St. John the Baptist*, *Justice* and *Integrity*.
- ◆ Only 1/4 of the captives survived the trip, due to malnutrition, overcrowding, suicide, and beatings.

were moved to the ship we had to face another trial. Everyone was looked over by another white man. He looked inside my mouth and he made me jump up and down and run around in circles. The sick and disabled were left behind, but the healthy were taken to the ship. We knew that those left behind were going to die and would most likely be eaten by animals too.

On the ship there were almost 500 slaves packed down in the hold, chained together at the hands and ankles. It was very dim and it was hard to breathe. There were small holes high on each side of the hold that let in fresh air. Still people would suffocate and when it rained the holes were closed all together and it was even worse.

Each man was given a width of about 16 inches. Women and children were given even less room. I got a total of about 14 inches. We were all crammed in shoulder to shoulder with

NEGRO WOMAN'S LAMENTATION.



SOLD BY HOWARD AND EVANS,
(Printers to the Cheap Repository for Moral and Religious
Tracts,) No. 41 and 42, Long-Lane, West-Smithfield, and
J. HATCHARD, No. 190, Piccadilly, London.

*From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room
of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library*

little room to sit up in.

After a while, things got even worse. Supplies were running low and we were given less and less to eat. Our food was served in buckets the size of a small water pail. Ten of us huddled around the pail with our small wooden spoons. Those who lost their spoons had to eat with their fingers. Finally we got our one cup of water. We were supplied with one pint of water a day, but not enough to make up for all the sweat that we gave off.

Some people tried to starve themselves to death. Those who did

were whipped and then told to eat. If they did not follow those orders they would have their mouths opened by a man and then food was forced down a funnel into the slave's mouth.

When the weather was nice we were moved up onto the deck. It was a relief to breathe the fresh air without coughing or wheezing. There was one problem, then you got seasick faster. At times we witnessed people jumping off the boat.

By now just about everyone was sick or on the verge of dying. My skin was rubbing off from the splinters from the floor. Disease was very common and even the captain got a fever. That was the rumor.

Every day was a day not worth living for. It was frightening, boring and disgusting all at the same time. I was always restless in the hold. I often thought of family and what would happen to them if they ever got captured. I had no one in my family there and I felt alone. For sure I would never see my parents again.

After about twelve weeks our number of 500 turned into a mere 257. Those of us who were still alive couldn't communicate with each other because we were from different tribes and spoke different languages. The one thing we most experienced and understood was the human misery.

The white men treated us like cattle. They had no hearts whatsoever.

It seemed like the crew and Captain could walk over dead bodies and think nothing of it.

One day I heard a horn blow and the ship stopped. I knew that if I got off the boat I would be sold to a white man and become a slave, but that was my destiny to become a slave and live the rest of my life on a plantation.

I was brought down a long dock and sold to an old man who treated me like family over time and I lived fairly happily, but I have always wished they had never found me. ■

The Evils of Slavery

by Kellianne Roessler

Slavery in America started in the year 1626. The Americans wanted Africans to be shipped from Africa to the U.S. as slaves.

The slave ships were actually crate ships. The slaves were chained together, and stacked *five bodies* high! There were no restrooms on the ship for the slaves to use, so they had to lay in each other's and their own waste. After these horrible voyages, only about half of the slaves were still alive.

The slaves were treated very poorly in America, and were given only so much to eat. They were whipped when they disobeyed, and had to sleep in guarded "slave quarters" as the whites called them. The "slave



THE BRANDED HAND.

Above we give an exact representation of the *brand*, which was burnt with a hot iron, by an officer of the United States, in the living flesh of a citizen of Massachusetts. Ponder it, fellow-citizens, and as you burn, and blush, and weep, at the disgrace of our country, the indignity done to a worthy neighbor, and the misery of the poor slaves, let the fire burn until your soul is enkindled, to the high resolve, that the letters on Jonathan Walker's hand shall be made to read—

SALVATION TO THE SLAVE.

*From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room
of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library*

quarters" were tiny 10' by 5' shacks that three slave families were ordered to sleep in.

In Africa, families dreaded the day that they were to be split up and shipped to the U.S. as slaves. Children as young as one year old were separated from their parents at slave auctions. Slave auctions were where people would offer money for the African Americans, and the best bidder would take them home and become their owner by law. Then the slaves were to do whatever their master told them to.

After the slaves were sold, they were now slaves by law. They were

not allowed to leave their master's property without a pass, gather in groups of more than five, practice medicine, own guns, raise animals, testify against whites, and they could only preach if whites were there to listen. They would be

lynched if any white accused them of acting against them. Blacks were only allowed to go to school in Maryland, Kentucky and Washington, D.C.

Slavery has stopped, and so few people believe in it today. ■

"I have a dream! That my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character! I have a dream today!" —Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963, at the Washington Monument



Uncle Tom's Cabin and Harriet Beecher Stowe

by Jessica Buczkowski

Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote a book called Uncle Tom's Cabin. I have a copy of the book and it said it was published in 1852. It was a huge best-seller when it first was printed.

"Hattie" (her nickname) had big wonderful blue eyes. She was the youngest child in her family. There were four adults and eight children. Hattie Beecher Stowe lived in a white house on a tree-shaded road in Litchfield, Connecticut.

In 1853 Harriet Beecher Stowe met President Lincoln, and he said, "So this is the little lady who made this great war." ■

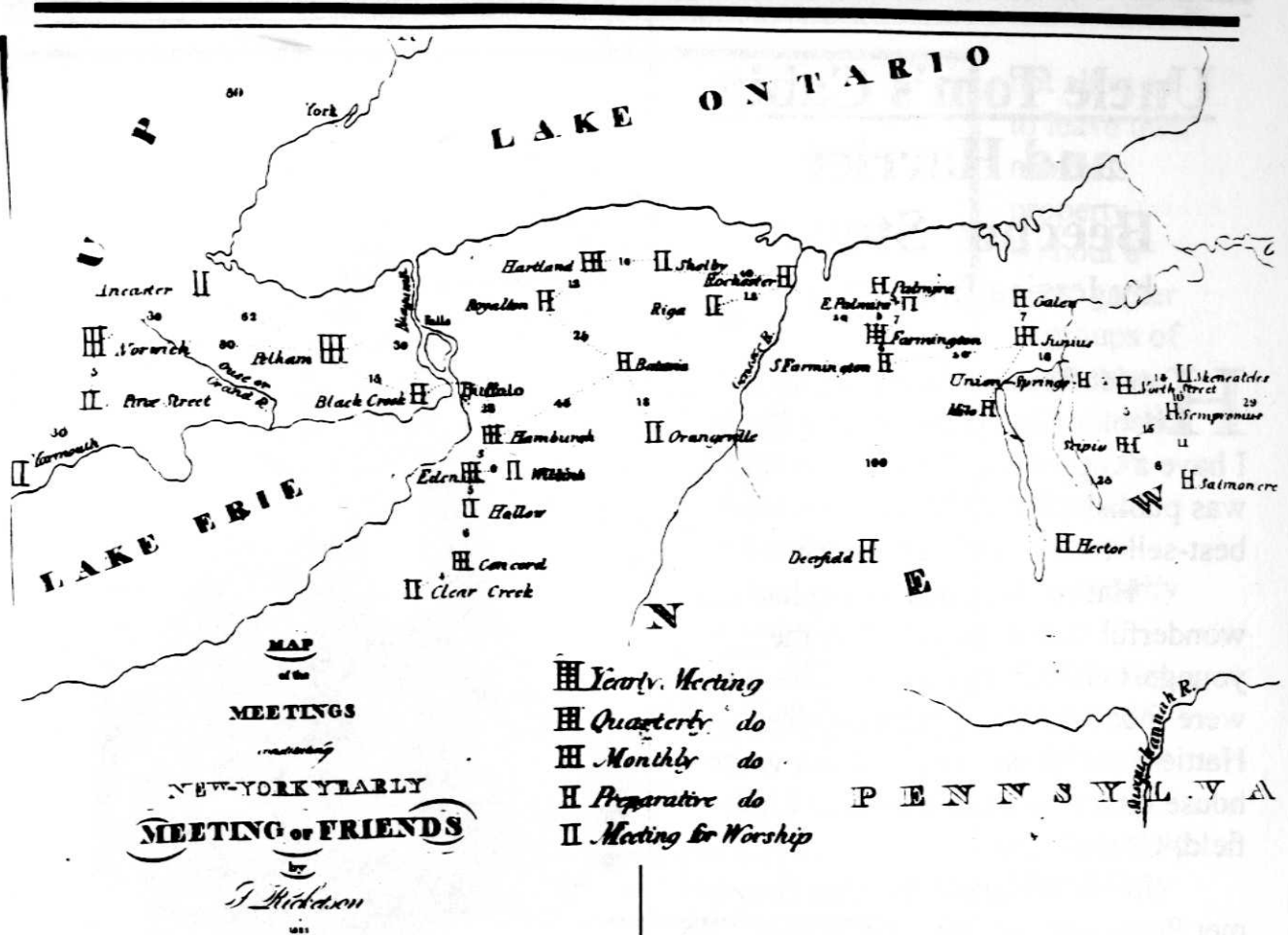
Editor's Note: Josiah Henson was said to be the real "Uncle Tom" of Stowe's famous book. He, his wife and four children are rumored to have crossed to freedom in Buffalo around 1830. They had escaped from Maryland to Ripley, Ohio ("Freedom Town, USA"), then to Buffalo and Canada. The family settled in a colony near Dresden, Ontario and Josiah lived to be 94. He returned to the South several times and reportedly led 118 slaves to freedom.



Quakers

by Brent Solina

The Quakers are a religious group formed during the 17th century. They live by simple principles. The Quakers believe that there is no middleman between an individual and God and they believe in the elimination of intermediaries, such as priests and pastors. The Quakers had a strong presence in Western New York, especially Orchard Park.



The Quakers were known as the Society of Friends. They were involved in the abolition of slavery because they believed in the equality of all people. The Quakers believed that all people were created equal and that there was no such thing as owner and slave. This belief led them to be involved in the Underground Railroad.

They would dress male slaves "in the gray gowns and bonnets of the lady Quakers" to help them escape to Canada.

Social work was another area where the Quakers were involved.

Quaker activity in social work became firmly established. They worked among the poor in the areas of education, mental health and prison reform.

There were many people who criticized the Quakers. Vivian Adbur-Rahim said, "The Quakers were progressive thinkers who helped many slaves to freedom. Those progressive Quakers, like Thomas Garrett, started it all," she said, referring to the UGRR. "They were participating in dangerous and illegal trafficking. They were leaders in this cause for freedom." ■

Know all men by these presents that I Thomas
Brooks of the County of Pitt in the State of North
Carolina hath bargained and sold unto
Richard Gist of the County of Beaufort and
State of Virginia as certain Negro Woman named
Fanny and her three children. Elvy, Hannah
& Dinah. Fanny aged about twenty five years.
Elvy four. Hannah two. & Dinah one month.
for and in consideration of the sum of eight
hundred Dollars to me in hand paid by him
for which I the said Thomas Brooks do bind
myself to warrant and defend unto him the
the said Richard Gist his heirs Executors
Administrators and assigns for ever in wit-
ness whereof I do hereunto set my hand and
seal this twenty first day of January - 1812

signed sealed & delivered

in presence of

Wm. H. Smith

Thomas Brooks



In 1812, Thomas Brooks of North Carolina bargained for the \$800 purchase of Fanny, 25, and her three children, 4-year-old Elvy, 2-year-old Hannah, and one-month-old Dinah.

Reprinted with permission from the Collection of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society

Compromise of 1850

The 1840s brought the United States to a very “un-united” state. Slavery was a huge issue, dividing the North and South. A civil war was close to breaking out any day.

Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky tried to calm things down by putting together a compromise—give the North some things they wanted and give the South one point too. For the North:

1) Slave auctions in Washington, D.C. were banned. There had been a slave pen by the new Smithsonian Castle in what is now the Mall.

2) California was let into the USA as a free state. California had quickly become full of “gold-diggers” from the Gold Rush of ‘49. It was the first state to get statehood without first

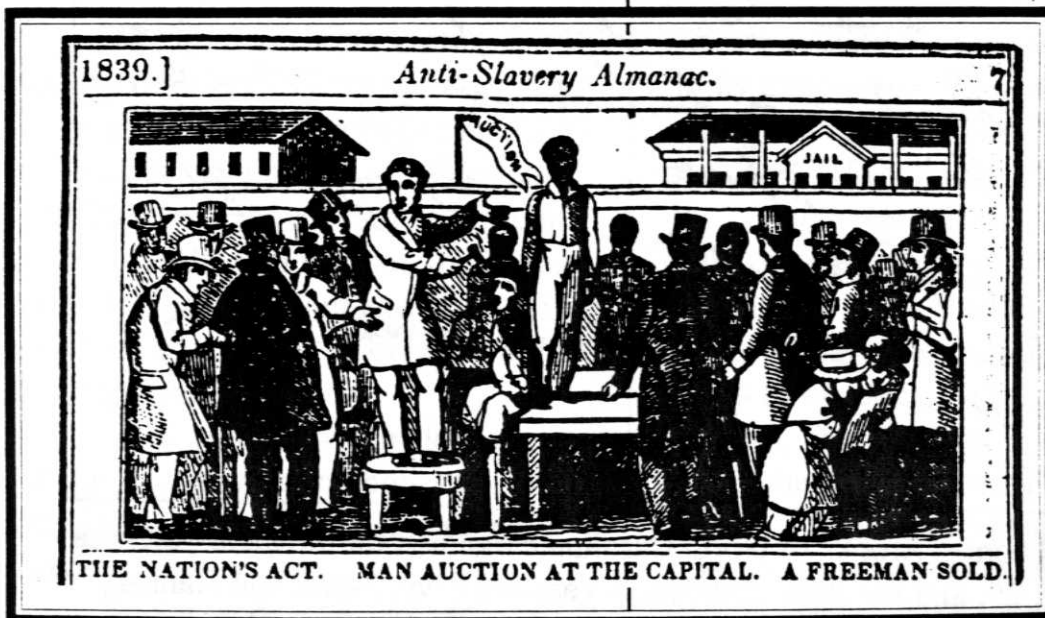
becoming a territory. Both the North and the South badly wanted California on their sides.

3) The territories of New Mexico and Utah could decide if they would be slave or free when they became states.

For the South, there was only one point, but it was a big one!

4) The old Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 was made much stronger. Those who hid runaway slaves could be fined \$1000 and go to jail. Judges were paid to decide if a black was a free black or a runaway—\$10 if it was decided he or she was a runaway, \$5 if he decided the black was freed!

This new law created a new crop of bounty hunters—men who looked for runaways so they could collect the rewards. Now even free blacks could no longer walk about alone at night. It was



possible for free blacks to be kidnapped and thrown into slavery. White people could be deputized on the spot--whether they liked it or not--to help capture possible fleeing slaves.

President Zachary Taylor refused

*From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room
of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library*



A NORTHERN FREEMAN ENSLAVED BY NORTHERN HANDS.

From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

to sign these proposed laws, but he died suddenly in July, 1850. His vice-president, Millard Fillmore, had listened to all the arguments in Congress that put together this Clay Compromise. Fillmore believed it was the only way to keep the country together, so he signed it, even though he hated slavery and knew his Northern friends and neighbors would punish him for his connection to the Fugitive Slave Law.

