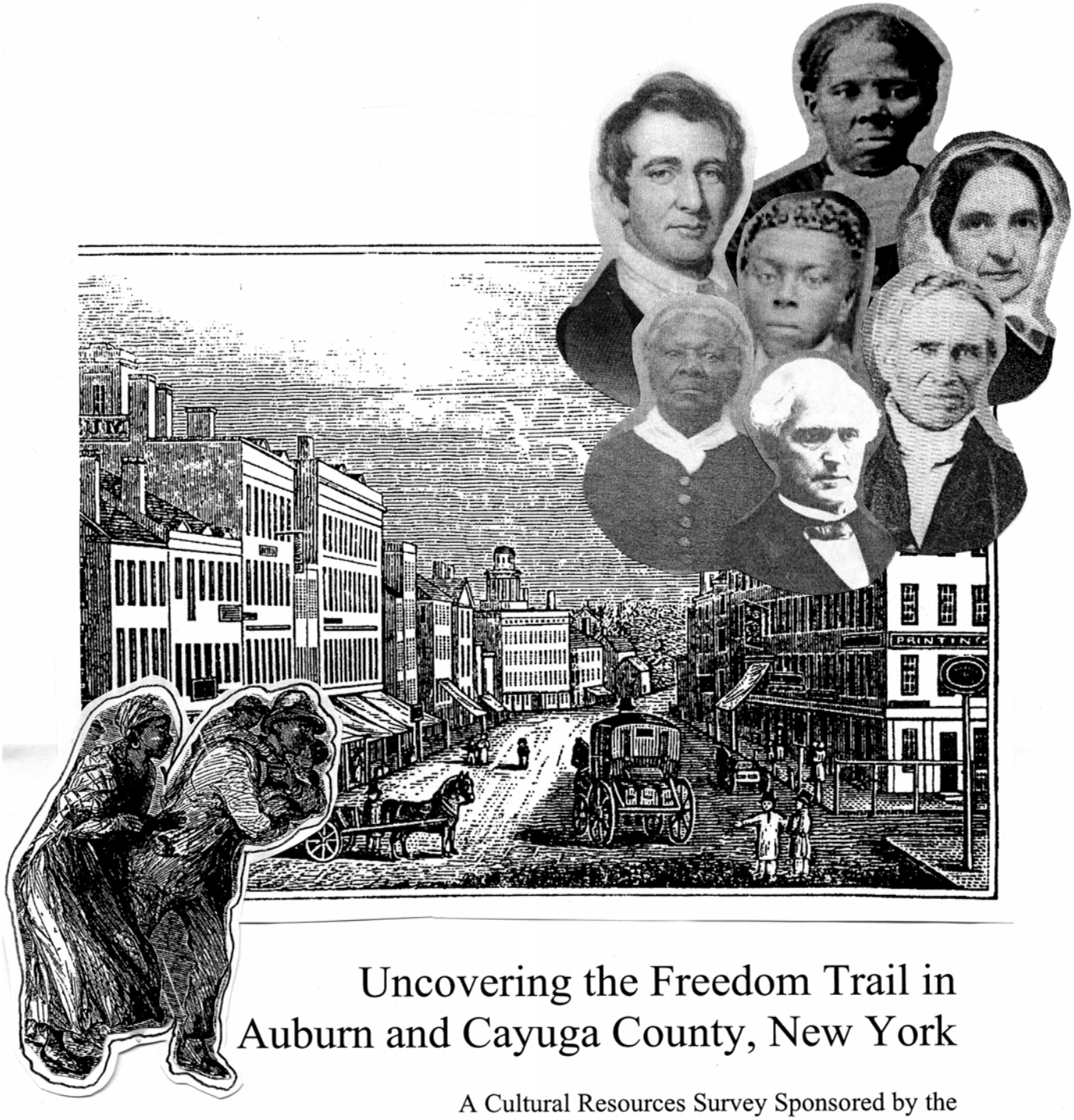


Uncovering the Freedom Trail in Auburn and Cayuga County, New York

A Cultural Resources Survey Sponsored by the
City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board and the
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York
2004-05

Judith Wellman, Project Coordinator
Historical New York Research Associates

Images on Cover:

"Eastern part of Genesee-street, Auburn." John W. Barber and Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of the State of New York* (New York: S. Tuttle, 1842), 75.

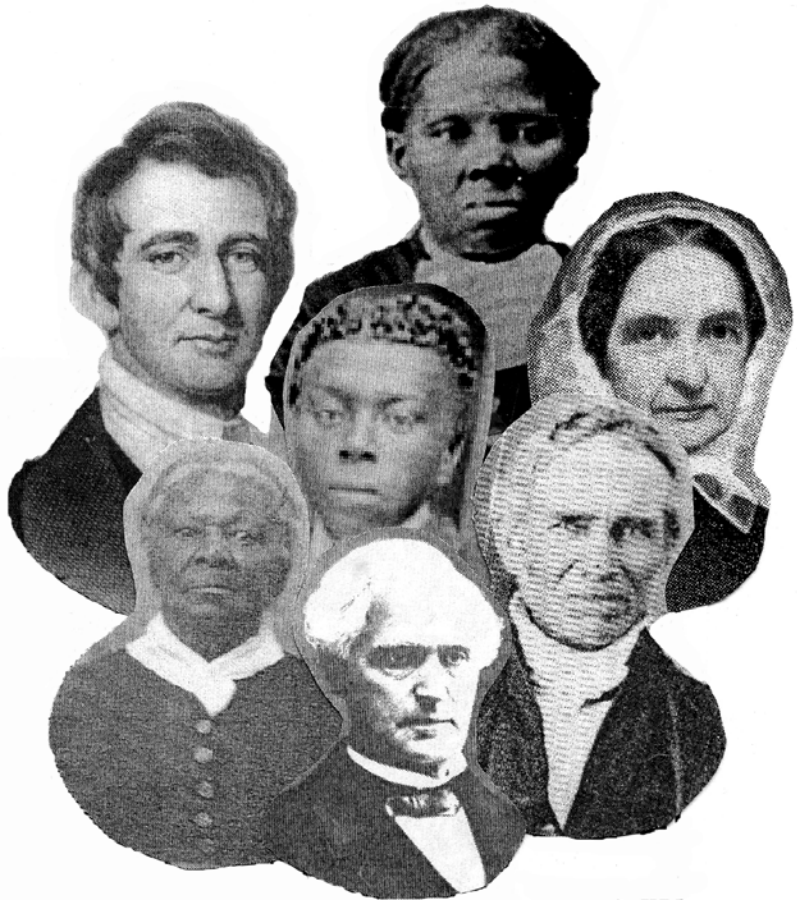
Selection from Oslek, "Twenty-eight fugitives escaping from the eastern shore of Maryland," in William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1872), 68, reprinted (Medford, New Jersey: Plexus Publishing, Inc., 2005).

Harriet Tubman. Courtesy of Cayuga Museum.

William Henry Stewart, Sr. c. 1860s. Courtesy of Stewart Family Archives.

Slocum Howland. Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County* (

Martha Wright. Courtesy of Smith College.



Key to photos, clockwise, beginning at top:

1. Harriet Tubman, freedom seeker who make about thirteen trips back into Maryland, bringing about 70 people into freedom. Bought land on South Street in Auburn in 1857 and brought many of her family and friends from Maryland here. *Courtesy of Cayuga Museum, Auburn, New York.*

2. Martha Wright, of Quaker background, sister of Lucretia Mott, one of the organizers of the woman's rights convention in Seneca Falls. Friend of Frances Seward, Lazette Worden (Seward's sister), and Harriet Tubman. Strong abolitionist. Used her home on Genesee Street as a stop on the Underground Railroad. John Becker, *History of the Village of Waterloo* (Waterloo, 1949).