Once the Compromise of 1850

was law, runaway slaves had to travel all the way to Canada to be safe. It actually had the opposite effect than was intended. Enslaved blacks began to flood North and through gateways like Buffalo and Niagara

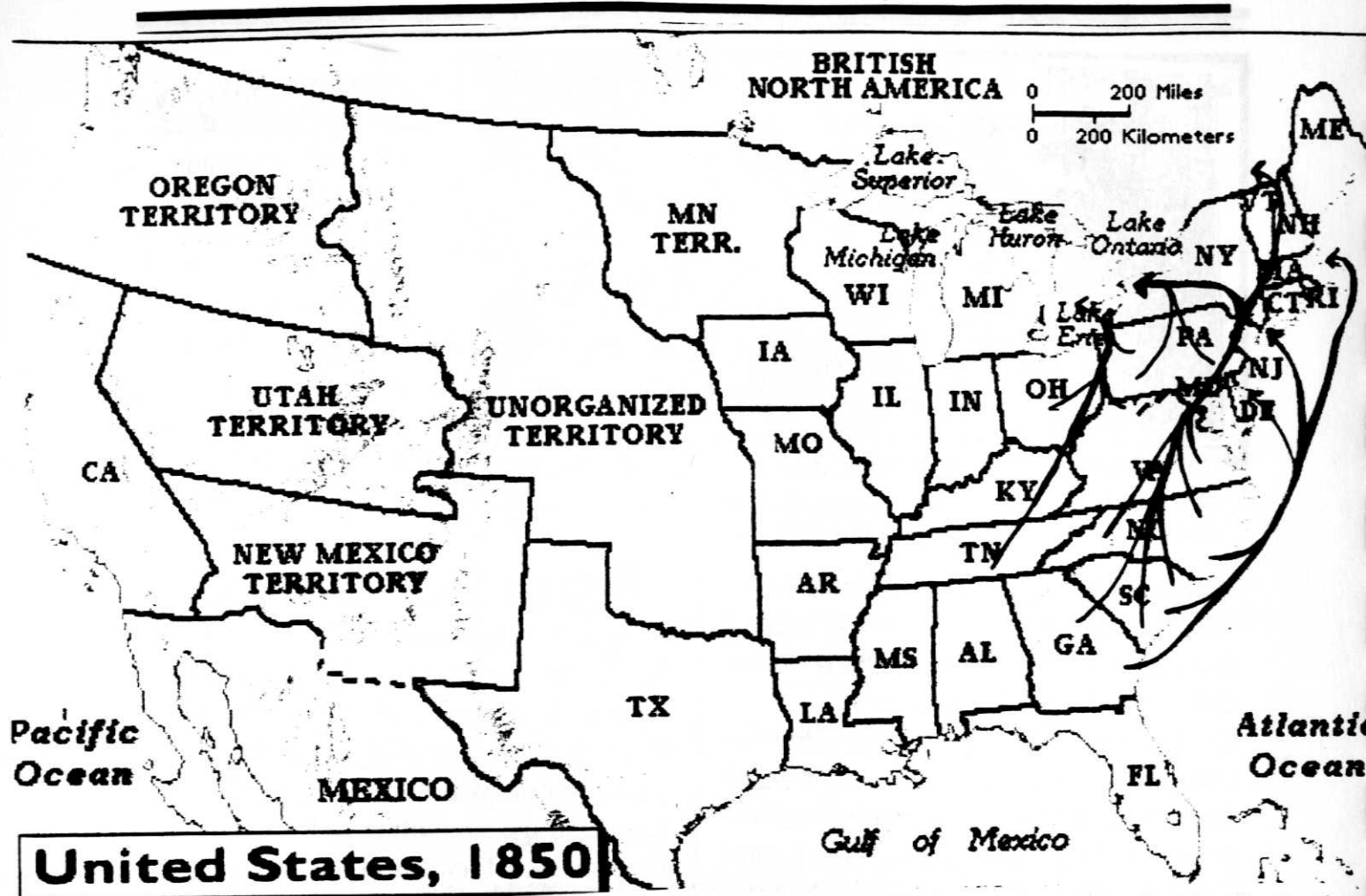
Falls to Canada. ■

Songs as Warnings

Our national love for the uniquely American sound of spirituals was born in the sorrow and shame of slavery. Enslaved blacks sang together to pass the time while working in fields, to encourage each other to have faith in God, to look forward to the next life when things would be better up in Heaven. Sometimes these rhythmic songs were sung just for the fun of it.

But what many overseers never figured out was that these songs were

And be it further enacted, That any person who shall knowingly and willfully obstruct, hinder, or prevent such claimant...from arresting such a fugitive from service or labor, either with or without process as aforesaid, or shall rescue, or attempt to rescue, such fugitive from service or labor, from the custody of such claimant...; or shall harbor or conceal such fugitive, so as to prevent the discovery and arrest of such person, after notice or knowledge of the fact that such person was a fugitive from service or labor as aforesaid, shall, for either of said offences, be subject to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, and imprisonment not exceeding six months...; and shall moreover forfeit and pay, by way of civil damages to the party injured by such illegal conduct, the sum of one thousand dollars for each fugitive so lost as aforesaid, to be recovered by action of debt...." Fugitive Slave Law of 1850



United States, 1850

"East Coast Escape Routes" From Mapmaker's Toolkit by Tom Snyder Productions

also used to pass on information about Underground Railroad escape routes, where to get help, when folks were leaving, or who was in trouble.

"Wade in the Water" gave good advice about how to lose tracking dogs. (Walking in the water erased the enslaved black's scent!)

"Follow the Drinking Gourd" was taught to slaves by Peg Leg Joe. He was an escaped slave with one fake leg who traveled throughout Alabama around 1840 to 1860, helping slaves

escape. His song taught listeners and singers to follow the Big Dipper to find North.

The Biblical River Jordan in the songs such as "Michael, Row Your Boat Ashore" and "O, Wasn't Dat A Wide River?" may have been references to the Ohio River or, at the end of the journey, the Niagara River! ■

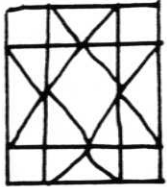
See page ??? of this book for a list of "clue songs" and their words and chords.

Quilts as Clues

by Alex Besecker

Have you ever wondered about the meanings of quilt designs? Now I will tell you some information about them.

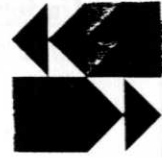
Slaves would make quilts and hang them up in their windows. The quilt designs would help the slaves who were going to freedom. In certain quilt designs there were hidden meanings.



One of them was a design called Evening Stars. It possibly was telling the slaves to follow the North Star to freedom.

Also Drunkard's Path was one of the quilt designs. It told the slaves to travel in zigzag paths to trick slave catchers.

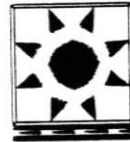
There was also a quilt design named Flying Geese. It meant that just as flocks of geese go north in the spring, so should slaves.



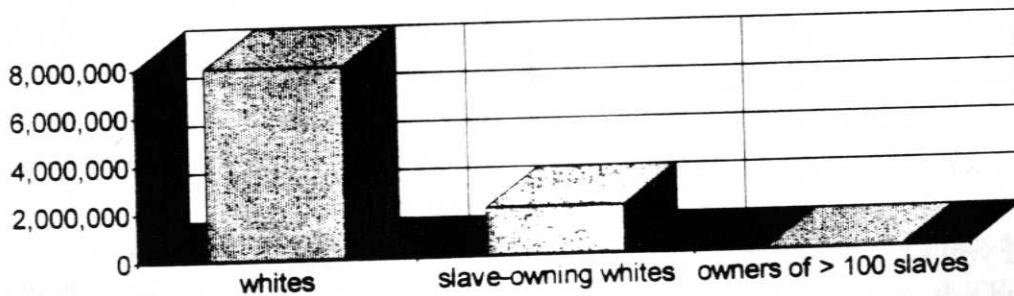
Plus there was one named Wagon Wheel. It meant for slaves to pack for escape, as if preparing for a wagon trip.

With these quilt designs the owner and overseer did not know what the designs meant. The slaves did that for that reason and the slaves had a better chance of getting away before the owner found out. ■

Editor's Note: See Bibliography for literature and activities to develop the quilt connection to the UGRR.



How many Southerners owned slaves?



Of the 8,000,000 white Southerners, only 1/4th of them owned slaves. Less than 3,000 of these whites owned more than 100 slaves.

**What are some other names for the
Underground Railroad?**

The Emancipation Car
The Freedom Line
Freedom Train
The Gospel Train
The Lightning Train
Mysterious Tracks
The Railroad
Railroad Telegraphy
The Trackless Train

Tricks

by James Gibson

Did you know that 28 slaves made a funeral procession, crying and weeping all the way out of town, just to get free? Or that a woman dressed as a white man to get free? She was Ellen Craft, and to hide the fact that she couldn't read or write, she banded up her right arm. Her husband William Craft acted like her slave.

Three slaves who wanted to be free paid a poor white man to act like a Southern gentleman. Then he took the three slaves in a coach up North where they left for freedom.

If a white man grabbed your ear, it meant "follow me to the secret house!" If you saw a hitching post with a slave and a lantern, you knew you were on the Underground Railroad. In Buffalo, one man put himself in jail until the bounty hunter left town! ■

Heroes of the Underground Railroad



Harriet Tubman

by Amy Klosowski

Harriet Tubman was born a slave. She dreamed of being free instead of a slave, but was made to work in a house rocking a baby in its cradle all night. She tried to escape once, but didn't get far at all and was starving, so she returned.

She was sent back to her parents and they told her that to be free, you had to reach Pennsylvania and needed the help of the people who ran the Underground Railroad.

Harriet's family stayed behind while she made her escape. She knew of a white woman who was a stop on the Underground Railroad and who helped Harriet on her way. She traveled by night and finally reached Pennsylvania.

She herself became a "conductor" on the Railroad and returned to lead her family to freedom. "When I found I had crossed, there was such a glory over everything."

Harriet made at least 17 trips to

UGRR Lingo

Definitions

abolitionist = a person who demanded the immediate emancipation of slaves

agents = people who helped the fugitives

brakeman = a person in charge of making contacts for fugitive slaves

conductors = those who led fugitives from one hiding place to another

passenger or baggage = code word for escaping slaves

railways = sometimes roundabout routes

shepherds = people who enticed slaves to escape

stations = places to hide along the way

stationmaster = a person in charge of a hiding place

vigilance committee = abolitionists who wanted to help conceal escaped slaves



lead the way for over 300 slaves. She suggested extending the route into Canada when Pennsylvania decided to return runaway slaves. There was a \$40,000 reward for her capture.

Her motto was "Forwards forever, backwards never." She wore disguises and used her quick thinking to escape capture. She was never caught and she never lost a passenger.

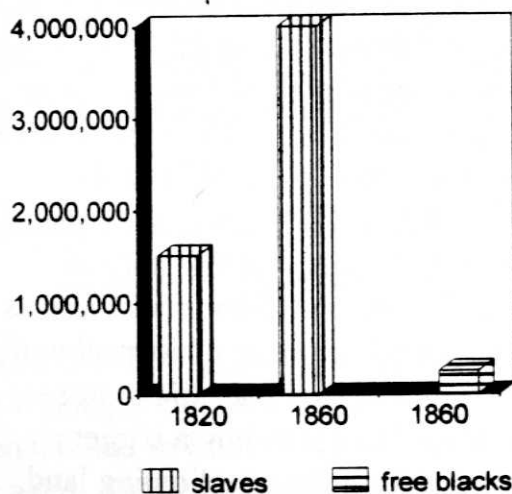
During the Civil War she became a nurse and also was a scout and a spy. After the war Harriet became a symbol of freedom. She died on March 10, 1913, and her friends and relatives gathered to sing "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" in her honor. ■

Editor's Note: Harriet Tubman had been a slave in Bucktown, Maryland, born around 1820. She began life as Araminta Ross and was known to be a stubborn and rebellious child.

In 1844 (at about the age of 24), she married John Tubman, a free black. This marriage did not go well for Harriet. Her husband was later killed by a white man during an argument.

She finally escaped from slavery in 1849 on her own, walking 90 miles to Delaware and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, then to New York and Canada.

The Growth of Slavery in America





Smart & LeFever, Auburn, N.Y.

“I had reasoned this out in my mind, there was one of two things I had a right to—liberty or death. If I could not have one, I could have the other, for no man should take me alive. I shall fight for my liberty and when the time comes for me to go, the Lord will let them kill me.”

Her leadership earned her the title, “Moses of her people.” Tubman freed over 300 slaves, which slave-owners looked at as stealing. She stole \$300,000 worth of human merchan-

dise. It is no wonder they offered a \$40,000 reward for her capture. She was causing a lot of damage!

“Keep going. If you are tired, keep going. If you are scared, keep going. If you are hungry, keep going. If you want to taste freedom, keep going.”

From 1851 to 1858, Harriet lived in St. Catharines, Ontario. In 1857 she finally brought her parents to freedom by saving enough money to buy an old horse and wagon to carry them North. Senator William Seward of Auburn, New York, sold some land in his hometown in the Finger Lakes of New York. Visitors may see her home and view videos about her life by calling Rev. Paul Carter at 315-252-2081 or e-mailing at hthome@locanet.com

Harriet knew and spent time with all the leaders of the Abolitionist movement such as Frederick Douglass, John Brown, and William Lloyd Garrison. In 1860, Harriet called it quits for her role as conductor on the UGRR.

In 1869 (at about 49 years old), Harriet married a black Union soldier named Nelson Davis (25 years old.) He died of tuberculosis in 1888 at 44.

An Auburn teacher, Miss Sarah Bradford, thought that the story of Harriet Tubman’s courageous life was remarkable. She wrote a biography of Tubman’s extraordinary life to raise money for Harriet to buy a bigger house and 26 acres of adjoining land.

100 Dollars REWARD.

RAN AWAY from the subscriber, living near Charlestown, Jefferson County, Va., on Sunday night, the 23d inst., a Negro Man, named

JIM,

About 35 years of age, about 5 feet 6 or 7 inches high, slender made, and of rather a down look when spoken to; no marks recollected. He had on, when he absconded, a drab linsey coat, trowsers and jacket, and a drab linsey or cloth over coat, a black wool hat, and high shoes, double-soled and nailed. Jim is fond of whiskey.

Twenty dollars reward will be given for the apprehension and recovery of said negro in Virginia; \$50 if taken in Maryland; or \$100 if taken in Pennsylvania and secured so that I get him again.

SAMUEL W. GHT.

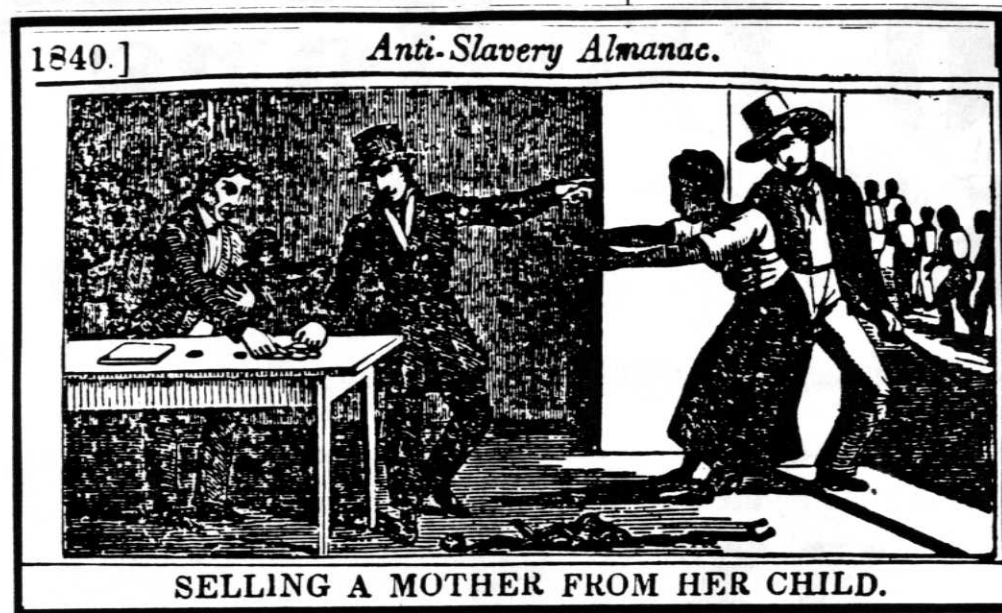
November 25, 1834.

Reprinted with permission from the Collection of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society

In 1903, Tubman gave the buildings she'd bought and 26 acres to the AME Zion Church to be used as a home for the aged. There she died in 1913 at 93

the 50th year of Emancipation! ■





*From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room
of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library*

William Wells Brown

by Stacey Sisson

One of the nation's first black novelists and historians was William Wells Brown. He was born in Lexington, Kentucky in 1816 and grew up in Missouri. After serving as a slave driver, he was hired out to transport slaves to the New Orleans slave market, but managed to escape. Here he describes the punishments he encountered while he was a slave in Missouri.

"My mother was hired out in the city, and I was also hired out there to Major Freeland, who kept a public house. He was formerly from Virginia, and was a horse-racer, cock-fighter, gambler and withal an inveterate

drunkard. There were ten or twelve servants in the house, and when he was present, it was cut and slash—knock down and drag out. In his fits of anger, he would take up a chair, and throw it at a servant;

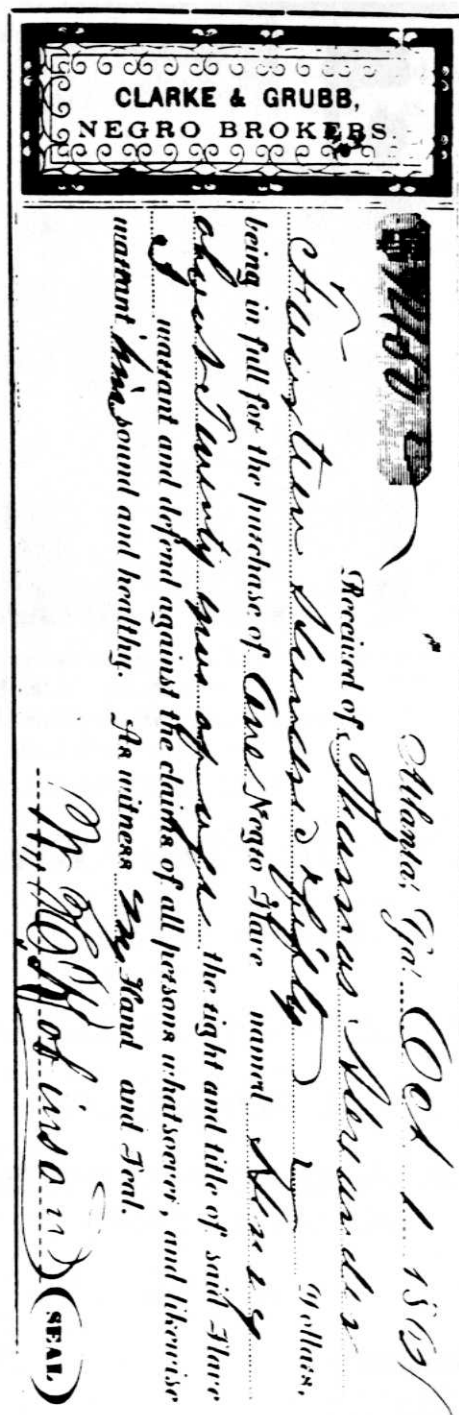
and in his more rational moments, when he wished to chastise one, he would tie them up in the smokehouse, and whip them; after which, he would cause a fire to be made of tobacco stems, and smoke them. This was called 'Virginia play.'

"I complained to my master of the treatment which I received from Major Freeland; but it made no difference. He cared nothing about it, so long as he received the money for my labor. After living with Major Freeland 5 or 6 months, I ran away, and went into the woods back of the city; and when night came on, I made my way to my master's farm, knowing that if Mr. Haskell, the overseer, should discover me, I should be again carried back to Major Freeland; so I kept in the

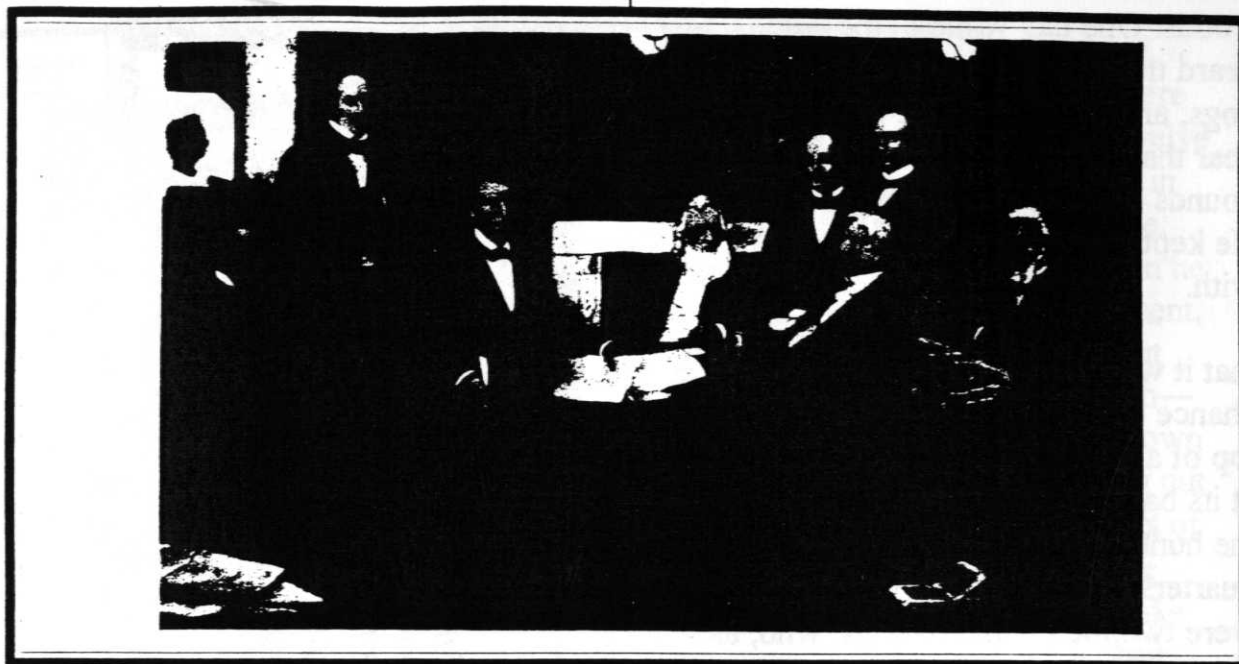
woods. One day while in the woods, I heard the barking and howling of dogs, and in a short time they came so near that I knew them to be the bloodhounds of Major Benjamin O'Fallon. He kept 5 or 6, to hunt runaway slaves with.

"As soon as I was convinced that it was they, I knew there was no chance of escape. I took refuge in the top of a tree and the hounds were soon at its base, and there remained until the hunters came up in a half or three quarters of an hour afterwards. There were two men with the dogs, who, as soon as they came up, ordered me to descend. I came down, was tied, and was taken to St. Louis jail. Major Free land soon made his appearance, took me out, and ordered me to follow him, which I did. After we returned home I was tied up in the smokehouse, and was very severely whipped. After the major had flogged me to his satisfaction, he sent out his son Robert, a young man 18 or 20 years of age, to see that I was well smoked. He made a fire of tobacco stems, which soon set me to coughing and sneezing. This, Robert told me, was the way his father used to do to his slaves in Virginia. After giving me what they conceived to be a decent smoking, I was untied and again set to work."

Source—Narrative of William Wells Brown, A Fugitive Slave, Boston, 1847. ■



Reprinted with permission from the Collection of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society



*Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1862.
William Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, is seated to the right, facing Lincoln.*

Lincoln Freed the Slaves with *The Emancipation Proclamation*

ONE OF THE GREAT DOCUMENTS OF HUMAN FREEDOM

January 1, 1863

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States;

and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit: Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, includ-

ing the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth[]), and which excepted parts, are for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages. And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

CHAPTER THREE

The Underground Railroad in Western New York

Because of Western New York's border position next to Canada and freedom, many enslaved blacks found their way here. Some followed the early Native American "Trail of the Forbidden Path," with help from the sympathetic Native Americans along the way.

There were also two main routes north to Buf-

falo. One hugged the shore of Lake Erie and traveled through Westfield and Fredonia. The more eastern route went through

Jamestown and north through Orchard Park, which was then called East Hamburgh. Only about 30 miles could be covered at a time, due to the secrecy and the difficulty of travel.

Dr. Eber M. Pettit, an Underground Railroad agent in **Fredonia**, wrote a book about his work in helping enslaved blacks escape. He called it Sketches of the Underground Railroad. His home was a station on the lakeshore line from Erie, PA to Buffalo. He fortunately never suffered any

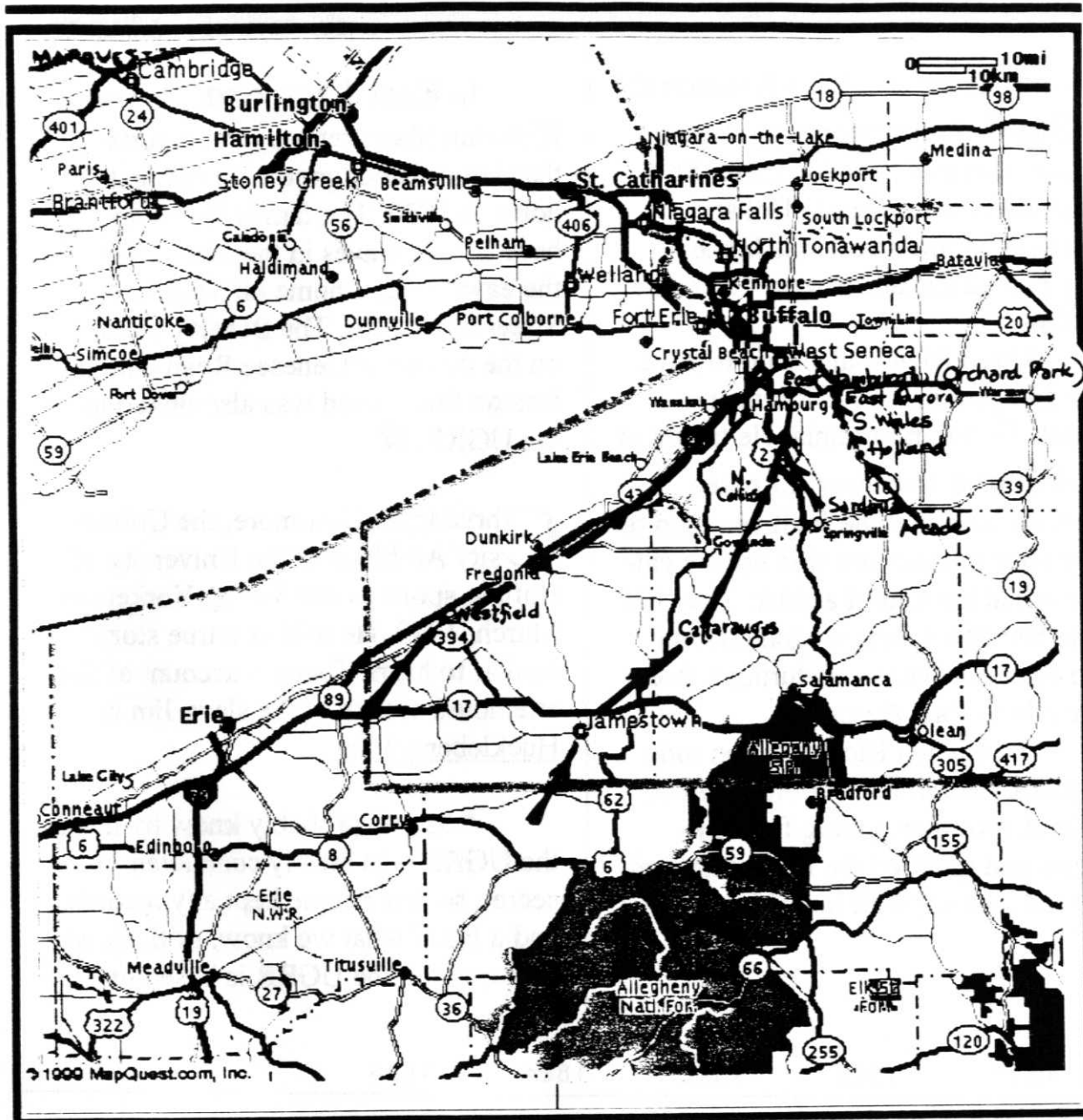
1839.]

Anti-Slavery Almanac.



finer or jailing as a result of the Fugitive Slave law, but Pettit often told his friends that if the law had been enforced, he would have been bankrupt many times over.

The Underground Railroad in Western New York



Map provided by www.mapquest.com

At Rice Corners in **Sardinia**, a farmer named John Wilkes ran an UGRR station. His daughter Mary remembered that on many nights, she would hear a low rapping at the door of the house. Her father would go outside and immediately return to put on warm clothing and gather up some blankets.

Then he would leave without telling his destination or the reason for his sudden departure. When he returned in the morning, his team of horses would be weary and his vehicles spattered with dirt or snow. Mary later learned that her father had taken slaves to Abner

Orr's house, the next UGRR station at **Holland**. A tannery run by Aaron Rumsey also had a station there. So many slaves were kept in Holland, folks say that the street was humorously named Canada Street. The name remains.

Alfred Rice is also said to have been an agent in the UGRR near Nichols Brook in Sardinia. He taught at the **Aurora** Academy, 17 miles away. He said that the fugitives used to carry their possessions tied up in a calico cloth at the end of a stick. They hid in the bed of a spring wagon covered with canvas or straw, enduring a three-hour ride to East Aurora.

Once when Rice's wagon rode the plank road in Protection, south of Holland, two men sprang from the bushes and grabbed the bridles. Alfred beat the men off with his whip.

In **East Concord**, Town Historian Margaret Mayerat reports that James Bloodgood built the first home in 1830. The family is said to have hidden slaves in the attic under the eaves of that home on Vaughn Street (now 240). The Bensley home on the corner of Genesee Road and the Boston State Road was also linked to the UGRR. ■

Christopher Densmore, the University Archivist of the University of Buffalo spoke to our Young Yorkers in March, 1999. He told us a true story similar to Mark Twain's account of the attempted escape of the slave Jim in Huckleberry Finn:

"As you probably know by now, the UGRR was mostly conducted in secret, so few people kept any records, and a lot of what we know, or think we know, about the UGRR is based on

1816

1818

1820

1822

1824

1826

► NYS slave liberation law passed

► Slavery abolished in NYS

stories that may or may not be accurate. Most, maybe all, stories of underground tunnels are probably not true. So, it is great to find original, first-hand accounts of people who were there.

“This is from a letter from Lorenzo Mabbett, a Quaker from **Collins Center**—not very far from where we are now—written to Frederick Douglas in 1849:

‘A few hours since Anna G. Mabbett was seen upon one of our back roads with a horse and wagon containing besides herself a fugitive slave and his wife, all in women’s attire...’

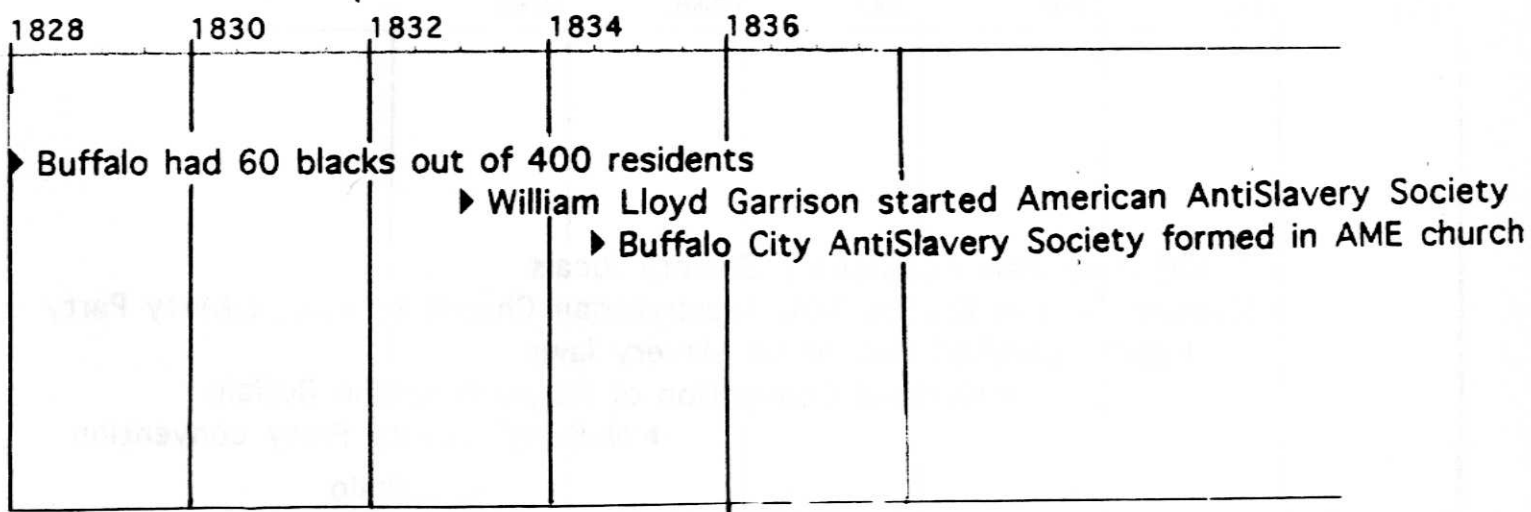
“Now a lot of conductors on the UGRR were Quakers, and Quaker women at that time wore long dresses and bonnets.