3. Slocum Howland. Quaker who made his home and store in Sherwood, New York, one of the most important stops on the Underground Railroad in central New York. His daughter, Emily Howland, taught in Freedmen's Schools and became an important supporter of African American and woman's rights. *Courtesy of Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College.*

4. Abijah Fitch. Abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter who sold much land on Chapman Avenue and Garrow, Fitch, and Parker Streets to freedom seekers. *Courtesy of Cayuga County Historian 's Office.*

5. Harriet Bogart, who (with her husband Nicholas Bogart) worked for the Seward family all of their adult lives. Lived on Miller Street. *Courtesy of the Seward House, Auburn, New York.*

6. William Henry Seward. He and his wife, Frances Seward, used their house as an Underground Railroad station, while Seward was U.S. Senator from New York. Became Secretary of State under Lincoln. *Courtesy of the Seward House, Auburn, New York.*

7. William Henry Stewart, Sr. Center photo. Freedom seeker who escaped from Maryland on Christmas Eve, 1854. Came to Auburn after the war with his son, William Henry Stewart, Jr., whose house still stands at Garrow and Chapman Avenue. *Courtesy of the Stewart Family Archives.*

Uncovering the Freedom Trail in Auburn and Cayuga County, New York

A Cultural Resources Survey of
Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and
African American Life in
Auburn and Cayuga County, New York

Sponsored by
City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board and
Cayuga County Historian's Office

Funded by Preserve New York
A Program of the Preservation League of New York State and the
New York State Council on the Arts

Judith Wellman, Project Coordinator
Historical New York Research Associates
2004-2005

This report prepared by Judith Wellman, Director
Historical New York Research Associates
September 2005

Dedicated to

all those
who sought freedom,
who assisted freedom seekers, or
who now tell their stories or preserve their buildings.

"THE Lake District in Central New York deserves to be better known by American tourists and scholars, and especially by the citizens of the Empire State."

Rev. R.B. Welch, "The Lake District in Central New York," *Ladies Repository* (October 1864), 601.[1]

[1] Thanks to Bill Hecht for finding this.

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Preface

In 1860, Harriet Tubman made her last trip to Dorchester County, Maryland. She wanted desperately to bring out her sister Rachel and Rachel's two children, Ben and Angerine. Although she waited for them in a wood, in a "blinding snow storm and a raging wind," they did not come. Rachel had died. Instead, Tubman brought out the Ennals family--Stephen and Maria and their three small children, six-year-old Harriet, four-year-old Amanda, and the three-month-old baby, along with a poor woman "in a delicate state," and a man named John.[1]

The trip was one of the most harrowing journeys that Harriot had ever undertaken. She went first to the home of Thomas Garrett, a Quaker in Wilmington, Delaware, who felt that Harriet had "a special angel to guard her on her journey of mercy." Slave catchers, "wretches," were everywhere. Garrett gave Harriet ten dollars to hire a carriage to take Maria Ennals and the children to Chester County, perhaps to the home of Dr. Bartholomew Fussell or his niece Graceanna Lewis, a common destination. [2] When they reached Philadelphia, William Still, keeper of the main safe house there, reported that Harriet brought her party "out of the prison-house of bondage," "through great tribulation." [3]

Their trials were not over, however. It took them almost four weeks to reach Auburn from Thomas Garrett's house. Harriet suffered frostbite, and they were all physically exhausted. Arriving at one home where she had previously received aid, Harriet Tubman rapped to give her usual signal, only to find that a white man now occupied the building. She and her party hurried to a small island in the middle of a swamp, wading through the water with the baby in a basket , drugged with paregoric to keep it quiet, and hiding in the damp grass. Kate Clifford Larson, following Sarah Bradford's account, as told by Tubman herself, told what happened nest:

> Eventually a Quaker man appeared, "slowly walking along the solid pathway on the edge of the swamp." Tubman and the others, thinking he was "talking to himself," finally realized he was giving them instructions to get to his nearby barn, where a horse and wagon filled with provisions awaited them. A seemingly miraculous answer to Tubman's prayer, Bradford later wrote, "never seemed to strike her as at all strange or mysterious; her prayer was the prayer of faith, and she expected an answer."[4]

Hiding in the woods by day, they waited for Tubman to return with food. She would whistle or sing hymns to let them know she was there.

They finally reached Auburn in late December. On December 30, 1860, Martha Wright wrote to her daughter Ellen that people "had been expending our sympathies, as well as congratulations,

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[1] Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, An American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2004), 185; William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphis, 1872), 531.
[2] Thomas Garrett to William Still, 12th month, 1st day, 1860, quoted in William Still, *The Underground Railroad,* 531.
[3] Kate Clifford Larson, email October 19, 2004; William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 530-31, http://www.quinnipiac.edu/other/abl/etext/ugrr/ugrr.html.
[4] Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land,* tells the story of the Ennals family, 185-89; email October 19, 2004.

on seven newly arrived slaves that Harriet Tubman has just pioneered safely from the Southern part of Maryland." They had "walked all night, carrying the little ones, and spread the comfort on the frozen ground, in some dense thicket, where they all hid."[5]

This story illustrates in detail all the major components of a classic Underground Railroad story: secrecy, fear of slave catchers, hiding in swamps, hunger, help from Quakers, Tubman's reliance on prayer, use of songs as signals, and finally safety in a northern white person's home. So compelling were stories such as this one that, in the popular imagination, much of the Underground Railroad became associated with them and with Harriet Tubman herself. Mention the Underground Railroad today, and people think immediately of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass. Nowhere is this truer than in Auburn, New York, where Harriet Tubman purchased a home in 1857 and lived from the early 1860s until the end of her long life in 1913.

Yet the name "Harriet Tubman" is not a synonym for the Underground Railroad. Tubman arrived in Auburn toward the end of a long period of Underground Railroad activism in Auburn and Cayuga County, upstate New York, and in the north in general. She came to Auburn because she found a well-organized network of both African Americans and European Americans who had supported the Underground Railroad since at least the mid-1830s.

This survey, entitled "Historic Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn and Cayuga County," uncovered the beginnings of this much longer story. Sponsored by the City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board, in conjunction with the Cayuga County Historian's Office, the survey was funded by Preserve New York, a grant program of the Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts. It was carried out from September 2004 to September 2005 under the direction of Judith Wellman, Director, Historical New York Research Associates.

With research support from people throughout Cayuga County and guidance from Cayuga County citizens, the project identified one hundred sites relating to these themes throughout Cayuga County, sixty of them in the City of Auburn. The project focused on standing buildings, but we did include descriptions of particularly important places for which no buildings exist, include sites relating to Tubman's own family. Many more sites could be included as probable Underground Railroad sites, including farms of families whose names appeared as housing African Americans in at least two census records. Names and sites of people possibly affiliated with the Underground Railroad are listed on our project database, available on the web, even if sites related to them are no longer standing.

Focusing on extant buildings, the project nominated seven sites to the National Park Service's Network to Freedom program (all of them accepted), seven sites to the National Register of Historic Places (of which four were accepted as of September 2005), and one more site to New York State's Underground Railroad Heritage Trail. Through the efforts of the Howland Stone Store Museum, the entire village of Sherwood was also nominated as one of the Preservation League's Seven to Save sites for 2006.

Results of this survey, including this report, all databases (more than 2500 names of all African Americans from every census between 1820 and 1870; a project database of more than 600 names of people directly associated with abolitionism and the Underground Railroad; and a list of

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[5] Martha Wright to Ellen Wright Garrision, December 30, 1860, Garrison Family Papers, Smith College, quoted in Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 189, 187, and Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 45-46.

sites related to abolitionists, freedom seekers, and the Underground Railroad in Auburn, as identified from city directories) will be available on the web through the Cayuga County GebWeb site and the Cayuga County Historian's Office. Copies of primary sources are available through local libraries and historical societies.

Harriet Tubman came to Auburn for a very good reason: People in Auburn and Cayuga County—both African Americans and European Americans—had been active on the Underground Railroad for twenty-five years before she settled there. The presence of William Henry Seward (and of Harriet and Nicholas Bogart, African Americans who worked for the Seward's for fifty years) linked Auburn's abolitionist community to events of national importance. The presence of Quakers in the central part of the county connected Cayuga County abolitionists to the Underground Railroad network in southeast Pennsylvania and Delaware associated with William Still, Bartholomew Fussell, and Thomas Garrett.

These buildings in Auburn and Cayuga County are extremely well documented. Some of them are associated with some of the most dramatic stories of the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, and African American life anywhere. Others document the lives of ordinary people who made it out of slavery to raise their families in relative safety and freedom. Still others tell the stories of European Americans who dedicated their lives to helping these freedom seekers and abolishing slavery throughout the nation.