“Now Lorenzo doesn’t say in his letter that he was a Quaker, but I know

that he was because I have researched the Quaker records in Western New York. Quakers—also called Friends—were opposed to slavery, and were not to do anything that would acknowledge the right of slavery but were to act with benevolence to those held in slavery. I also know, from reading the abolitionist newspapers, that Lorenzo was actively working with other abolitionists, both Quakers and non-Quakers, to speak out against slavery. He published an anti-slavery newspaper at **Gowanda**, and organized a ‘Free Produce Society’ that sold cotton cloth and other goods free from the taint of slavery. This was a particular Quaker concern: if people bought slave-produced cotton, were they not supporting the system of slavery?

‘The slave was about to com-

*Timeline created by Johnny and Timeliner
by TomSnyder Productions*



mence school on the Reservation with the Indians...'

"Even though Lorenzo uses his own name in the letter, he is careful not to give away the names of the others who helped him. However, I do know that about this time a man named Griffith Cooper was teaching in the Quaker school at the Cattaraugus Reservation, and that Cooper was a strong abolitionist. Another Quaker teacher at the Cattaraugus Reservation school was Andrew Varney, who may have been the 'Friend Andrew' mentioned in Eber M. Pettit's accounts of the UGRR.

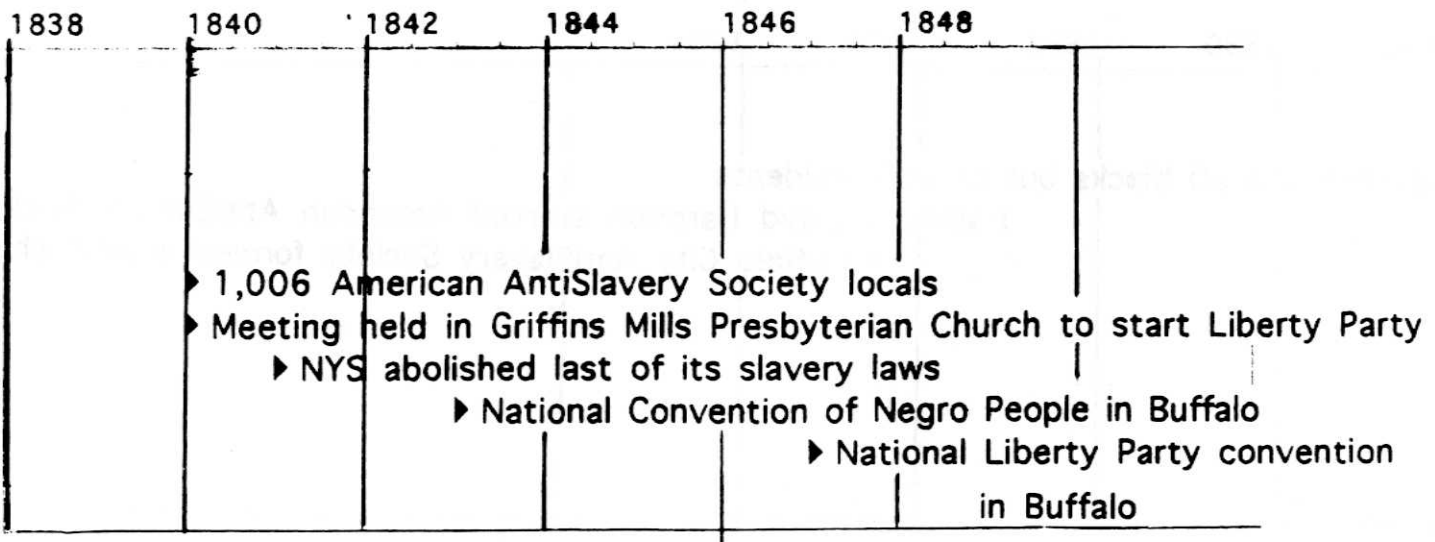
'...when his friends learned that the base ministers of Slaveocracy were on his track and close upon him, but [they] being put upon the route to Canada—and not in this instance the right route—he is safe...'

"How did the fugitive get from

Collins to Canada? The letter doesn't tell us. As a Quaker, Mabbett would have known other Quakers in **Orchard Park** (then called East Hamburg) and he may well have sent the fugitives on to the Quakers here. Or, he may have sent them by a different route. We don't know.

'...we may safely conclude the time is near, if not already at hand, when this region of Western New York will be a safe retreat for the poor...fugitive.' (North Star, Sept. 29, 1849)" ■

East Aurora has at least four houses that claim a connection to the UGRR, all located on East Main Street. John Case's home at 762 claims a hiding place at the rear of the property. In the basement of the Greek Revival next door at 774, there is a bulge



and a strange patching job in the wall directly under the front door. This is said to have been a "priest hole" or "hidey hole" used as a hiding spot for runaways.

Across the street are two more houses with claims to UGRR fame. Dr. Horace Hoyt lived at 793 Main before the Civil War. Local stories are told of a tunnel from this house under the street to 774, but many now doubt this. Dr. Hoyt's father, Dr. Jonathan Hoyt, is said to have treated any ill runaways. One time, a little girl died and was buried in the Hoyt family lot at the Pioneer Cemetery in downtown East Aurora.

771 Main is said to have had two stairways to the basement, one secret. The occupant of the house during the time period of the UGRR was Mrs. Henrietta Smith (from 1849 to 1867). Was she the slave sympathizer?

Griffins Mills is on record as one of the centers of anti-slavery activity in Erie County. Some say that the Liberty Party (the first anti-slavery political party) was actually founded in Griffins Mills in 1840. Other records show the party beginning in Warsaw in 1839 or in Albany at a national convention in April, 1840.

We do know that Judge Isaac Phelps called all the judges of Erie County together in 1835 to form a county-wide Anti-Slavery Society. He also led a mass meeting of the Liberty Party at the Congregationalist Church (now Presbyterian) on September 1, 1844. G. W. (George Washington) Jonson, a former East Auroran who had become a prominent newspaper publisher in Buffalo, called the meeting. (Buffalo had had a city anti-slavery society since the 4th of July, 1834.)

At that time Griffins Mills was known as **West Aurora** because its

1850 1852 1854 1856 1858 1860 1862 1864

▶ Compromise of 1850--Fugitive Slave Law

▶ Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin"

▶ Dred Scott Decision ruled that slaves were property

▶ Abraham Lincoln elected

▶ Civil War began

Evening 29th 1837 Anti Slavery Meeting call
 to order by Abijah ^{Gault} President.
 1st Moved to appoint delegates to represent
 this society in the annual meeting of the Erie
 County Anti Slavery Society to be held at
 Lancaster on the 12th day of Feb next
 on motion the following persons were chosen
 as delegates viz Henry Moore Henry A. Phelps
 Isaac Phelps Abijah Gault John C. Drake
 L. N. Conkling J. M. Phelps Bertha Brown
 2nd Henry Moore was chosen Treasurer
 of the Society for the balance of the year
 3rd Moved to adjourn without date
 Meeting closed with prayer
 J. M. Phelps } Secy

An Blakeley has paid
 pay for 50 Almanacks
 \$2.00

that area East Au-
 rora. And that is
 why East Aurora
 is about 100 miles
 west of Aurora,
 New York. To
 further confuse
 matters, the town-
 ship in which East
 Aurora exists is
 the Town of Au-
 rora!

William
 Wells Brown, the
 first published
 American black
 author of the best-
 seller Clotel: or
 the President's
 Daughter, also
 wrote about a col-
 orful incident in
 either West or
 East Aurora
 sometime be-
 tween the fall of
 1843 and the
 summer of 1849.

"I remained
 on Lake Erie dur-
 ing the sailing
 season, and resided in Buffalo in the
 winter. In the autumn of 1843 I was in-
 vited by the officers of the Western
 New York Anti-Slavery Society to take
 an agency as a lecturer in behalf of my

Minutes of the West Aurora Anti-Slavery Meeting,
 1839. Note the receipt for 50 Anti-Slavery Al-
 manacks (see page 42). From the Anti-slavery
 Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room of the
 Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

of New York. Then when people set-
 tled east of West Aurora, they called

Names of Members	Names of Members
Wm. N. Phelps	Royana Young
Geo. Coan	Adeline Adams
Abel M. Coan	Polly Holmes
Geo. M. Coan	Jane M. Ward
Joseph Sprague	Betsy Gillson
Samuel Sherman	Julia Juell
Wm. Holmes	John Clark
John B. Darke	Saml. Jarvis
Andrew Perry	J. M. Spalding
John Stevens	Samuel A. Sarna
Waterman Perkins	James Henshaw
Billins Decker	Orson B. Baker
Saml. Adams	Wm. Kitchum
Webcom Gillson	Abel
Augustus Wood	
James Howard	
Osborn Gillson	
Peter McPherson	
Polly Perkins	
Mary Church	
Martha M. Darke	

Above are only some of the brave men and women who signed in or were present at an 1839 meeting of the West Aurora Anti-Slavery Society. From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

earliest settlers had come west from the village of Aurora near the Finger Lakes enslaved countrymen, which offer I accepted, and soon commenced my labors. Mobs were very frequent in those days.


"Being advertised to address the citizens of **Aurora**, Erie County, New York, on one occasion, I went to fulfill the appointment, and found the church surrounded by a howling set of men and boys, waiting to give me a warm reception. I went in, opened the meeting, and began my address. But they were resolved on having a good time, and the disturbance was so great that I had to stop.

"In the meantime, a bag of flour had

—VOL. 1. No. 4.—

THE
'AMERICAN
ANTI-SLAVERY
ALMANAC,
FOR
1839,

BEING THE THIRD AFTER LEAP-YEAR, AND THE 63D OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE. CALCULATED FOR NEW YORK; ADAPTED TO THE NORTHERN AND MIDDLE STATES.



What has the North to do with Slavery!

"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED FOR THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.
S. W. BENEDICT, 143, NASSAU STREET. >

From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

been brought to the church, taken up into the belfry, directly over the entrance door, and a plan laid to throw the whole of it over me as I should pass out of the house, all of which my friends and I were unaware. After I had been driven from the pulpit by the unsalable eggs, which were thrown about very freely, I stopped in the body of the church to discuss a single point with one of the respectable rowdies, when the audience became silent, and I went on and spoke above an hour, all the while receiving the strictest attention from every one present.

"At the conclusion the lights were put out, and preparation made to



From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room
of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

the men at the door, and while they were settling their difficulty, my few friends and I quietly walked away unharmed."

—From The Black Man: His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements, 1863. ■

The Liberty Party

A Resolution by the Liberty Party in the Daily National Pilot, April 2, 1846--

"Resolved, That as anti-slavery men of the county of Erie, we will abide by the principle that the mere relation of master and slave is sinful and the basis of iniquity...."

Resolved, That no man or party of men who believe slaveholders worthy of office and power, are worthy of a freeman's vote for office...."

Resolved, That as the representatives of the Liberty Party of Erie County, we are decidedly in favor of All male citizens over the age of 21 years having a right to vote without reference to adventitious circumstances of wealth or color, as a necessary natural right of self-protection, except persons insane or idiots, or persons convicted of crime....."

Second Looks, a pictorial history of Buffalo and Erie County, reports that "At a Fourth of July celebration in 1844 in East Aurora the ex-slave Samuel Ringwold Ward was the keynote speaker. The audience later drank a sober cold-water toast to 'Erie

county: hers is the honor of having furnished the first colored juror and the first colored Fourth of July orator.' In the last days of the campaign of 1844, Ward kept a punishing schedule speaking to audiences in Springville, Collins, Eden, Evans, Aurora, Alden, Lancaster, Clarence, Williamsville, Buffalo, Holland and Sardinia." ■

The Paul-McCormick House

by Alice Buskus

Welcome to the Paul-McCormick House. In 1820, Adam Paul built this house. After Adam Paul, Or-

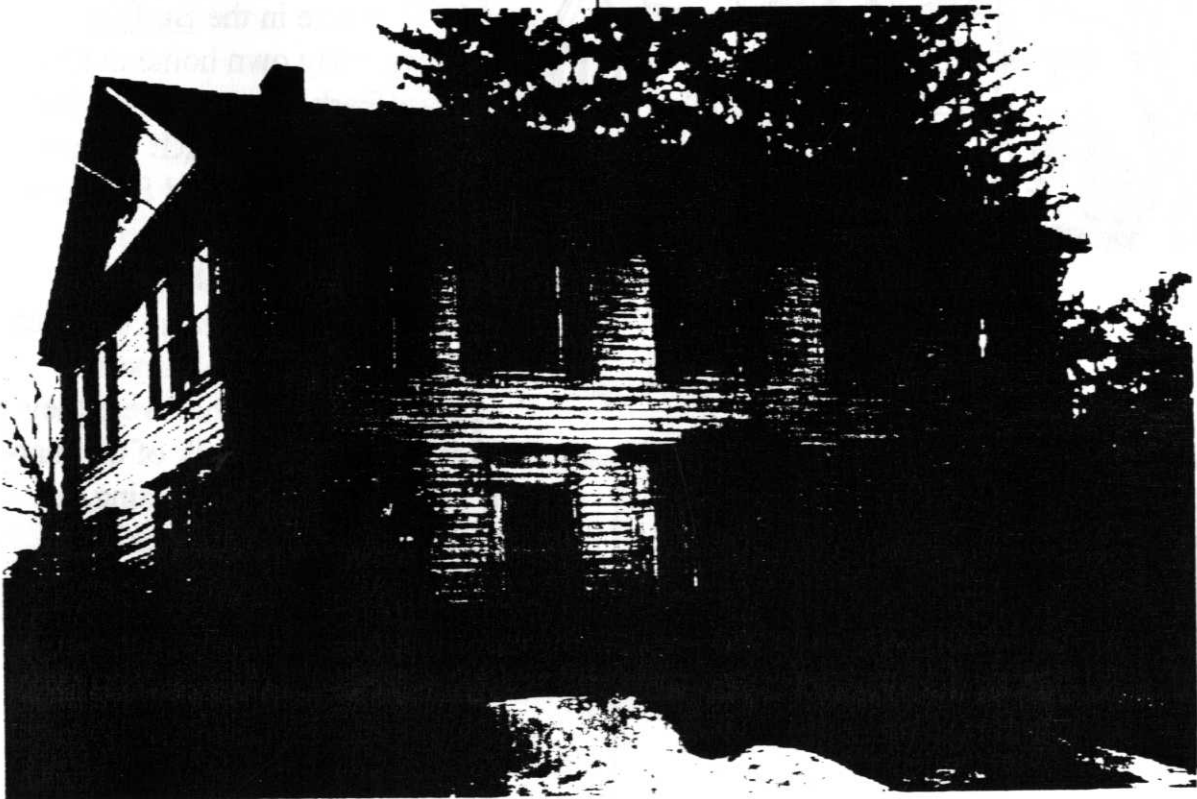
Train Brown owned the house.

In the house, there is a secret passage from a stairwell on the first floor to the basement and from the cellar to the attic. There is a special type of railing along the stairs. Upstairs are great stencils painted by Moses Eaton.

During the Civil War, different people by the name of Heinz bought the house. They got a new chimney in 1910.

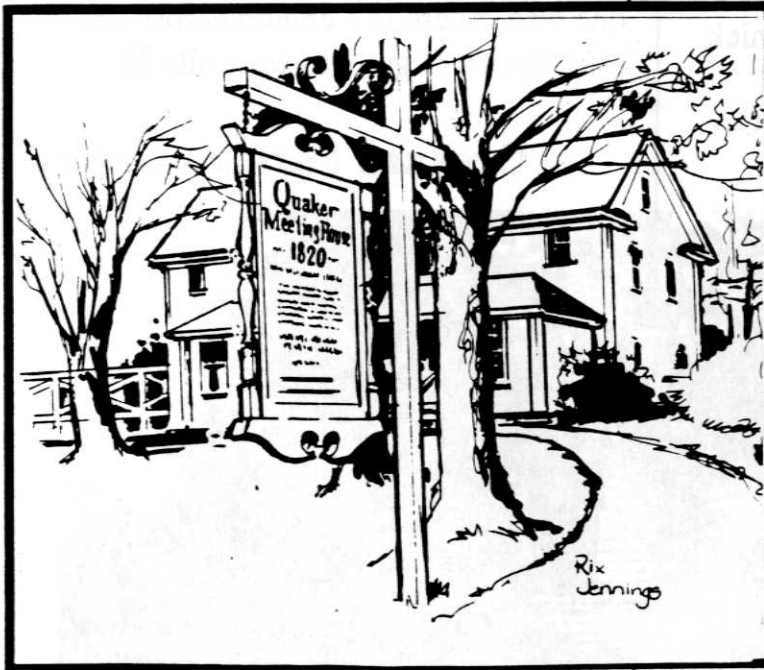
Slaves passed through this house. It was a hideout along the Underground Railroad. The McCormicks have now lived there longer than anyone else. There is a church across the road from this great historic site. ■

Orchard Park was a major



stop on the UGRR due to its Quaker roots. Many Quakers there happily harbored fugitive slaves.

The Quaker Meeting House on Quaker Road (now 20A) and Freeman Road was not only the first church in Erie County (1820), but an UGRR station in its later years. Elisha Freeman built the Meeting House and Obadiah Baker gave the land for it. The meeting room is divided into two equal sides—one for the men, one for the women. Services were held twice a week—on Thursday and on Sunday. Even today



there are straight-backed wooden benches that are as old as the meeting house itself. It still is used as a Quaker meeting house, an elegant and “Simple Gift” to remember the heritage of the town.

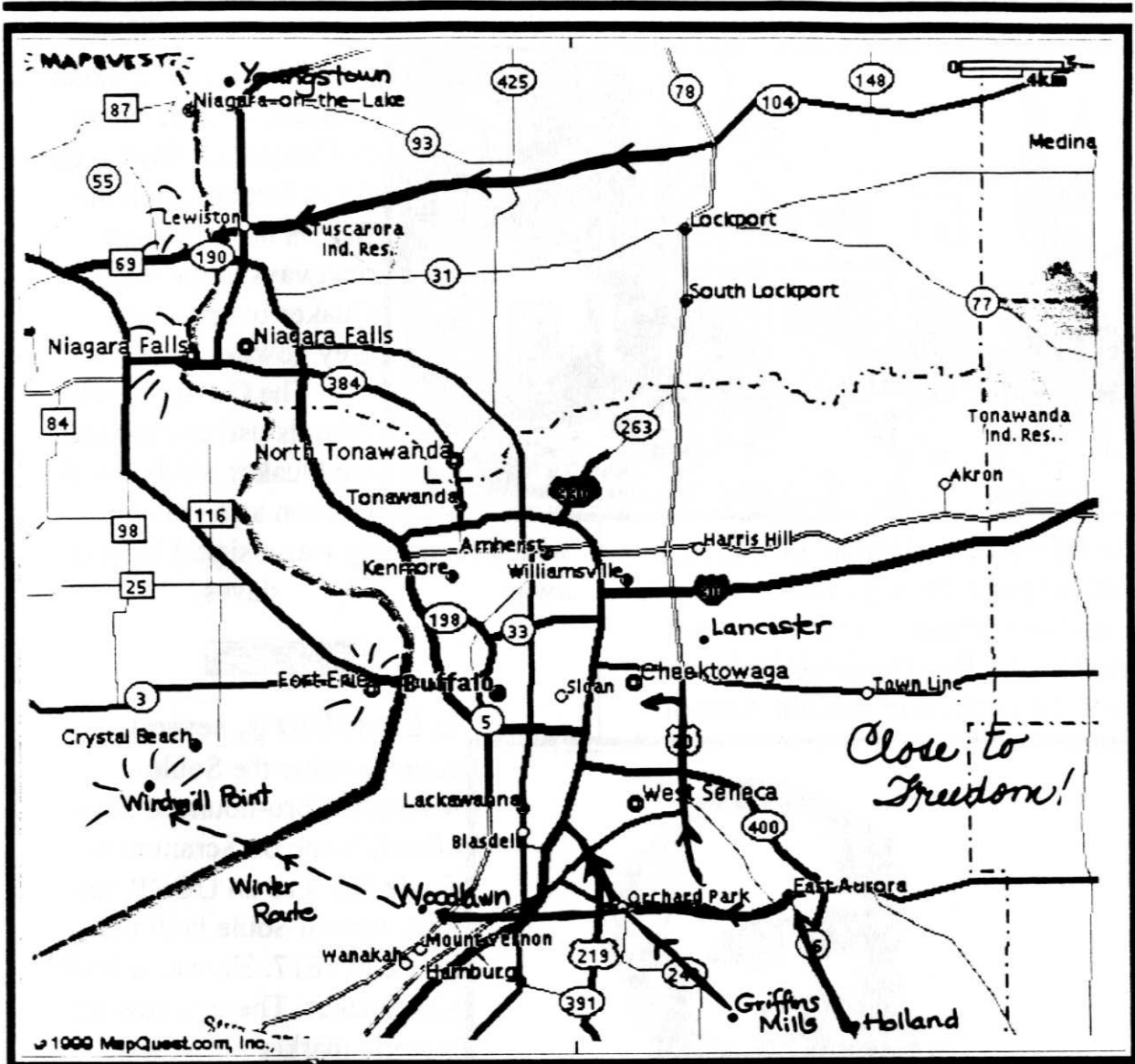
At the next intersection to the east stands the **Baker House** at 7166 Quaker Road. The Bakers felt strongly about helping slaves to freedom and played an active role in the UGRR movement. Peter Burakowski, an Orchard Park student, interviewed Obadiah Baker’s great-great-granddaughter Judith Baker Becker, who told him that she was the last of the Bakers to live in the Obadiah Baker house. “She told me the slaves stayed in the loft over the kitchen. Quakers did not believe in slavery or war. That was why they helped the slaves to escape their masters.”

Obadiah’s great-grandson, Benjamin II (father of Judith), told this story according to a 1951 article in the Buffalo News: “My own home in Orchard Park was one of the last stations on the UGRR before reaching Buffalo and Fort Erie. The children were never allowed to see the slaves, but they could hear them plainly as the fugitives talked amongst themselves. Neither were they ever allowed to talk of the mat-

ter but, frequently, when dressing, a jacket, a skirt or a pair of stockings would be missing articles which Grandmother (Anna Freeman Baker) had given some needy child...

“Finally, they were taken by the last conductor, my grandfather

The Underground Railroad in Western New York



(Benjamin I), to Buffalo where he turned them over to the Hampton Dodge home on Court Street. There, arrangements were made to ferry them across the river. Sometimes in winter, he piled his sleigh with bags of grain and, hiding the slaves underneath, drove across the lake at Woodlawn to a gristmill in Windmill Point, Canada.” The peculiar thing about these trips is that the grain came back unground.

Map provided by www.mapquest.com

Another source tells that the fugitives were brought by the wagon load from Warsaw (the central NY line from Philadelphia through Elmira) or from Pontiac (the line running through western Pennsylvania from Pittsburgh and Jamestown). Dr. Baker’s great-aunts told him stories of how the children were sent to a room in the farthest corner of the house while the fugitives

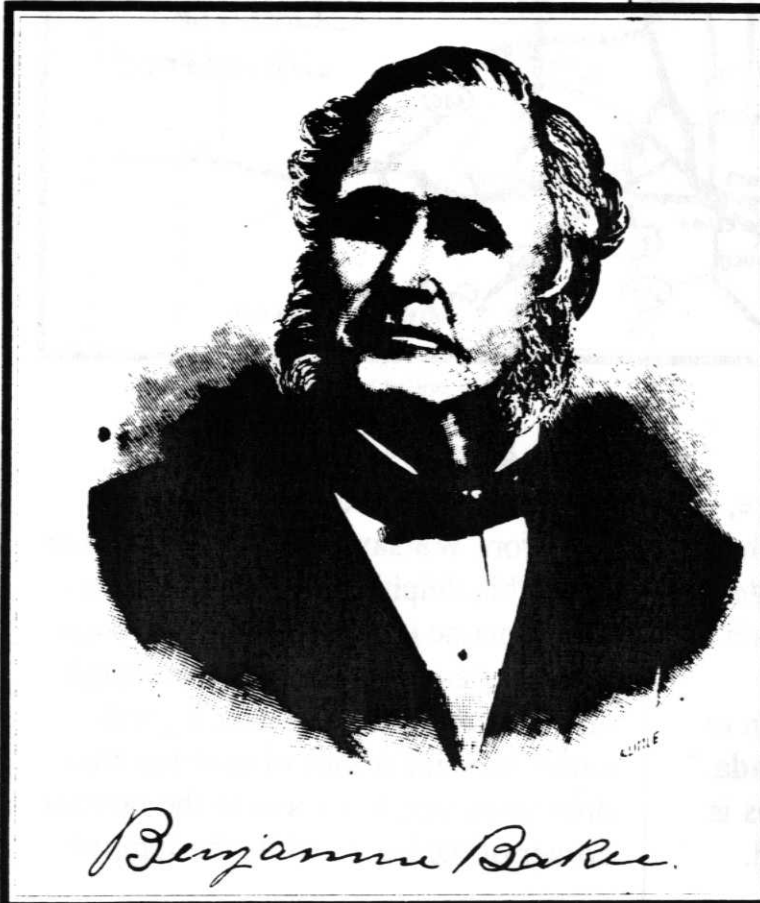


these stations, Dr. Baker recalled, was the home of Cheeseham Dodge on Court Street. Often the Bakers dressed male runaways in the large Quaker bonnets and grey gowns.

The Orchard Park schools use as a mascot the Quaker symbol with maroon as a color,

were unloaded and put in a room in the cellar to spend the day. The next night, the enslaved blacks would be transported by the first Benjamin Baker to one of the stations in Buffalo. One of

which reportedly was a signal for run-away slaves.



In **Hamburg**, several sources name the Soule-Meatyard (pro-nounced *Meechard*) home on Scranton or Soule Road as an UGRR station. Abram Soule built the house in 1817. He was a Hick-site Quaker. There is now an historic marker at the spot, a quarter mile from Camp Road.

Colonel Asa Warren's home in **Eden** is featured in Erie County's Architectural Legacy, 1983, as an UGRR depot. It is located at 8639 South Main Street.

An old newspaper article by Eleanor Bissell and Mrs. Weltha Yurann Benton tells

rich details of **Lancaster**'s involvement with the UGRR. Joseph Yurann and his brother-in-law Joseph Swansbro were the core of the UGRR activity there. Runaways were delivered from the Quakers in Orchard Park to Sterling Ely's home in Bellevue. Also Seldon Ely's home at the northeast corner of Como Park Boulevard and Indian Road was an UGRR station. The old stone barn was built with a double cellar; a brick-floored sub-cellar was built to be a wine cellar, but was never used for that. It was too busy as a hiding place for slaves from Orchard Park.

"The search officers were always hot on the trail of Mr. Ely, because they suspected him. They were accustomed to lying in the fields to keep watch on his house, and stopping in often to search the place. He never lied to the search officers, but would ask them when they came to his door, 'Gentlemen, do you have a warrant?'

"When they showed him their search papers, his booming voice would order them, 'Gentlemen, proceed!'

"But they never found a single slave in his house, and he was never caught. The slaves were safely hidden in the sub-cellar. When Mr. Ely thought it was safe, he sent word to some of the runners to bring a fast team of horses to his barn during the night.

"In the barn, always in readiness, stood what was called 'the slave

wagon.' It was nothing but a hay wagon, with the side raves built a bit higher than usual. The slaves were lain in the bottom of the wagon, and corn stalks were piled over them. As soon as runners and team came to the barn, Mr. Ely dispatched the wagon to the next underground station, on Transit Road, just north of Main Street. This station was in the John N. MacNiel homestead. When a propitious moment arrived for sending the slaves on, Mr. MacNiel worked much as Mr. Ely did.

"The slaves were put into a farm wagon with a fast team and sped down the Goodrich Road to the next station at the edge of Lake Erie, the home of George Carnochan's great-grandparents." ■

The Hull House

by Melissa Ford

The Historical Hull House, at 5976 Genesee Street in Lancaster, was built in 1810 and is still standing. Mr. Hull was a Revolutionary War soldier who built this stone house on his 750 acres of land. It is in the book, Erie County's Historical Legacy. Once he built it, he worked as a farmer and ran this house as a tavern and stage stop.

Joseph Ellicott laid out the Genesee Road plans from Buffalo to Batavia where the Holland Land Com-



pany was headquartered, but he needed a more direct route north from East Aurora. The road across from the house, Pavement Road, was originally called Stonehouse Road for this house. In 1811 Ellicott lined up the road with the east side of the house. You can see it as you drive north on Pavement Road. In 1810 this was the grandest house between Buffalo and Batavia.

It is two stories high in the front but three stories high in the back. It is said that there may have been a tunnel between the barn and house to hide runaway slaves, but probably just the roomy fruit cellars were used to hide runaways.

The kitchen fireplace had limestone edging. The basement kitchen had a bake oven so that all the baking was in the cool basement and a cistern that was six feet deep for collecting rainwater.

The upstairs kitchen also had a

fireplace, but it was stone. The upstairs kitchen had five doorways leading out of it. Those rooms were painted gray. The door is a "cross and Bible" door. All the windows were 12 over 12 with 4 down and 3 across. It was in

style to have a fancy spiral on the beginning and ending of all the staircases.

There was a dining room with a fireplace with a crane for the teakettle! It had a parlor and, much to my surprise, it is still standing much similar to when it was built!

We call this house a historical landmark because it had lots of marks on the walls from runaway slaves, especially in the attic! ■

Editor's Note: Architectural historian John Conlin took us for a fascinating tour of this house. He and many others of the Landmark Society are working long hours to restore all the details of the house to the time when Warren Hull was here. He showed us the detective work he has to do to figure out what used to be. There are many original architectural features (like the 24 inch wide floorboards) that make this an historic gem! Conlin has written an

article on the home for the Spring 1998 *Spree* magazine.

Warren and Polly Hull's home housed their twelve children—9 girls and 3 boys. The parents both died in 1838 and are buried behind the house.

Entering the attic is like being in a time warp. There are forty hand-hewn beams put together with pegs.

The side door is a giveaway that this was a tavern or a tap room. The Hull House is now on the National Register of Historic Places. Stop by for a visit into the past. Look for the limestone rocks with fossils in front of the house ! ■

Finally the runaways were on their last leg, on their way to Buffalo and the crossing of the Niagara River. It is estimated that as many as 30,000 to 40,000 found their way to freedom through the Niagara Frontier. There the fugitives could connect with a larger community of blacks who worked hard to help those in need.

Buffalo had black settlers as early as the 1790s. The first known was Joseph Hodge, called "Black Joe." Joe ran a trading post and learned to speak the Seneca's language. By 1807, he had married an Indian wife and settled down near the Cattaraugus Creek.

Until the 1820s—the Years of

Freedom—

many blacks in New York State were slaves. Their tasks were not picking cotton, but serving as butlers, maids, shipbuilders and sailors.