Many of these sites, and the stories that go with them, have turned out to be of national significance, so the rewards will be, we hope, truly magnificent, worth all the energy that everyone has given, bringing attention not only to the Underground Railroad story in Auburn and Cayuga County and throughout New York State and the nation. In some cases, further work may identify more sites relating to the Underground Railroad, especially in Union Springs (where Daniel Anthony and George Howland, who hired Frederick Douglass at his wharf in New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1840, might have been involved), Weedsport, Genoa, and Sterling. Research on local people listed in the project database who had African Americans living in their households for two or more census years might also prove useful.

As you drive through Cayuga County today, time folds back upon itself, in accordion-style pleats. You can't forget the past. You are tessered in a time warp. You hear yourself talking in a normal voice, but people around you speak of Harriet Tubman and Emily Howland as "Aunt Harriet" and "Miss Emily" as if these women might at any moment appear among us.

And, indeed, houses and their landscapes enhance that feeling. Walking down Chapman Avenue to the corner of Garrow Street, you see a streetscape created by freedom seekers and their Irish neighbors in the late 1860s, with small story-and-half or two story frame houses, most with gable ends to the street and small yards, many still inhabited by descendants of those families.

Near Port Byron, William O. Duvall's home and tenant house still stand on a point of land, surrounded by the Seneca River and marshy lowlands, with a road sign pointing toward "Hayti," the name given to the area by local people because Duvall hired so many African Americans to work on his farm.

Farther south, on roads that freedom seekers would surely have traveled, the landscape is stark and spare. Broad fields drop down in sweeping vistas to Cayuga Lake. You ride close to the sky.

New York State markers remind you that you travel through old Cayuga Indian lands, along old Haudenosaunee pathways.

Using this report and the people of Cayuga County as guides, we invite you take both a virtual journey and a physical journey through this landscape, seeking out the buildings that still tell the stories of freedom seekers and those who helped them.

* * * *

This project is the work of a whole team of people, If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a whole county to conduct a survey of this magnitude, and the results are a tribute to the hard work of people throughout Auburn and Cayuga County. Their work and spirit shines on every page. Chief among them are Michael Long, Capital Improvement Program Manger for the City of Auburn, vision inspired this project and all of us from beginning to end, and Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian, who enthusiastically supported this work, generously sharing her time and resources, coordinating local historians throughout the county and surveying local histories for every reference to the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, and African American life. We especially appreciate the support of the City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board (including Michael Deming, Chairman, and members Ellen Clark, Betty Mae Lewis, David "Sam" Swan, James E. Hutchinson, Christina J. Selvek and Judith Bryant), who sponsored this project; Timothy Lattimore, Mayor of Auburn; the City Council of Auburn (including members Robert E. Hunter, Thomas D. McNabb, William F. Jacobs, and David J. Dempsey), and City Manager John L. Salomone, who gave an additional grant to this project for the summer of 2005.

Researchers for this project included Tanya Warren, whose work in property records was nothing less than astounding and whose database management formed the backbone for all our work; Judith Bryant, whose work in local oral histories and city directories connected Auburn's nineteenth century African American history to the families who carry it on in the twentieth century; Rev. Paul Carter and Christine Carter, Curators of the Tubman Home, who graciously opened their facilities for our first two meetings of the Advisory Board and who cheered us onward through the whole year; Peter Wisbey, Director of the Seward House, who gave us a warm welcome at the Seward Home and shared his extensive research on African Americans and the Seward family; and members of the Board of the Howland Stone Store Museum in Sherwood (especially Bradley Mitchell, Brian Chappell, Trudy Buxenbaum, and Patricia White), who generously shared their time, research, and space to increase our understanding of the important role of the Howlands and Cayuga County Quakers. Many local historians provided inspiration to all of us, as they shared their knowledge and detailed research about events, buildings, and families, both African American and European American. Sheila Edmunds, Aurora Village Historian; Judy Furness, Ledyard Town Historian; Penny Helzer, Port Byron Village Historian; Mike Riley, Mentz Town Historian; Anthony Gero, Owasco historian, and Hallie Sweeting, Sterling Town Historian have been especially helpful. Jane Simkins provided amazingly detailed information about Quaker families and meetings in Cayuga County. Joni Lincoln produced an extensive report on Methodist minister William Hosmer. Audrey and Ken Mochel, pastors at the Auburn Unitarian Church, have generously shared their findings from the diary of John Austin, Unitarian minister in Auburn in the mid-nineteenth century.

Five consultants—Beth Crawford, of Crawford and Stearns, Architects and Preservation Planners; Kate Clifford Larson, author of *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, An American Hero*; Milton Sernett, Professor, African American Studies Department, Syracuse University; Mary Loe, of the State University of New York at Oswego; and Christopher Densmore, Curator of the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College--shared their

extensive knowledge and made this project a true joy. Doug Armstrong shared the work of his archeology students at the Tubman Home. Carrie Barrett, an intern from the State University of New York at Oswego, helped write nominations to the National Register and the Network to Freedom. Thanks to Bonnie Ryan for finding the drawing of freedom seekers from Maryland in William Still's *Underground Railroad* (1872) that we used on our cover. And then there is Bernie Corcoran, in a class by himself, who has (with the help of many people, including Bill Hecht and his superb scanned images) made the Cayuga County GenWeb site into the gold standard for all GenWeb sites, He has generously shared his skills both as a webmaster and as map maker.

No historical research project could ever succeed without keepers of the records, and Cayuga County has been blessed both with good records and cheerful and efficient keepers, including Sue Dwyer, Cayuga County Clerk; William Hulick, Director of Cayuga Records Retention Office; Bonnie Boughton, whose cheerful assistance with retrieving records made working in that office a pleasure; Alan Kozlowski, Director of the Real Property Tax Office; Sally Otis, Librarian and Hazard Library, Poplar Ridge; and Mary Gilmore, librarian at the Local History section of Seymour Library. Each of these has been so knowledgeable and so willing to take extra time to find just what we needed. Eileen McHugh, Director of the Cayuga Museum, supplied photos and the detailed manuscript biography of freedom seeker Jane Clark. Martha Lollis, of Cayuga Community College's local history room, has provided special assistance through census microfilms and access to local history materials, including newspapers. Meg Vanek and Jesse Kline, of the Cayuga County Department of Tourism, have faithfully given their support to this project throughout a whole year's worth of Advisory Board meetings.

Many, many thanks to owners who allowed us to nominate their houses to the National Register or the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, including Thomas and Jinny Bianconi, Judith Bryant, Stephen and Judy Colman, Richard and Luella Horseler, Edna Nagy, Frances M. Park, Fay and Louie Rood, Alison Van Dyke and William Downing, the Board of the Howland Stone Store Museum, the Board of the Seward Home, and the Trustees of the Sennett Federated Church. None of these nominations could go forward without their support.

Nancy Todd and Mark Peckham, of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, gave extensive and most welcome advice and support, as did Sheri Jackson, Diane Miller, and Barbara Tagger of the National Park Service's Network to Freedom Program. Their work and their input adds incalculable value to these local projects. The local Advisory Board for this project made each meeting a pleasure, truly an energizing experience. It has been a special pleasure to have the support of descendents of both freedom seekers and those who kept safe houses, including Helene Belt, Judith Bryant, Naomi Post Fletcher, Laberta Gaskins Greenlea, Pauline Copes Johnson, Donna Jones, James Livingston, and Erik Osborne.

Finally, the Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts, through their Preserve New York grant program, have been a catalyst for so much of the Underground Railroad research, preservation, and tourism work in New York State. Without their vision and willingness to fund these initial and very basic cultural resource surveys, all the rest of the projects based on them—the National Register nominations, Network to Freedom nominations, Environmental Protection Fund grants, tourism brochures, signage programs, curriculum units, conferences, and all the programs that bring life to these stories in so many local communities—would not have been possible. Thank you.

The Project

Results

This survey uncovered more than one hundred sites relating to the Underground Railroad Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn and Cayuga County. These are all listed here, with photographs, locations, and descriptions. These descriptions are thoroughly documented and are immediately ready for planning documents, tour brochures, exhibit captions, curriculum units, websites, or a variety of other uses. Much of the research for these site descriptions was generated by Sheila Tucker, Tanya Warren, Peter Wisbey, Jane Simkin, Michael Riley, Sheila Edmunds, Bradley Mitchell, Carrie Barrett, Kate Clifford Larson, Christopher Densmore, and other researchers throughout the city, county, and nation. We have also included a historic context statement, "Friends of Freedom in Auburn and Cayuga County," to give a sense of how these sites fit into the larger story. Unless otherwise noted, Judith Wellman, Project Coordinator, took all photographs did all the writing for this report.