The first record of fugitives arriving through Buffalo was in 1838 when two sleighs of escaped slaves from Ohio were brought to Buffalo. ■

The Anti-Slavery Almanac of 1840—From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library



NORTHERN HOSPITALITY—NEW YORK NINE MONTHS' LAW.

Heroes of the Western New York UGRR



Mary Talbert

Mary Talbert shone brightly from the start, graduating at the age of 19 from Oberlin College in Ohio. She moved to Buffalo in 1891 to marry William Talbert, whose father had struck it rich in the '49 California Gold Rush. The elder Mr. Talbert had returned to Buffalo with his new riches and bought over thirty houses in the city and 600 acres on Grand Island.

Mary spoke several languages and earned her doctorate. She worked to earn the right to vote for women, crusaded for an anti-lynching law, and lectured around the world, raising money for the troops in W. W. I. She was an active member of the Michigan Avenue Baptist Church, almost next door to her home.

In 1905, Mrs. Talbert hosted meetings at her home at 521 Michigan, helping to begin the "Niagara Movement" that led to the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). She was a close friend of the famous Harriet Tubman, so close that she came to Tubman's

bedside when she died in 1913 and read Tubman's eulogy at the funeral.

W.E.B. DuBois

(William Edward Burghardt)

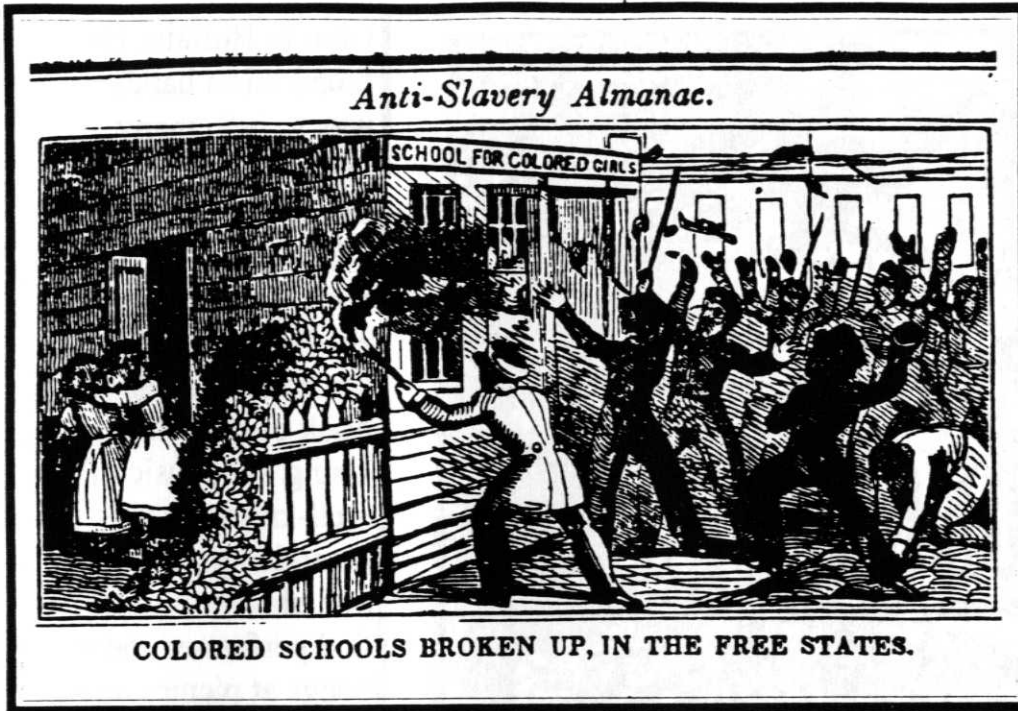
Another black intellectual who visited Buffalo frequently was W.E.B. DuBois. He earned degrees from Fisk and Harvard and was the first scholar to seriously study the conditions of African-Americans.

In 1905 he helped to begin the group called the Talented Tenth, Buffalo's young black intellectuals. His group was refused hotel rooms in Buffalo because of the color of their skin, so the convention had to take the ferry across to Canada to meet. Their group became known as the Niagara Movement, which eventually became the NAACP, the oldest civil rights organization in the United States. ■

Sojourner Truth

The six-foot-tall Sojourner Truth escaped from slavery in 1826. She became a well-known speaker whose speeches are still memorable.

Her 1851 "Ain't I a Woman?" speech is especially famous. She joined women across America who were then demanding the right to vote. When one man said that women were "too weak" to vote, Sojourner stood up to him. She



From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room
of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

described her strength and the hard work she did, and asked, "Ain't I a woman?"

Truth was a frequent visitor to Western New York. In 1868 she made a circuit of the Quakers and activist groups in Western New York. After visiting Angola, Collins, Gowanda, Kerr's Corners and Bront Center, she spoke in the Orchard Park Meeting House at the end of September, staying with Isaac Baker. Then she stayed with P. Paxton, the son-in-law of Isaac Baker that Friday evening.

From Paxton's she went to Pot-
ters Corners Saturday evening, the
26th, for a large Republican meeting,
then stayed with Alfred Moore and his

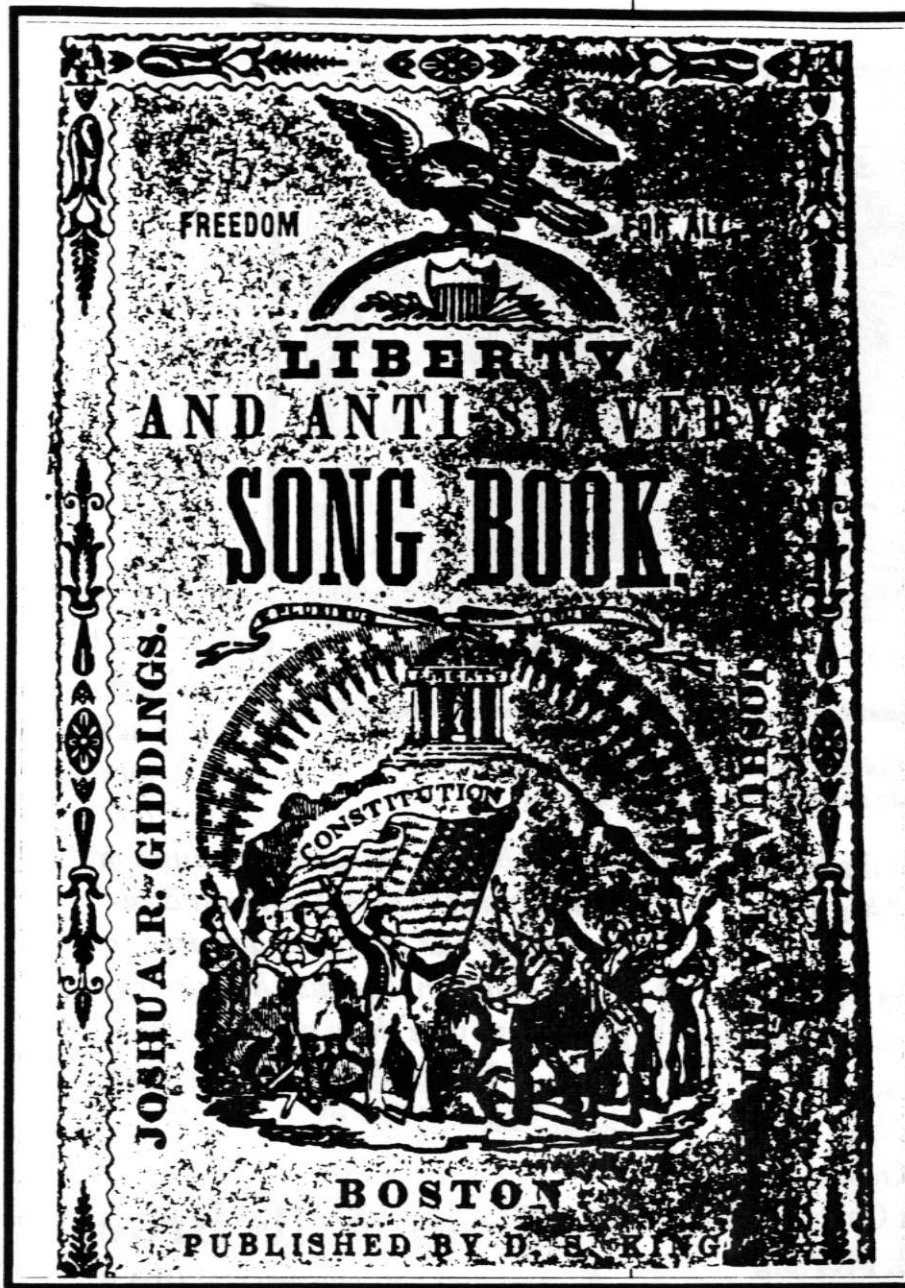
wife for sev-
eral days. At
the Griffins
Mills lecture
room on Oc-
tober 1, Rev.
Sandford and
Friends took
up a collec-
tion for her.
"Children,
who made
your skin
white? Was
it not God?
Who made
mine black?
Was it not the
same God?

*Am I to blame, therefore, because my
skin is black? Does it not cast a re-
proach on our Maker to despise a part
of his children, because he has been
pleased to give them a black skin?"*

—National Anti-slavery Stan-
dard, June 3, 1864 ■

William Wells Brown

A national anti-slavery star (the who
successfully avoided the flour
shower in Griffins Mills—see page 40),
was William Wells Brown. He was
also very influential in the growing
black community of Buffalo. He es-
caped from slavery not just once, but
at least three times! In 1834 he finally
escaped to Cleveland and worked for



*From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room
of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library*

traders on the Mississippi. He took the name of Wells Brown, the Quaker who aided his escape. At 21, he hired himself out to work for a lake captain at Cleveland, shipping on Lake Erie from

Ohio to Buffalo. He found this a handy way to help many (69) other escaped slaves to freedom.

He wrote the song book, The AntiSlavery Harp, which was the favorite song book of abolitionists. Using the music of well-known hymns, he added powerful anti-slavery words and performed these songs at picnics and bazaars which raised money to free slaves. In 1847, William Lloyd Garrison asked Brown to serve as a lecturer and Underground Railroad agent. From then on he lectured around the United States and Europe almost without interruption. He was also a self-taught doctor and practiced medicine after the Civil War.

You can still find a marker at the site of Brown's house at Michigan and 13 Pine Streets. He was another one of the faithful parishioners of the Michigan Avenue Baptist Church. ■

Violent Attempt to Re-Capture a Slave

Buffalo Commercial Advertiser,
October 1, 1847

Two persons from Covington, Kentucky, one of whom claims to be the agent for an owner of a colored man, named Christopher Webb, who has for some time served as a waiter at the Gothic Hall Saloon, told poor Webb that he must return to his master, and when he protested he was free, one of them seized him and drawing a "six shooter" threatened to kill the first person who should interfere. He however, contrived to escape, and it having been found out that he had been arrested illegally, a warrant was obtained against the agents for the man who thought "he had a right to do what he liked with his own." It was then their turn to escape, which they attempted without delay, hotly pursued by the Deputy Sheriff and people of various hues. The run-aways had the start. The affair created much excitement, particularly among our colored citizens and the abolitionists; but the Kentuckians successfully eluded all pursuit. ■

The early black churches of Buffalo were "activist"—they were active in working to change society for the better. The African Methodist Episcopal Church at 1525 Michigan Avenue

was established in 1831. There the Buffalo City Anti-Slavery Society was founded in 1834. ■

Michigan Avenue Baptist Church

by Larry Seivert

The Michigan Avenue Baptist Church was founded in 1836, but members built their brick building in 1845. It is the oldest building in Western New York that has been owned and used by African Americans ever since it was started.

The Michigan Avenue Baptist Church helped many escaped slaves find their way to Canada and freedom. Plans are being made to have it restored by many blacks who cherish its history.

An early pastor, a mason named Rev. Dr. J. Edward Nash, built the church with help from freed slaves.

The Underground Railroad was a success at the Michigan Avenue Baptist Church due to a sympathetic police magistrate, Judge Albro. He would "step out for coffee" to warn the church when bounty hunters had shown up to get warrants validated in the old courthouse, which was where the downtown Buffalo Library now stands. Judge Albro hated bounty hunters more than slaves, so he made the bounty hunters wait while he warned the



Michigan Avenue Baptist Church by Larry Seivert

church.

I think it is interesting that some very exciting parts of our country's history happened right in Western New York. ■

John Spencer Fosdick

The principal of school 14, John Spencer Fosdick lived at Virginia Street and Ellicott. His house is now gone but stories tell that it had a secret compartment by the fireplace and served as a station on the UGRR.

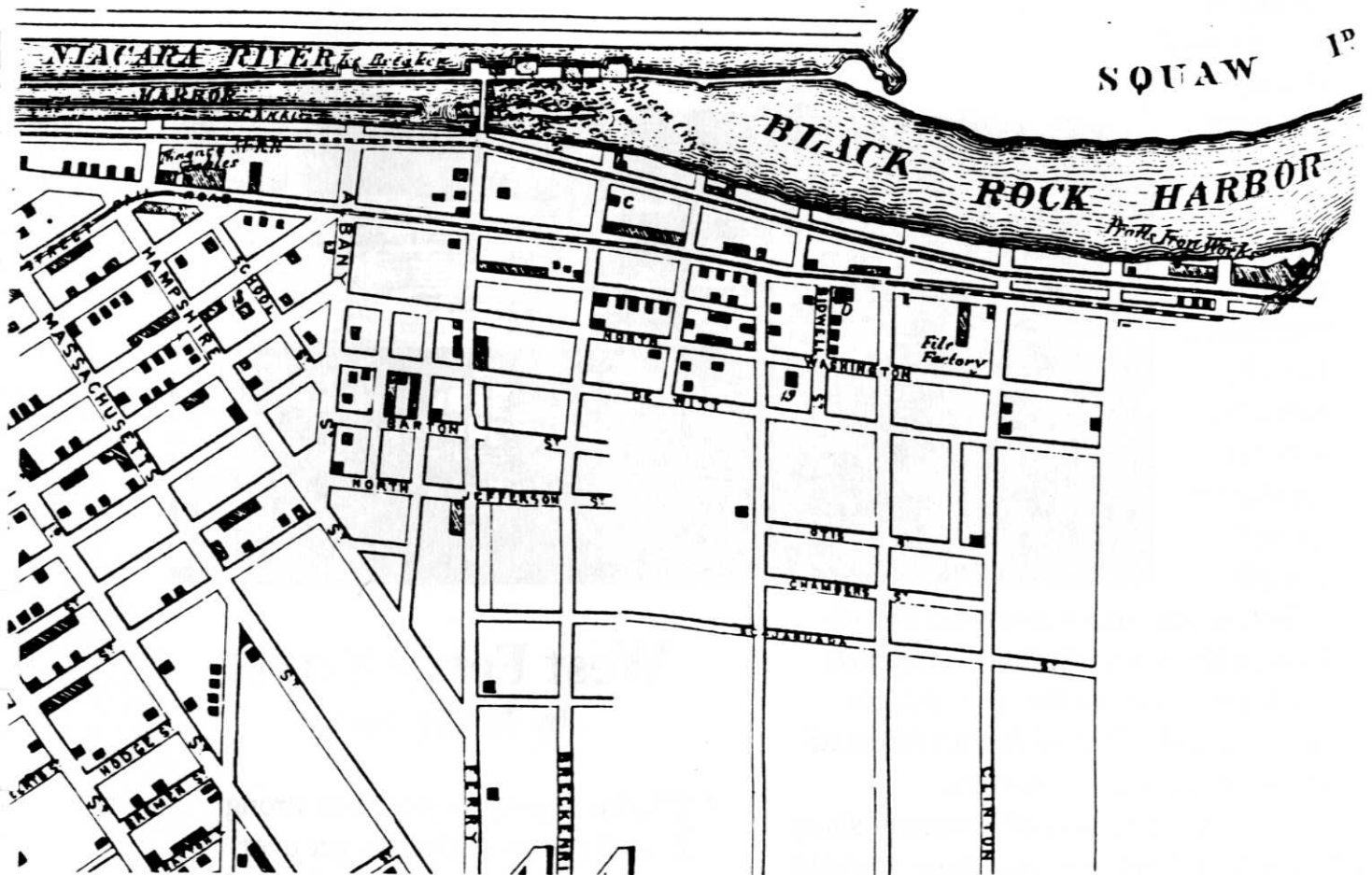
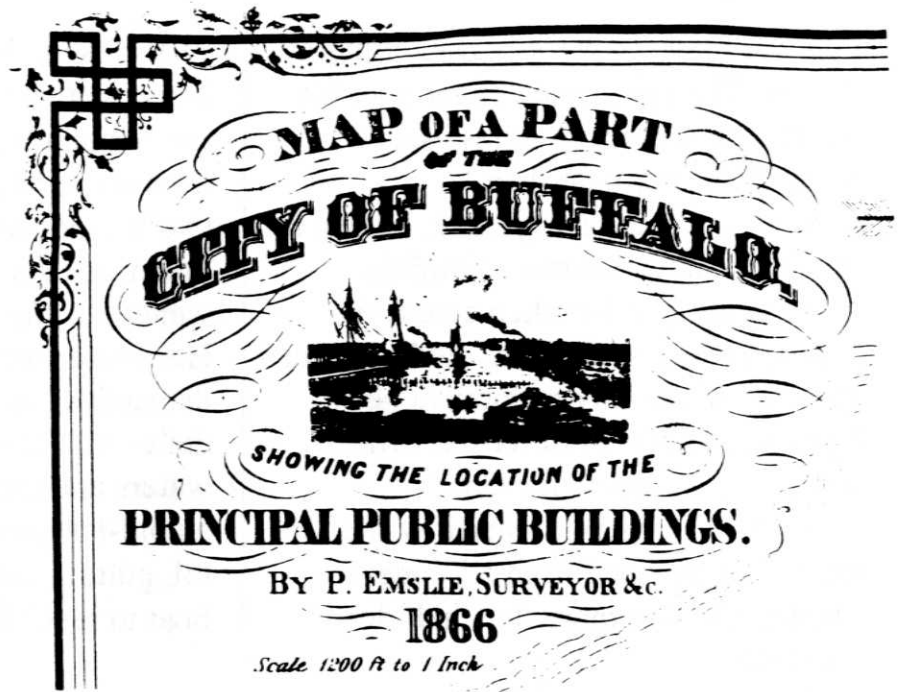
Eleanor Bissell wrote an article

with fascinating details:

“A group of four slaves with their white runner were about to enter the secret compartment, when the searchers came in unexpectedly. The compartment would hold four people, and one old Negro offered to stay behind and be captured, while the other three slaves with their runner entered the compartment. No one knows whether it was the shock and excitement, or all health, but the story goes that this slave dropped dead at the feet of the searchers before the fireplace.”

Harry Emerson Fosdick also wrote about his colorful grandfather in *The Living of These Days: an Autobiography*, by Harper & Brothers, 1956:

“My father (Frank S. Fosdick) recalled stormy nights when a signal was tapped on a window-pane, and his father rose from bed and went out to row another boatload of black refugees to their freedom. As his custom was, he had a text for this defiance of the



Fugitive Slave Law too—Deuteronomy 23:15: ‘Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee.’

“.... An escaping slave, hidden in my grandfather’s home in Buffalo while waiting to be taken across the Niagara River to Canada, died of fright because mistakenly he thought he heard the footsteps of federal officers searching the house for him.”

Frank Fosdick himself wrote: “A man slave escaped from a Tennessee planter and was more than half dead from star-

vation and the strain of anxiety he had been under for weeks while being spirited northward.

John F., aided by another conductor named Joseph

Adler, whose route was from the village of Boston to Buffalo, smuggled the fugitive across the river from a point near the foot of Austin Street after some exciting adventure.

“Another was of a woman slave from Maryland, who had been pursued

very closely. Her escorts had but barely got started in their skiff across the Niagara when another boat put out from shore to head them off. The fugitive’s conductors reached the dividing line first, then rested on their oars and waited for the other boat to come up. Her owner was in the other boat. He demanded his property. Her protectors defied him to claim her in Canadian waters and emphasized their deft with an old-fashioned double-barreled pistol, putting the men in the pursuing boat to rest.” ■



West Ferry Street

by Johnny Sisti

Today many people cross strong and sturdy bridges to get over great rivers like the Niagara River, but

back when slaves were trying to escape to freedom, they didn't have bridges at all! So they got a boat called a ferry, and went across.

There was a famous one at the foot of Ferry Street in Buffalo. On Ferry Street of Broderick Park there were originally cobblestones that you can still see.

Samuel Murray, a member of the Michigan Avenue Baptist Church, was a free black who hid slaves in the basement of a hotel where he worked. At night he would give them a small boat or a skiff to row to Canada. Early in the morning he would give them food and directions to the riverfront.

Snake Hill and Little Africa were black communities in Canada, so that meant, "No bounty hunters allowed!"

John Fosdick, principal at School 14, lived on Virginia Street. He had a secret compartment by his fireplace and served as a conductor on the Underground Railroad.

One of the most ingenious and daring conductors was Carl Zimmer. He had a lot of ways of disguising the black fugitives in order to get them over the river under the noses of the bounty hunters.

If you are looking at the Niagara River, remember the thousands of slaves who crossed the river to freedom! ■

Dr. Eber M. Pettit, Underground Railroad agent in Fredonia, wrote about the ferry in Sketches of the Underground Railroad:

"Dan was warmed and fed and secreted in the old house until it was deemed safe for him to go on, supposing the pursuers to have lost the track and abandoned the search. But not so; their spies were on the line watching every little skiff in Black Rock harbor, when friend Andrew, just at daylight having signaled the boatmen, left his carriage in a back street and led Dan through a narrow lane to where a boat lay hid, and out of the water. It was launched in a moment, and Dan and two boatmen were on their way to Canada before the spies watching the other boats could give the alarm." ■

Niagara Falls

by Caitlin Schmitt

Long ago, slaves would go across Niagara Falls to go to Canada and get to safety. Back then there were no railings on the Suspension Bridge and it rocked. Now it has a railing and it is built better so it won't rock.

Slaves hiding in cattle cars were allowed in unknowingly. Harriet Tubman used to cross over to help free slaves. This bridge was her favorite way to get fugitives into Canada. ■



Pettit also wrote about Niagara Falls: "A Niagara Falls UGRR agent was a wealthy gentleman living some two miles from the river. He employed in his household a fugitive who had escaped to Canada, but had returned to the American side, where she could earn higher wages.

"A slave hunter from the South recognized the Colonel's employee as a fugitive.

"Guards were set at all the river crossings between Tonawanda and Youngstown. A federal commissioner and marshals were kept at the Falls at this time to assist in such captures. As the marshal approached the colonel's house, the gentleman dashed out of his barn behind the fastest team of horses in Niagara County, heading for Lewiston. The officers started in hot pursuit. The Colonel led the race all the way to Youngstown, when he allowed himself

to be overhauled with the remark that he merely was trying to see if there was a team of horses in the county fast enough to keep pace with him. The diversion had enabled the fugitive to reach a safe hiding place."

An article from The Niagara Falls Iris told this story: "A slave escaping from servitude, arrived in this village last Tuesday week, and reached the ferry just in time to get into the little boat as it was prepared to leave for the Canadian side. His master was on the same train in pursuit and reached the ferry only in time to see his chattel midway across the foaming waters of the Niagara. We learned that the slave was last seen by his master at Cleveland; yet although both were on the same train, the slave succeeded in eluding his vigilance and placing him beyond pursuit." ■

Lewiston

The North UGRR route, the present Route 104, was Harriet Tubman's favorite path from Rochester. She followed the old stagecoach route to the



Lower Niagara River. The McDonald's of Lewiston is one of the most historic in all of America, housed in the old stagecoach station on Center Street. Built by Benjamin Porter, it is now called Frontier House.

Local legend says that Riverside Inn served as a hiding place for fugitive slaves and that the Niagara Frontier Bible Church, at Mohawk and River Roads, once a monastery, provided shelter to runaway slaves.

In the summer and fall, some slaves swam across the river to freedom when the water was calm; others were rowed across in small boats. In the winter, when the river was frozen, many slaves walked across the ice to the Promised Land. ■

The First Presbyterian Church of Lewiston on Cayuga Street served as a safe house, one of the last depots on the UGRR. A marker from the UGRR Public Sculpture Project has

been placed here by the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University.

The pastor from 1835 to 1886, Rev. Josiah Tryon, had a strong sense of right and wrong and so was dedicated to helping fugitive slaves.

His brother Amos had built a huge stone

mansion on River Road in 1815, but his wife preferred to live in town. The fancy house sat vacant and became known in town as "Tyron's Folly."

Josiah put it to good use, however, to house runaway slaves after their two-month journey north. The house had a unique design on the steep riverbank with four levels below the main floor, as a terrace design. The fourth basement extended close to the river front of the house, opening onto the high river bank where boats waited to take slaves to the opposite side of the river.

One night while Rev. Tryon was rowing a small runaway boy and his family to freedom, the boy asked curiously, "Are you God?"

The reverend answered humbly, "I'm just one of His children."

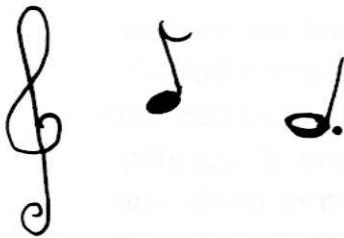
Satisfied, the boy nodded, "I knew you must be one of His kin." ■



Lockport

The former McClew farmstead is thought to be a station on the UGRR. Now known as the Murphy Orchards, archeologists are trying to determine if there may have been tunnels beneath the barn.

Owner Carol Murphy is producing a video called "One Step Closer to Freedom" to record the path taken by fugitives through the farm. ■



UGRR Songs

Wade in the Water

"Wade in the water,
Wade in the water, children,
Wade in the water,
God's gonna trouble the water."

Steal Away to Jesus

"Steal away, steal away, steal away to
Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home, I ain't
got long to stay here!
My Lord calls me, He calls me by the
thunder;
The trumpet sounds with in a my soul,

I ain't got long to stay here....

Green trees are bending, Poor sinner
stands atremblin.....

Tombstones are bursting, Poor sinner
stands atremblin..."

Go Down, Moses

"When Israel was in Egypt land, 'Let
my people go.'

Oppressed so hard they could not
stand, 'Let my people go.'

Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt
land,

Tell ol' Pharaoh to let my peo- ple
go."

Follow the Drinking Gourd

"Follow the drinking gourd,
Follow the drinking gourd,
For the old man say, 'Follow the drink-
ing gourd..."

The river's bank is a very good road,
The dead trees show the way:
Left foot, peg foot going on, Follow the
drinking gourd....

The river ends between two hills, Fol-
low the drinking gourd;
Another river on the other side, Follow
the drinking gourd."

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

"Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for
to carry me home,

Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for
to carry me home.

I looked over Jordan and what did I
see, comin' for to carry me
home,
A band of angels acomin' after me,
Comin' for to carry me home."

Gospel Train is Coming

"The Gospel Train is coming, I hear it
just at hand,
I hear the car wheels moving,
And rumbling through the land.
Get on board, little children.
Get on board, little children.
Get on board, little children.
For there's room for many a more."

This Train

"This train is bound for glory, this
train!
This train is bound for glory, this train!
This train is bound for glory!
If you ride it, you must be holy, this
train is bound for glory, this
train!

This train don't pull no gamblers, this
train!

This train don't pull no gamblers, this
train!

This train don't pull no gamblers!
Neither don't pull no midnight ram-
blers, this train don't pull no
gamblers, this train!

This train don't pull no jokers, this
train!

This train don't pull no jokers, this
train!

This train don't pull no jokers!
Cigarette puffers and cigar smokers,
This train don't pull no jokers, this
train!

Michael, Row Your Boat Ashore

"Michael, row your boat ashore,
Alleluia
Michael, row your boat ashore,
Alleluia.

Jordan's River is chilly and cold,
Alleluia,
Kills the body but not the soul,
Alleluia.

Jordan's River is deep and wide,
Alleluia.

Meet my mother on the other side,
Alleluia."

O, Wasn't Dat A Wide River?

"O, Wasn't dat a wide river, dat river
of Jordan, Lord.

Wide river! Dere's one mor' river to
cross,

O, wasn't dat a wide river, dat river of
Jordan, Lord,

Wide river! Dere's one mo' river to
cross.

O, de river of Jordan is so wide, One
mo' river to cross.

I don't know how to get on de other

side. One mo' river to cross."

On their arrival in Canada, the freed slaves would sing "Great Day" and "Amazing Grace" in joy and celebration. ■

Local Visits

Murphy Orchards in Lockport offers UGRR re-enactments through a trail, with three stations with interpreters. They sing spirituals, run from bounty hunters, and end with Carol Murphy waving them into the farm

Motherland Connexions with Kevin Cottrell—282-1028
(www.motherlandconnexions.com) He offers tours of Western New York's UGRR sites, dressed as a Freedom Fighter of the period.

Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society. Notice the stone tablet carved by Edmond Amateis on the upper front right of the entrance. It depicts escaping slaves being escorted to the Black Rock Ferry.

Niagara's Freedom Trail: an African-American/African-Canadian Heritage Tour. This is a self-guided tour that includes sites in Ontario. Call Niagara Economic & Tourism Corporation at 800-263-2988.

"Stations of the Underground Railroad," Developed by Castellani Art Museum at Niagara University, seven sculptures at locations where runaway slaves had been sheltered in Niagara County and Niagara-on-the-Lake. ■

Bibliography

Abraham Lincoln, Ingri and Edgar D'Aulaire.

Beautifully illustrated picture book with many fascinating details about Lincoln's early life. Average reading level

Across Five Aprils, Irene Hunt.

Engrossing chapter book about the Civil War, which began in April 1861 and ended in April on 1865. Average/challenging

American Girls' Addy series by Connie Porter

Very popular fiction series with many true facts and settings embedded, such as the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky, Faith Ringgold, 1992, Crown Publishers.

Brightly colored easy picture book based on Harriet Tubman's dreams as a guide, Cassie retraces the steps es-

caping slaves took on the Underground Railroad in order to reunite with her younger brother. Easy fiction.

Cobblestone: The Antislavery Movement, Feb. 1993.

Contains a play entitled, "The Douglas 'Station of the Underground Railroad'" by Glennette Tilley Turner. It tells of Harriet Tubman delivering fugitives in Rochester.

Also included is a recipe for Maple Sugar Cupcakes, to encourage abolitionists to boycott sugar harvested by slave labor. "Feast not on the toil, pain and misery of the wretched... Sugar made at home must possess a sweeter flavor to an independent American of the north, than that which is mingled with the groans and tears of slavery."--1840 Vermont almanac (Cobblestone)

Daily Life on a Southern Plantation, 1853, by Paul Erickson, 1997.

A detailed portrait of a cotton plantation in the Deep South before the Civil War with a timeline, glossary and list of places to visit.

Drinking Gourd, The, F. N. Monjo, 1970, Harper Trophy. Tommy learns about the Underground Railroad when he discovers that his father is hiding runaway slaves in the barn. Easy fiction.

Escape by Richard A. Boning
Caitlin recommends this book because it tells the true story of how two slaves escaped. A girl didn't know how to write and read so she dressed up as a boy with a cast.

Follow the Drinking Gourd, Jeanette Winter, 1988, Alfred A. Knopf.
Beautiful folk art illustrations tell the story of a slave family's escaping to freedom on the Underground Railroad by following the directions in a song. Easy fiction.

From Sea to Shining Sea: A Treasury of American Folklore and Folk Songs, compiled by Amy Cohn.
The chapter entitled "Let My People Go" is illustrated by Jerry Pinkney and contains five spirituals.

Get on Board: The Story of the Underground Railroad, Jim Haskins, 1993.
12 chapter book that describes how the Underground Railroad evolved, how it worked, and the people who led slaves to freedom. Good timeline. Challenging non-fiction

Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Beecher Preachers, Jean Fritz. .
Average/challenging.