All of this work has relied on a wide variety of sources, including census records (especially names of African Americans listed in the census); printed local histories; William Still's *Underground Railroad*, online through Quinnipiac University; manuscripts (especially the Gerrit Smith Papers at Syracuse University, Seward Papers at the Seward House and the University of Rochester; Talcott Papers at the University of Rochester; *Liberator* subscription lists at the Boston Public Library; antislavery petitions from the National Archives; Martha Wright Papers at Smith College; Quaker meeting records at Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College; African American newspapers online through *Accessible Archives*; and extensive secondary materials. More work in the voluminous Howland Family Papers at Cornell and Swarthmore would be richly rewarding, but we simply did not have time to do this for this survey. To identify accurately specific buildings with their owners and/or residents, we undertook extensive research in property records, including deeds, mortgages, assessment records, city directories, maps, and wills. This proved especially important in Auburn, where changes in house numbers occurred several times over many decades. The Image-mate property database from the Cayuga County Real Property Office was invaluable, as were the property files in the Cayuga County Clerk's Office, Historian's Office, and Records Retention Office.

To help continue this research process, research material from this project will be available on the web, with the help of Bernard Corcoran, through GenWeb and the Cayuga County Historian's Office. Hard copies of much of this material are also available in the Cayuga County Historian's Office, the Tubman Home, the Seward Home, Seymour Library, the Cayuga Museum, the Howland Stone Store, and Hazard Library. Results of the survey included reports on the Abijah Fitch house (by Tanya Warren), William Hosmer (by Joni Lincoln), and several databases compiled by Tanya Warren from research done by many people across the county:

> 1) "African Americans in Cayuga County Census Records, 1820-1840, " which includes the names of 109 African Americans listed in the 1820, 1830, and 1840 censuses;
> 2) "African Americans in Cayuga County Census Records, 1850, 1855, 1860, 1865, 1870," which includes the names of 2459 African American listed in federal and state census records in those years;

3) “Freedom Seekers, Abolitionists, and Underground Railroad Facilitators, Cayuga Co., New York,” which includes the names of 692 people most likely to have been involved in the Underground Railroad movements, as identified from a variety of sources;
4) “African Americans in Auburn, 1880,” with names of 393 African Americans who lived in Auburn in 1880; and
5) “Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn, New York, from City Directories, 1929 Census by Gladys Bryant, and Cayuga County Image-Mate Real Property Data.”

Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian, has also put much material relating especially to the Quakers of Cayuga County on the web.

With the help of many, many people throughout the county, this project has also produced several nominations to the National Park Service’s Network to Freedom, including the Hannah and Herman Phillips house in Sherwood, New York, built in 1856 by freedom seekers who came from Maryland in 1843; the Cayuga County Historian’s Office, as a research site; Seymour Library as a research site; the Cayuga County Courthouse as the site of the first trials for those who helped rescue William “Jerry” Henry in October 1851; Howland Stone Store Museum, Sherwood; and the site of the Martha and David Wright house, a documented Underground Railroad site. In addition, Peter Wisbey nominated the Seward Home to the Network to Freedom as a documented Underground Railroad site.

We also nominated seven sites to the National Register of Historic Places: 1) the Belt-Gaskin House, 77 Chapman Avenue, Auburn, built in 1868, home of freedom seekers from Maryland; 2) Sennett Federated Church and parsonage, Sennett, documented Underground Railroad site; 3) Howland House, Sherwood, extraordinarily well-documented Underground Railroad site; 4) North Street Friends Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse), Sherwood, “a storm center of reform”; 5) Hosmer House, Auburn, home of Methodist abolitionist editor, author, and UGRR supporter William Hosmer; 6) Huntington House, Auburn, representing the importance of Auburn Theological Seminary as an abolitionist and UGRR center; 7) Bogart House, Auburn, home of Harriet and Nicholas Bogart, African Americans who worked for the Sewards for 50 years. Nicholas Bogart was “one of the most important men in the state during slavery times,” according to his obituary. Four of these (Belt-Gaskin House, Sennett Church, Howland House, North Street Friends Meetinghouse) have already been accepted by the State Board. We nominated these sites under the draft Multiple Property Document written by Milton Sernett and Judith Wellman, “Historic Sites Related to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African Life in Central New York, 1820-1870.” A copy of this document is available on the web at the Oswego County Underground Railroad site.

We also nominated the Sennett Federated Church to New York State’s Underground Railroad Heritage Trail.

We have also held eight public meetings for this project (seven in Auburn--Tubman Home (2), City Hall (3), Seward House, Willard Chapel) and one in Sherwood, with about twenty-five people at each meeting--and delicious refreshments, reports from volunteers, lots of handouts, and Powerpoint presentations at each one. We have two more scheduled for September and October (including one at the national Association for African American Association for History and Life in Buffalo) and one in early February at Cayuga Community College. We are also

keeping in touch with the Maryland Council on Business and Economic Development, which is working Tubman exhibits and trails there, so that they can loop Tubman sites in Auburn into their planning.

These buildings speak to us. As we learn to listen, we can begin our own conversations with people they represent—with Harriet Tubman and her brothers and nieces and nephews and friends, with William and Frances Seward and Lizette Worden, with Morgan Freeman and Nicholas and Harriet Bogart, with William O. Duvall and Slocum Howland and Emily Howland, with William Hosmer and Martha Wright and William Henry Stewart, with Charles and Mary Griffen and Hannah and Herman Phillips, and with all those hundreds of others who devoted their lives to the fight against slavery, who worked for freedom and equal rights for all citizens. And so we can begin a discussion about the way we see ourselves and our relationship to each other, to the land and buildings that sustain us, and to the future.

A few of the buildings we have discovered are architecturally significant as well as historically important. The Abijah Fitch house at 197 Genesee Street in Auburn and the North Street Friends Meetinghouse, often called the Brick Meetinghouse, on the Sherwood-Aurora Road in the Town of Ledyard are two examples. Most of the structures we have discovered, however, are modest, from the Charles and Sally Shorter house in Cayuga Village (home of an African American couple born in slavery in Maryland and the West Indies who survived to live in freedom as property owners along the Seneca Turnpike) to the Slocum and Hannah Howland house in Sherwood (center of Underground Railroad activity in central Cayuga County). These buildings are architecturally simple, but they are extremely significant historically for their connection to the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, or African American life.

We found so many sites in Auburn and Cayuga County in part because these themes were extremely important here. These sites also survived in large numbers in this area because most of the county escaped major rebuilding, such as urban renewal. Except for tenant houses, which are often lost, much of the built environment continues to be economically useful.

We also experienced major disappointments at what had been lost. Among these were the Martha and David Wright house at 192 Genesee Street, torn down about 1880; the first AME Zion Church on Washington Street; the Underwood House, where Mary and William Kiah-Williams found refuge and where the Cayuga County Courthouse currently stands; the houses where Jane Clark and her brother Henry Lemons lived and worked (Jane Clark's autobiography recounting her life in slavery and freedom, held at the Cayuga Museum, remains one of the most detailed stories of freedom seekers in Auburn); Abijah Fitch's last house, at 216 Genesee Street; the Jarrod house on North Street; the Methodist Church where Frederick Douglass spoke in Port Byron; so many churches and public sites in downtown Auburn; and any site remaining for Nathan Marble, Archibald Green, or Cassandra Hamlin in Port Byron.

This survey turned out to be far, far larger than any of us realized when we first began. We expect, if we had more time, we would find several more sites, so we hope that people will consider this survey a very substantial beginning, but not an end.

Recommendations

Buildings do not stand in isolation. Always, they need human assistance. What can be done to maintain these sites and to promote further research, interpretation, and interest in these sites? People might want to consider several options:

General

1. Website. One result of this survey will be a website with information produced by this work. This can be expanded, as new information emerges.
2. Exhibit. The Cayuga Museum has indicated an interest in such an exhibit.
3. Tour brochures. These might be driving tours of city or county sites, with maps.
4. Signs. To put signs in front of every building identified in this survey would be to litter the landscape with markers, but it might be feasible to mark particularly important sites (such as the site of the original AME Zion church on Washington Street or the site of Morgan and Catherine Freeman's home, a key UGRR site in Auburn for 29 years, behind the County Building on Genesee Street) or to put one major marker with a map to identify important sites throughout the city.
5. Curriculum units. These will be particularly important, as a way to introduce children (and thus their parents) to their local stories.
6. Oral histories. Because this project focused on the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life from 1820-1870, it touched only peripherally on the equally important history of the African American community in Auburn from 1870 to the present. Many descendents of those who came to Auburn before 1870 still live in this community. Their stories are just as important as those we emphasized here.
7. Plays/talks/dances/movies/etc.!

Historic Preservation

1. National Register of Historic Places. Sites can be nominated based on their historic importance, their association with an important person, their architectural significance, or their usefulness in generating evidence. Sites can be nominated individually or as historic districts. We have nominated seven sites as a result of this survey, all for their historic importance: the Sennett Federated Church, Belt-Gaskin House, Howland House, North Street Friends Meetinghouse, Bogart House, Hosmer House, and Huntington House.

   Several more could be nominated, including:

   a. Elliot-Stewart House—31 Richardson Avenue;
   b. William Henry Stewart, Jr., House—64 Garrow Street;
   c. Charles and Mary Griffen House-58 Garrow Street-if this can be identified as the original house and not a replacement in the 19-teens;
   d. Hornbeck houses—38 and 40 Jefferson Street;
   e. Hart House, Union Springs (if it can be positively identified);
   f. Cooper-Cromwell House, Aurora (unless it is already listed on the Register as part of the Aurora Village Historic District)
   g. William O. Duvall house and tenant house, Port Byron;
   h. Port Byron Hotel, both for its association with African American life and for its architectural merit;

i. Aibjah Fitch House, as a home associated with an abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter;
j. Susannah Marriott houses, town of Ledyard, associated with abolitionist and educator, especially important in women's education;
k. Emily Howland house, Sherwood, associated with abolitionist and woman's rights advocate;
l. William and Hannah Howland and Isabel Howland House (Opendore), Sherwood associated with abolitionists and woman's right advocate.
m. Tenant houses, Sherwood. One of these was the temporary home of the Phillips family when they came from Maryland in 1843. Extant tenant houses are increasingly rare.
n. Schoolhouse No. 2, Sherwood. Probably the school attended by Herman Phillips after he came from Maryland in 1843.
o. Thomas and Sarah Jane Hart House, home of freedom seeker, Union Springs (if it can be positively identified.

Possibly the William and Martha Kirk house in Sterling, the Matthias and Hannah Hutchinson houses in Northville and the Town of Ledyard, and several other houses throughout the county, with a little more work, could also be nominated.

Several areas might also be nominated as historic districts, including the village of Sherwood. See further discussion below.

2. National Park Service's Network to Freedom. This program takes documented Underground Railroad sites, programs, or facilities. Sometimes, matching grants are available. We have nominated seven sites to the Network to Freedom through this survey: Phillips House, Seward House (with Peter Wisbey), Cayuga County Historian's Office, Cayuga County Courthouse, Seymour Library, Site of Martha and David Wright House, and Howland Stone Store. Several more sites uncovered as a result of this survey might be eligible for the Network to Freedom, including the Sennett Federated Church, Slocum Howland House, Elliott-Stewart House, William Henry Stewart, Jr. House, Abijah Fitch House, William O. Duvall House, North Street Meetinghouse, and others.
3. New York State's Underground Railroad Heritage Trail. This program accepts only buildings that are in not-for-profit hands and open to the public. Currently, the Tubman Home, Seward Home, and Howland Stone Store in Cayuga County are listed with this program. As a result of this survey, we nominated the Sennett Federated Church to this program.
4. Local Historic Districts. These generally have well-defined and substantive enforcement powers, relating to historic restoration. Since so many of these buildings are not nominated for their architectural qualities, and since they are generally scattered, this would probably not be the most appropriate route to follow at this time.
5. Conservation districts. These can be defined in many ways, according to wishes of local residents, offering as much or as little specific protection as local people desire. This might be one avenue to explore further, especially for an area such as Sherwood.
6. Seven to Save program of the Preservation League of New York State. This program highlights seven important historic sites across New York State each year. This year, the Village of Sherwood has been nominated in its entirety.

National Register Historic Districts.

After consultation with Nancy Todd, Field Representative with the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, the following areas have emerged as possible districts relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life, 1820-1870. Further work may be needed to decide whether or not to move forward with possible districts or whether to treat particular buildings as individual sites.

In Auburn, if no historic districts are nominated, individual nominations should definitely be considered for:

1. Elliot-Stewart House—31 Richardson Avenue
2. William Henry Stewart, Jr., House—64 Garrow Street
3. Charles and Mary Griffen House-58 Garrow Street-if this can be identified as the original house and not a replacement in the 19-teens.
4. Hornbeck houses—38 and 40 Jefferson Street

Other buildings could be considered, as well.

Buildings in Sherwood, New York, form a cohesive district that could well be nominated, some of them for their importance as abolitionist and Underground Railroad sites and some for their architectural significance.

Possible Auburn districts:

I. Auburn. Richardson (Union) Avenue.

A. Current state of research. This area consists of four possible standing structures and a vacant lot. (See descriptions of individuals houses for more details.)

1. Stewart House. 29 Richardson (Union) Avenue. Home of Elijah Stewart, born in St. Catherine's, Ontario, son of Ben Ross (James Stewart, Harriet Tubman's brother) and Jane Ross (Catherine Stewart), both freedom seekers from Maryland, 1880 (not known how much before and after.)

2. Elliott-Stewart House. 31 Richardson (Union) Avenue. Home of Thomas Elliott and Ann Marie Stewart Elliott, both freedom seekers, from 1868-1881. Thomas Elliott was one of the famous Dover Eight, documented in William Still, and Ann Marie Stewart Elliott was one of Harriet Tubman's nieces.

3. 33 Richardson Avenue. Vacant lot. May (or may not) have once been site of home of Catherine Stewart (before 1880).

4. Waire House. 35 Richardson (Union) Avenue. Home of John and Mary Duboise Waire. John Waire was born in Virginia about 1836 and came to Auburn in the late 1860s. He was a barber in the firm of Hornbeck and Waire. The family built this house about 1890 and their descendents still own it.

5. Gaskin House. Home of Philip and Mary Gaskin. Philip Gaskin was born in Virginia, ca. 1856, and came with his parents to Ledyard about 1864, where they purchased a home in 1869. Philip Gaskin married Mary Elliott, daughter of Thomas and Anne Marie Stewart Elliott (who lived at 31 Richardson). They lived at 34 Richardson (Union) Avenue in the 1890s (and it is not know for how much longer).

B. Advantages of Richardson (Union) Avenue Historic District:

1. Elliott—Stewart House has one of the great escape stories of the whole Underground Railroad, the house forms an anchor for this district. Also connected to Harriet Tubman through Ann Marie Stewart
2. Elijah Stewart House connected to Tubman through Catherine Stewart, who also has a great escape story.
3. Waire family (of whom John Waire was a possible freedom seeker) was one of the leaders of Auburn's African American community, and house remains in family to the present.
4. Gaskin family (of whom Philip was also a possible freedom seeker) also connected to Tubman through Mary Elliott Gaskin, and Gaskin family members remain in Auburn to the present.

C. Disadvantages of Richardson (Union) Avenue Historic District:

Elliott family left the area by 1881, and Stewart family may have left about the same time. Catherine Stewart died before 1880, and house she lived in is probably no longer standing.

Waire and Gaskin houses probably built late 1880s or early 1890s, so their houses were no there at the same time as the Elliott and Stewart families lived there (although the Waire family lived on the same street when the Elliott and Stewart families lived there, and Mary Elliott Gaskin grew up in the Elliott house.)

D. Research still needed:

1. How long did Gaskin family live at 34 Richardson? (Check city directories).
2. How long did Stewart family live at 34 Richardson? (city directories)
3. Which part of Elliott house was original, and when was second part added? (Look at physical structure of house.)
4. When was Gaskin house built? (Check assessments.)

II. Auburn: Cornell (Chapman) Avenue/Garrow Street

A. Current state of research. This area consists of consists of six (or possibly seven) standing contributing structures, built by people who were either identified freedom seekers or most likely freedom seekers, and two (or possibly three) non-contributing structures. For more details, see descriptions of individual houses.