Harriet Tubman and the Black History Month, by Polly Carter, 1990.
Examines the experiences of the run-

away slave who risked her life to help others through the Underground Railroad. Beautiful black-scratch illustrations by Brian Pinkney.

Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad, by Dan Elish

Alex recommends this book because it tells about how Miss Susam whipped Harriet and gave her scars. Her most important trip was her last one, for her family.

The Last Safe House, Barbara Greenwood, 1998, Scholastic.

The story of a family in St. Catharines, Ontario, in 1856, whose lives are changed when they are asked to help Eliza Jackson, a black girl escaping from slavery. Highly recommended!

If You Travelled on the Underground Railroad, Ellen Levine, 1988

Questions and answers with many fascinating details about the UGRR. Great resource!

I'm Going to Sing: Black American Spirituals, and Walk Together Children: Black American Spirituals, Ashley Bryan, 1981

Journey to Freedom: A Story of the Underground Railroad, Courtni C. Wright, 1994.

Picture book about Joshua and his family, runaway slaves from a tobacco

plantation in Kentucky, follow the Underground Railroad to freedom.

Lincoln: A Photobiography, Russell Freedman. Clarion Books, 1987.

A Newbery Medal-winning book about Lincoln's life, well told and richly documented by photographs. Good read-aloud. Challenging non-fiction.

Many Thousand Gone: African Americans from Slavery to Freedom, by Virginia Hamilton, 1993, Alfred A. Knopf. Chapter book that recounts the journey of black slaves to freedom via the Underground Railroad to the Emancipation Proclamation.

Nettie's Trip South, Ann Turner, 1987, Macmillan.

A ten-year-old girl from a northern city experiences the reality of slavery when she visits Richmond, Virginia, and sees a slave auction. Easy fiction.

Obadiah the Bold, Brinton Turkle, 1988.

A young Nantucket Quaker boy's desire to be a pirate is quelled by his brothers and sisters during a game. It reveals the unique characteristics of Quaker speech, clothing and worship.

Pink and Say, Patricia Polacco. Easy/average

Touching story of young soldiers from the Civil War, based on a true story.

Secret Signs: Along the Underground Railroad, Anita Riggio, Picture book, Boyds Mills Press, ages 4-8.

In the mid-1800s, a boy and his mother help support themselves by making panoramic eggs of maple sugar. The boy, Luke, who is deaf, paints pictures that fit neatly inside the eggs. When a man bursts into their home and accuses them of hiding slaves, Luke's mother can honestly deny the charge. But she is that very day planning to meet their contact on the Underground Railroad to pass along information about the next "safe haven." Luke's mother is held at home, but the boy uses his creative talents to help make the connection.

Sojourner Truth, Ain't I a Woman? by Patricia C. McKissack & Fredrick McKissack, 1992, grades 4 to 9. Her size, (six feet tall) an abiding faith in God, and the determination to correct injustice set Belle apart from other slave girls. Quaker friends helped her gain freedom. Calling herself Sojourner Truth, this remarkable woman captivated listeners with the simple truth about slavery and oppression.

Sojourner Truth and the Voice of Freedom, Jane Shumate, 1991.

Sojourner Truth dedicated her life to achieving equal rights for blacks and women. Her courage, drive, and speaking talent inspired many people. This

tall, deep-voiced former slave helped plant the seeds of equal rights for all.

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt, Deborah Hopkinson. Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.

Beautifully illustrated story of a young slave who stitches a quilted map that guides her to freedom in the North. Average fiction.

To Be a Slave, by Julius Lester. Scholastic, Inc., 1968.

Men and women who lived in slavery tell in their own dialect how it felt to be slaves. Challenging non-fiction.

Two Tickets to Freedom: The True Story of Ellen and William Craft, Fugitive Slaves. Florence B. Freedman, by Simon and Schuster, 1971.

Ellen and William Craft escaped to freedom in Philadelphia and encountered difficulty living free in the North because of the FSL of 1850. Challenging non-fiction.

Who Comes with Cannons? by Patricia Beatty, 1992, grades 4 to 10.

A Quaker family operating a station on the Underground Railroad in NC soon finds it necessary to use this escape route themselves. As soldiers on both sides of the war harass them, Truth Hopkins proves her loyalty to this strong family.

Websites

www.npca.org

www.UndergroundRailroad.org/UndergroundRailroad

www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad

www.nps.gov/undergroundrr

www.nyhistory.com/harriettubman

www.nyhistory.com/UndergroundRailroad

www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~desnmore/ for Western New York accounts of fugitive slave cases

Integrated Tasks

Language Arts

Write newspaper articles about runaway slaves, from both viewpoints.

Write poems or journals of runaway slaves.

Social Studies

Plot routes on maps.

Figuring from mileage distance charts, estimate how long one of these unpaved routes would take if covered in wagons travelling at night. Estimate if traveled by foot, in different seasons, now on superhighways.

Art

Collect a display of artifacts from African or African-American history, such as kente cloth, masks, and carvings.

Make and play a mancala game. Mancala is a traditional African board game using a playing board with cups to hold counters.

Make a diorama of an UGRR hiding spot.

Design a house with ingenious hiding places.

Make silhouettes of people traveling at night.

Music

Make African instruments such as xylophones, drums, rattles from gourds.

Values

Discuss the courage, perseverance, justice, kindness, and compassion shown by the UGRR heroes.

Science

Predict the next moonless night without a calendar.

Learn to identify the North Star and the Big Dipper.

Math

How much would the \$1000 fine be now?

Land cost \$1.25 an acre then. Find out how much land costs now in your town. ■



Thanks..

to so many who made this project possible. First was the impetus provided by the grant from **Erie BOCES I**. A great deal of information was provided by **Kevin Cottrell** of Motherland Connexions and his inspiring field trip.

William Loos generously provided assistance in locating Anti-Slavery primary documents from the Rare Book Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library. The Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society also made available primary documents for us.

Chris Densmore shared more primary documents and an expertise in the UGRR history. **John Conlin** and **Stephanie McCormick** taught the process of archeological restoration to our Young Yorkers group for an excellent field trip. **Charlie Fisher** visited our club and inspired us onto this path originally.

Karen Stuart Marino provided her editor's eye to the details and **Jake Francis** revived my computer after the Crash of April. **Pat Leach** patiently endured the copying requests along the way.

Thanks also to the support of our principal **Peter Walders** and to the excellent children of the Young Yorkers Club and their supportive families! ■

Underground Railroad in Western New York

- I. Evils of Slavery**
 - A. Africa to America**
 - B. Uncle Tom's Cabin upset people about slavery.**
 - C. Quakers**
 - D. Abolitionists**
- II. Tricks to Escape**
 - A. Warning Signs**
 - 1. Songs with Hidden Meanings**
 - 2. Quilts**
- III. Important Events**
 - A. Compromise of 1850**
 - B. Emancipation Proclamation**
- IV. Famous People**
 - A. Harriet Tubman**
 - B. William Lloyd Garrison**
 - C. Harriet Beecher Stowe**
 - D. Mary Talbert**
 - E. W.E.B. DuBois**
 - F. William Wells Brown**
 - G. Sojourner Truth**
- V. Western New York**
 - A. Fredonia**
 - B. Sardinia**
 - C. East Aurora**
 - D. Griffins Mills**
 - 1. McCormack House**
 - 2. Congregationalist Church**
 - 3. Judge Phelps House**
 - 4. Minutes of Anti-Slavery Society**
 - 5. Liberty Party**
 - E. Orchard Park**

*He used
"Inspiration"
to organize
our thoughts.*

1. Baker House

2. Quakers

F. Lancaster

1. Hull House

G. Buffalo

1. Michigan Avenue Church

2. William Wells Brown

3. W. Ferry Street

4. Fosdick

H. Niagara Falls

1. Bridge

I. Lewiston

J. Lockport

VI. Bibliography

A. Tasks

B. DBQ

C. Websites

VII. Miscellaneous Thoughts

A. Timeline

B. Word Search

C. Maps

D. Graphs

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS



constituting
NEW-YORK YEARLY
MEETING OF FRIENDS
 by
J. Rickatson
 1821.

- H** Yearly Meeting
- H** Quarterly do
- H** Monthly do
- H** Preparative do
- H** Meeting for Worship

By **1821**, Western New York had three towns where monthly Meetings of Friends were held. Where were they? _____, _____, and _____

In which three towns of Western New York were people simply meeting for worship?
 _____, _____ and _____

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

Directions:

This task is based on the accompanying documents. Some of these documents may have been edited for the purpose of this task. The essay will test your ability to work with historical documents. As you analyze the document, take into account both the source of the document and the author's point of view.

Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction with a thesis statement, several paragraphs explaining the thesis and a conclusion.

Analyze the documents.

- Use evidence from the documents to support your position.
- Do not simply repeat the contents of the document.
- Include specific related outside information.

Historical Context: At the beginning of our country's history, slavery existed in the North as well as the South. But opinions on the "peculiar institution" of slavery soon began to change.

Task: By using the following documents, as well as your background knowledge of slavery in American history, evaluate the thesis that the North and South became alienated from each other because of their differing positions on the right to own slaves.

Provide (3) three specific examples that compare the different viewpoints of the North and the South that led to the Civil War.

Part A:

Short Answer

The documents give examples of the ideas, philosophy or actions that either the North or the South held regarding slavery. Examine the documents carefully and then answer the questions that follow each document.

The NEW ENGLAND
Weekly JOURNAL

Containing the most Remarkable Occurrences Foreign & Domestick

Monday April 8 1728

Document 1--The New England Weekly Journal of April 8, 1728

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

¶ Mr. Nath. Pigott intends to open a School on Monday next, for the Instruction of Negro's, in Reading, Catechizing, & Writing if required, if any are so well inclined as to send their Servants to said School near Mr. Checkley's Meeting-House, care will be taken for their Instruction as aforesaid.

+++ Just Published

The Nature and Necessity of REPENTANCE, with the Means and Motives to it. A Discourse occasion'd by the Earthquake. By the Rev. Mr. John Rogers, Pastor of the Church in Boxford. Sold by S. Gerrish, in Cornhill Boston.

☞ Choice New Coffee to be Sold by Arthur Savage at his House in Brattle-Street Boston for Eight Shillings per Pound.

☞ A very Likely Negro Woman - who can do Household Work, and is fit either for Town or Country Service, about 22 Years of Age, to be Sold, Inquire of the Printer hereof.

☞ A very Likely Negro Girl, about 13 or 14 Years of Age, speaks good English, has been in the Country some Years, to be Sold, Inquire of the Printer hereof.

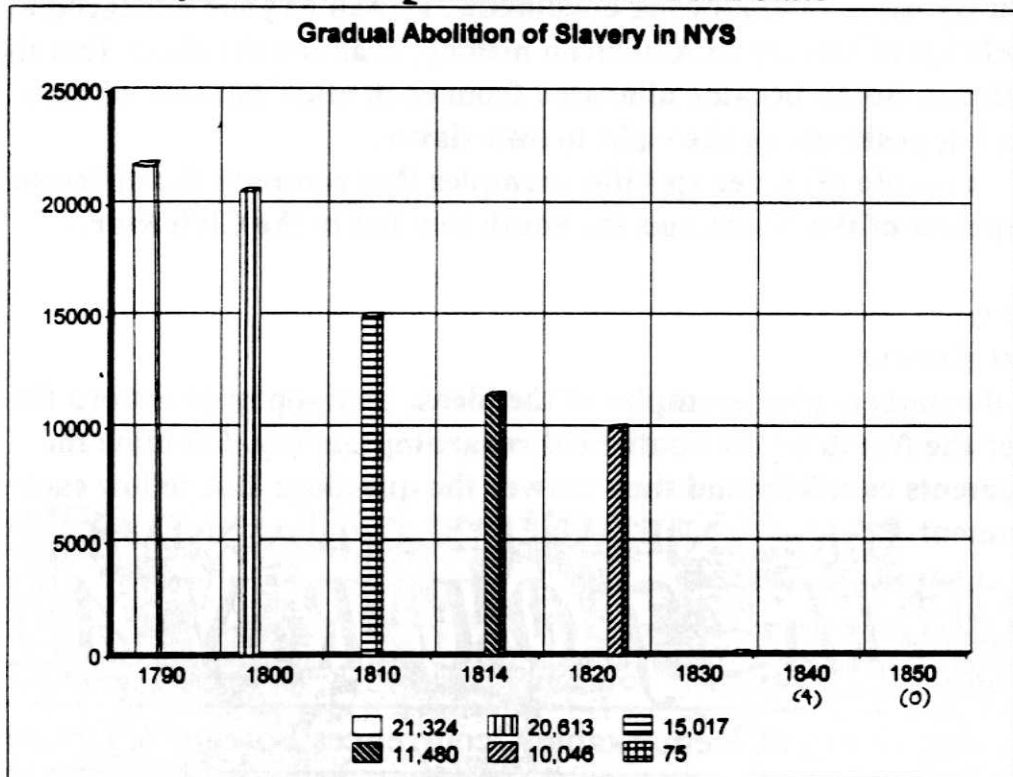
From the Anti-slavery Collection of the Grosvenor Rare Book Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

In what city are these sales of Negroes being offered?

What indication is there that whites were willing to help educate black servants?

BOSTON: Printed by S. KNEELAND & T. GREEN, at the Queen-Street, where Advertisements are taken

Document 2—Graph of Slave Population in New York State



In what ten year period did the number of slaves in New York State drop the most?

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

Document 3--Gradual Abolition of Slavery Law of March 29, 1817

Every child born of a slave in NYS after July 4, 1799, should be born free but will be the servant of the mother's owner until the male child reaches the age of 28; and the female reaches the age of 25. The child was bound to service of the mother's owner, who must support the child as long as he or she is bound to the owner. All other children were to be free at age 21, after passage of this bill.

By July 4, 1827, all slaves in the state were intended to be free.

In what year was the U.S.A. 50 years old? _____

What was happening to black slaves in New York as we got closer to the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence?

Why do you think men were kept in servant status longer than women under the law?

Why didn't the mother support the child?

What was the role of the child's father?

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

100 Dollars REWARD.

RAN AWAY from the subscriber, living near Charlestown, Jefferson County, Va., on Sunday night, the 23d inst., a Negro Man, named

JIM,

About 35 years of age, about 5 feet 6 or 7 inches high, slender made, and of rather a down look when spoken to; no marks recollected. He had on, when he absconded, a drab linsey coat, trowsers and jacket, and a drab liasey or cloth over coat, a black wool hat, and high shoes, double-soled and nailed. Jim is fond of whiskey.

Twenty dollars reward will be given for the apprehension and recovery of said negro in Virginia; \$50 if taken in Maryland; or \$100 if taken in Pennsylvania and secured so that I get him again.

SAMUEL W. LIGHT.

November 25, 1834.

From the Collection of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society

Document 4—Handbill for Reward for Finding Jim

In what state was Jim a slave? _____

In what year? _____

What kind of information does this handbill tell us about Jim?

Why do you think the reward would increase as Jim moved northward? _____

How do you think Jim felt if he saw this handbill? _____

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

Document 5--Bill of Sale for Henry

CLARKE & GRUBB, NEGRO BROKERS.	Atlanta, Ga. Oct 1, 1862
	Received of <u>Thomas Alexander</u> <u>Fifty</u> Dollars, being in full for the purchase of <u>one</u> Negro Slave named <u>Henry</u> <u>about twenty years of age</u> the right and title of said Slave warrant and defend against the claims of all persons whatsoever, and likewise warrant <u>him</u> sound and healthy. As witness <u>my</u> Hand and Seal.
	<u>W. H. Robinson</u> (SEAL)

From the Collection of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society

How much was paid for Henry? _____

In what city and state was this sale made? _____

What law will soon be passed that will make this a very bad investment? In what year?

What role, if any, do you think Henry had in this transaction?

Describe how he may have felt at this sale.

Part B:

Essay Response

In a well-constructed essay, you are to explain how and why the North and South became alienated from each other because of their positions on the right to own slaves. You will need to use three (3) specific examples of ideas or actions that compare the different viewpoints of the North and the South.