1. Belt-Gaskin House. 77 Chapman (Cornell) Avenue. Originally built between 1869 and 1874 by Thomas and Rachel Belt, born in Maryland. Belts lived in this house through the 1920s until it was occupied by Philip and Mary Elliott Gaskin and their son, Philip

Gaskin, Jr., his wife, Myrtle Gaskin, and their children, beginning in 1927. Nominated to National Register, 2005.

2. Stewart House. 64 Garrow Street. Built 1899 to replace a home originally built c. 1880 by William Henry Stewart, Jr., nephew of Harriet Tubman, for his bride Emma Moseby Stewart. Continuously inhabited by this family to the present.

3. Stewart House. 66 Garrow Street. Occuped in early twentieth century by Clarence "Dye" Stewart, great-nephew of Harriet Tubman, who was with Tubman when she died.

4. White House. 62 Garrow Street. Built c. 1869 by Isaac White, probable freedom seeker, b. Alabama.

5. Griffen House. 60 Garrow Street. Probably built late 1860s-early 1870s. Rebuilt or added on 1880s by Robert Griffen, son of freedom seekers Charles and Mary Griffen, born Maryland, who built the house next door at 58 Garrow.

6. Griffen House, 58 Garrow Street. Original lot purchased 1868 by Charles and Mary Griffen, probable freedom seekers, born Maryland. The original house may have been torn down c. 1912 and rebuilt. If so, this would be a non-contributing structure.

7. Non-contributing house, built c. 2003-04.

8. Non-contributing house, built c. 2003-04.

9. Purnell House. 54 Garrow Street. Original lot purchases 1868 by John Purnell, freedom seeker from Maryland. House built shortly thereafter.

B. Advantages of Chapman (Cornell) Avenue/Garrow Street District:

1. Row of houses owned by freedom seekers (or probable freedom seekers) sold in post-Civil War years by Abijah Fitch, real estate developer, abolitionist, and Underground Railroad supporter, continuously identified since that time with African American community.
2. Three houses directly identified with Harriet Tubman. Anchor house on corner—64 Garrow--was built and owned by William Henry Stewart, son of Tubman's brother, William Stewart. 77 Chapman was lived in by Mary Elliott Gaskin, great-niece of Tubman. 66 Garrow was occupied by Clarence "Dye" Stewart, Tubman's great-nephew.

C. Disadvantages of Chapman (Cornell) Avenue/Garrow Street District:

Assessment records are unclear about whether 58 Garrow Street is original home of Charles and Mary Griffen. Ditto for 60 Garrow (although 1904 map helps resolve some of the difficulties with this one. See description for this site.) If 58 Garrow is NOT original house (and the two houses just north of it are recent—2003-04) structures, this cuts this district in two, with the Purnell house left hanging at the north end. The Belt-Gaskin, Stewart, Stewart, and White houses (with possibly the Robert Griffen house) might still make a small district at the south end.

D. Research still needed:

1. Clarence "Dye" Stewart house—66 Garrow. We have done no research in deeds or assessments on this at all, nor have we done city directory work to know when Clarence Stewart lived in this house.
2. Griffen house. 58 Garrow. We would need to get inside this house to look at moldings, framing structure, nails, etc., to see if we could determine whether or not any part of the original house remains.

III. Parker Street District

A. Current state of research. This area has one house (51 Parker Street) that was important before the Civil War as the home of freedom seekers). The other houses became more important as the center of an African American neighborhood after the Civil War, anchored by the construction of the AME Zion Church in 1893. Because this neighborhood was most important beginning in the late nineteenth century, our research did not focus on it. Contemporary African American families continue to live here, however, and local oral tradition carries on memories of the history of this neighborhood back to the turn-of-the century. It should be captured on tape or video, and further archival documentation of these houses should also be done.

Eight houses on Parker Street (51, 47, 45, 41-43, 37, 35, 31, and 22), plus the AME Zion Church (a National Historic Landmark) represent African American settlement, including freedom seekers and their descendents, in Auburn from the 1880s to the present day. Six of these houses have been continuously owned and occupied by African American families from the late nineteenth century to the present.

1. Carter House-22? Parker
2. Dale-Stewart House. 37 Parker.
3. Hornbeck-Ray House. 41-43 Parker.
4. Copes-Johnson House. 45 Parker.
5. AME Zion Church parsonage. 47 Parker.
6. AME Zion Church.
7. Smith-Stewart House. 51 Parker Street. Home of freedom seekers and Harriet Tubman's nephew, John Isaac Stewart. Birthplace of Clarence "Dye" Stewart.

A. Advantages of the Parker Street District

This centers around the AME Zion Church and includes houses that relate to families historically identified with Auburn's African American community, who still live in the community. This was a major center of African American life from the later nineteenth century to the present. It also includes the home of John Stewart, one of Harriet Tubman's nephews, in 1880.

B. Disadvantages of Parker Street district

Under the terms of this grant, we have been focusing more on the earlier period, before 1870, and this area became more important as a center of African American life later in the century.

C. Research still needed

We have focused research under the terms of this grant on other African American sites in Auburn, because they related more explicitly to the earlier period. With the exception of 51 Parker Street, which relates to the story of John Stewart, we have not developed detailed descriptions of the rest of these homes.

IV. **Fitch Street Historic District**

Three homes (and one site of former home) sold to African American families by Abijah Fitch, abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter, after the Civil War. (Cale House, 74 Fitch Avenue; Roosevelt Memorial Church,79 Fitch Avenue, site of Plymouth and Alive Cannon's House; Diggs House-Apostolic Church, 101 Fitch Avenue; Diggs House, 105 Fitch Avenue).

V. **Aspen Street Historic District.**

Three houses (14, 18, 22 Aspen Street) represent successful home ownership of freedom seekers (including the Richard and Mary Gaskin family) who arrived in Cayuga County in the 1850s and 1860s and settled here when this street opened in the late 1880s. Because of changes in street numbers over time, these properties need to be checked with deeds.

VI. **Jefferson Street Historic District—North Side**

Centered around the two houses of Sebeo and John Hornbeck at 38 and 40 Jefferson Street were three or four other homes of African Americans. These have not been well-documented here, but together, they would form a small historic district, representing freedom seekers who intermarried with children of people born into slavery in New York State, whose families continued to live in Auburn into the twentieth century. For more details, see descriptions for Hornbeck houses.

VII. Mechanic Street District—East side

This was the earliest identifiable African American neighborhood, noted on the 1837 map of Auburn as "Negro Settlement," "New Guinea." While there are several nineteenth century houses in this vicinity, and we did discover through city directories that African Americans inhabited some of them into the 1850s, the core of this settlement disappeared as African Americans moved into the north side in the 1840s and 1850s and then into the south side in the 1860s and later. Further research would be useful here, but in general would probably not yield a coherent district that could be labeled "New Guinea."

VII. **Sherwood Village District**

A. Current state of research. As the home of Slocum Howland, Emily Howland, Josiah Letchworth, William Howland, and Herman and Hannah Phillips, Sherwood was a major center of abolitionist and Underground Railroad activity. Several buildings—including

the Howland Stone Store, the Slocum (and Emily) Howland house (pre-1857), the Howland house (post-1857), the William (and Isabel) Howland house (Opendore), the Josiah Letchworth house, the Herman and Hannah Phillips house, the schoolhouse, the North Street Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse) directly west of the village on the Sherwood-Aurora Road, and at least one Howland tenant house--are directly connected to this story. The Stone Store is currently on the National Register. The Phillips House is currently on the Network to Freedom. For more details, see descriptions for individual sites.

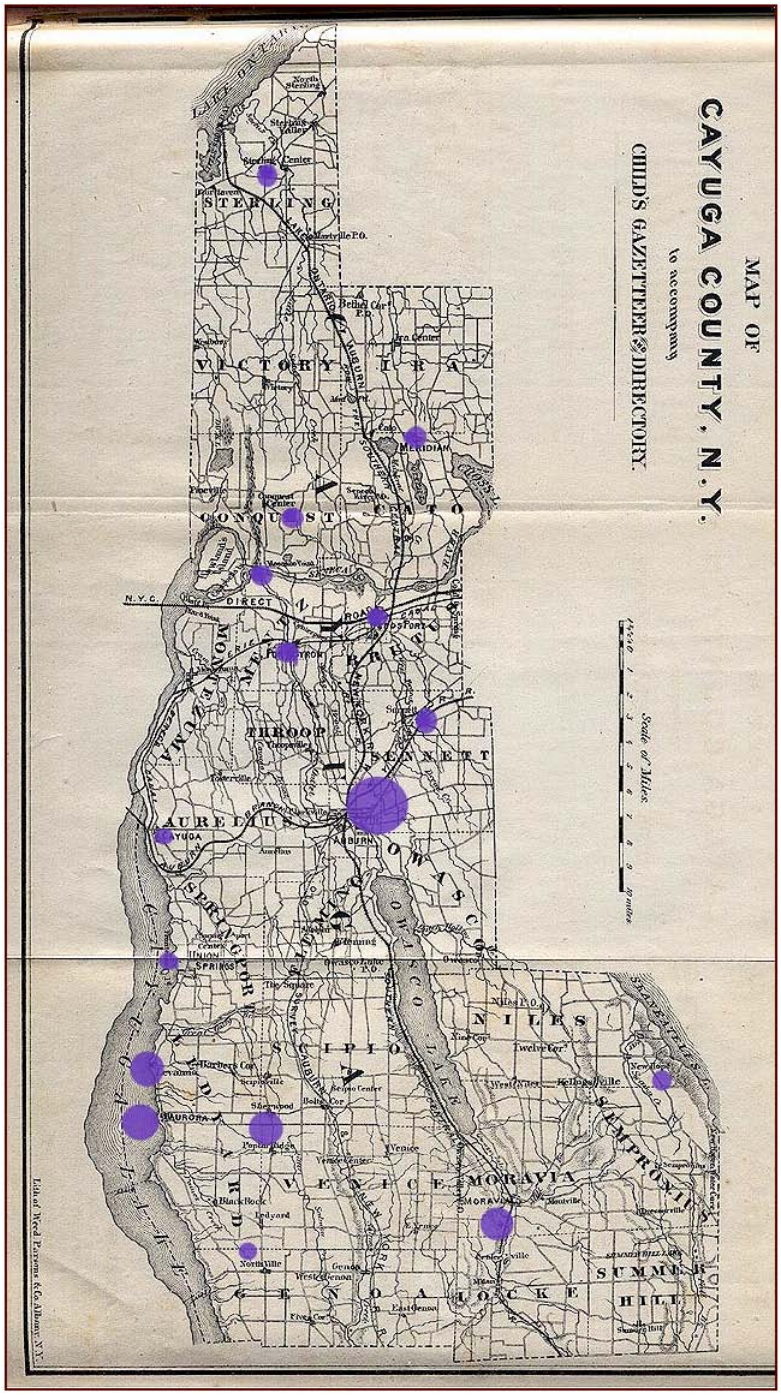
B. Advantages of a Sherwood District. The entire village reflects the character of the historic period and is one of the most important hotspots for Underground Railroad in Cayuga County outside Auburn. The Howland Stone Store is already on the National Register. As a result of this project, the Phillips House has been listed on the National Park Service's Network to Freedom; both the Howland House and the North Street Meetinghouse have been listed on the National Register; and the Howland Stone Store has been nominated to the Network to Freedom. The State Historic Preservation Office has suggested that the whole village of Sherwood would be an appropriate historic district, and the Howland Stone Store Museum has nominated the entire village as one of the Preservation League's Seven to Save sites for 2006.

C. Disadvantages of a historic district. None.

D. Research still needed. We have done extensive research on the Howland house, the Phillips house, and the Howland Stone Store. We have researched Josiah Letchworth and Emily Howland in printed materials.

ORVALL DUVAL
A staunch Abolitionist

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05



Hotspots Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn and Cayuga County

Base Map from 1867-68 Auburn City Directory, Cayuga County GenWebsite

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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The Friends of Freedom in Auburn and Cayuga County

Context: The Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn and Cayuga County

Slavery ended in New York State in 1827. From that point forward, free people of color and a few European American allies—in Auburn, Cayuga County, and throughout New York State and the North--worked both for the abolition of slavery and equal rights for African Americans. They sent antislavery petitions to Congress, organized antislavery societies, supported antislavery newspapers (such as the *Friend of Man*, the *Liberator*, the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, and the *Northern Independent*, edited by Auburn's own William Hosmer*)*, voted for antislavery politicians, and collected money for antislavery lecturers. A small number of them actively supported the Underground Railroad.

By the time Harriet Tubman arrived in Auburn, Cayuga County was already a hotbed of Underground Railroad activity. This work was not distributed evenly throughout the county, like salt sprinkled on the table, but was concentrated in particular hotspots.

Chief among them was the City of Auburn, which has almost two-thirds of Cayuga County's one hundred sites relating to the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, and African American life. Measured in terms of numbers of identifiable sites, the Ledyard-Scipio area (including the villages of Sherwood, Aurora, and Levanna) was second in importance. Port Byron and Moravia were third. Several other areas—including Sennett, Cato, Northville, Weedsport, Sterling, Conquest, Cayuga Village, New Hope Mills, and Ira—also had activity relating to these themes.

In Auburn itself, African Americans lived throughout the city, on the North, South, and East sides, with the earliest settlement located along the Owasco outlet at a spot identified on an 1837 map as "New Guinea," or "Negro Settlement."

Note “New Guinea” or “Negro Settlement” on the lower right hand corner of this Hagaman and Markham, *Map of the Village of Auburn* (1837), between Mechanic Street and the Owasco Outlet.

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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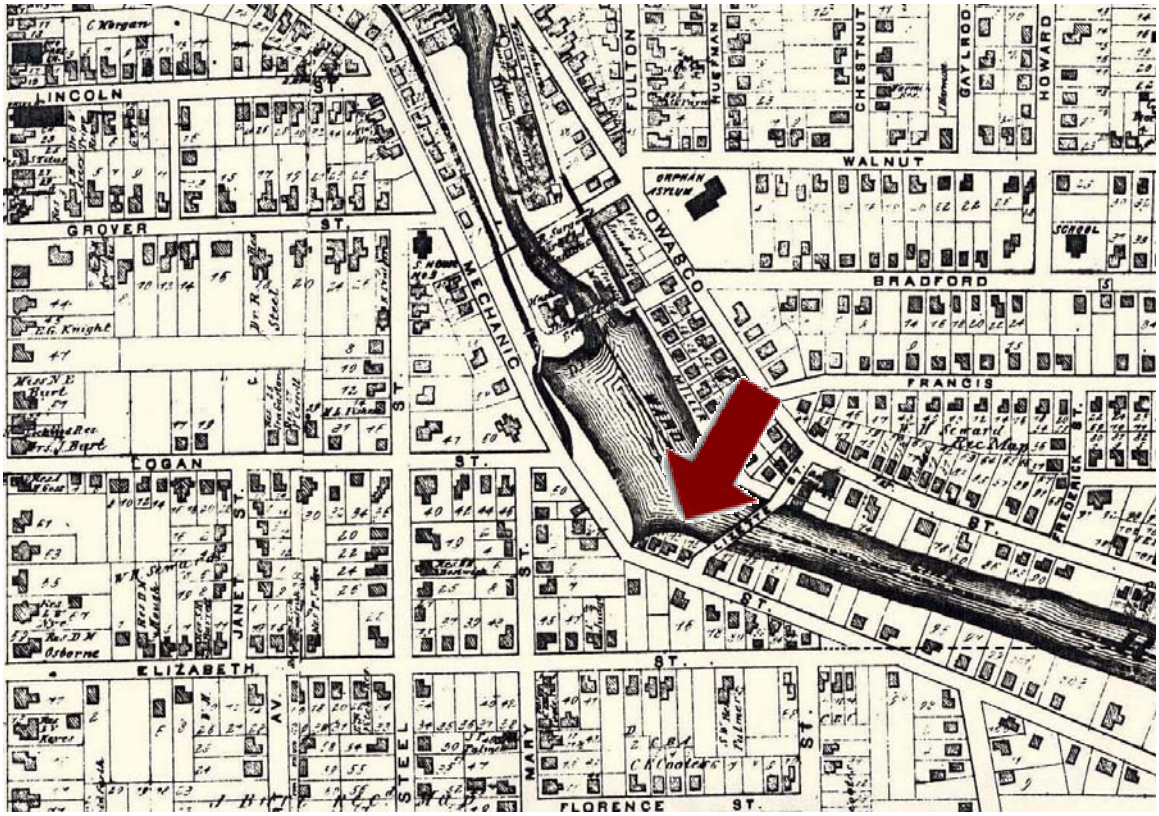
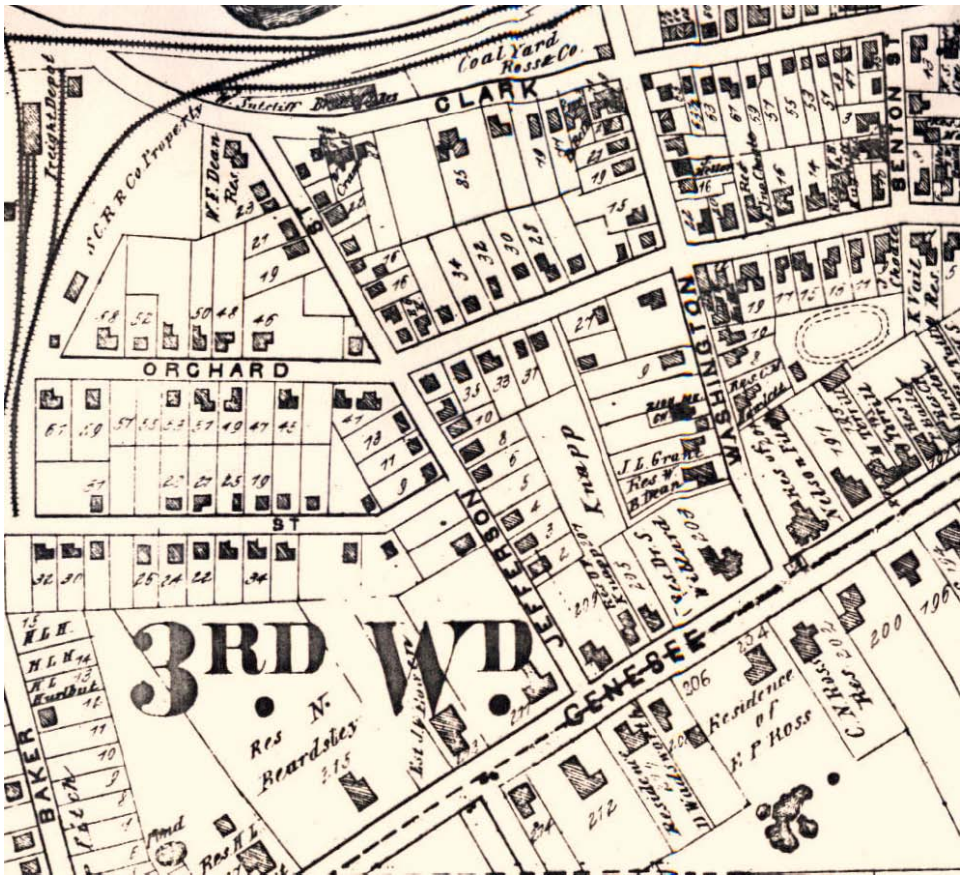


Note houses in the former "Negro Settlement" area on this P.A. Cunningham, *Map of Auburn* (Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871).

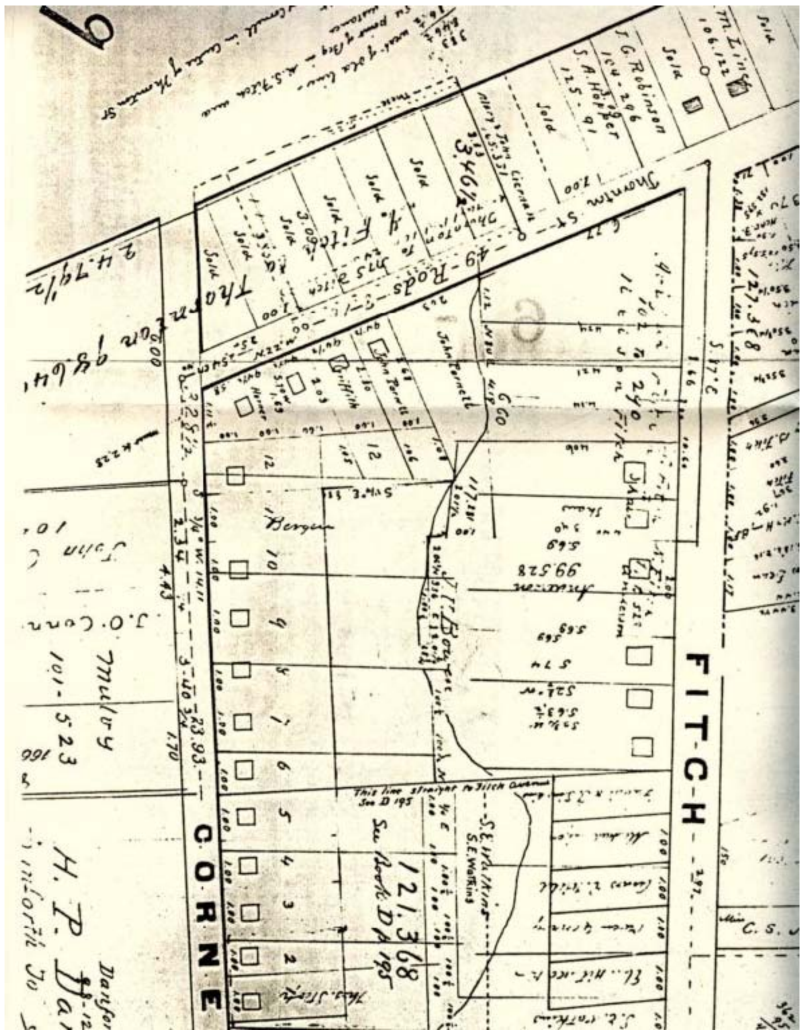
By the 1840s, African Americans began to move to the north and west side of the Auburn, working in businesses along Genesee Street. This is also where most European American abolitionists settled in the 1840s and 1850s.



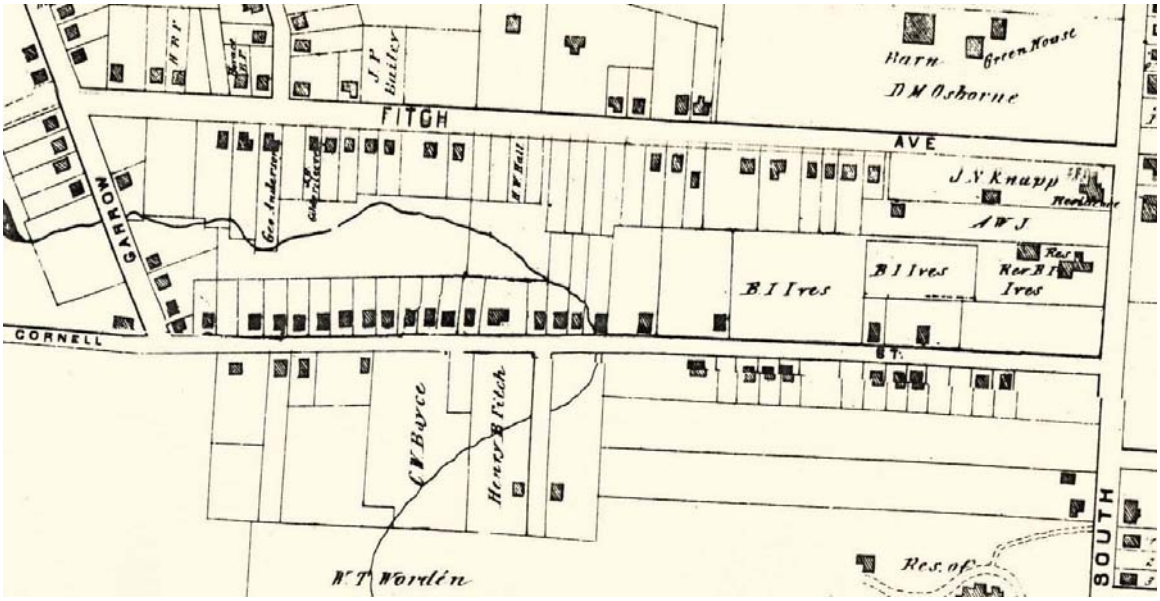
Auburn, north and west of Genesee Street, from P.A. Cunnngham, *Map of Auburn* (Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871).

In the 1850s, many working class people, both black and white, also began to settle on the east side of Owasco Outlet, buying land from William Henry Seward. Lizette Miller Worden, Seward's sister-in-law, also built a house in this area in 1856.

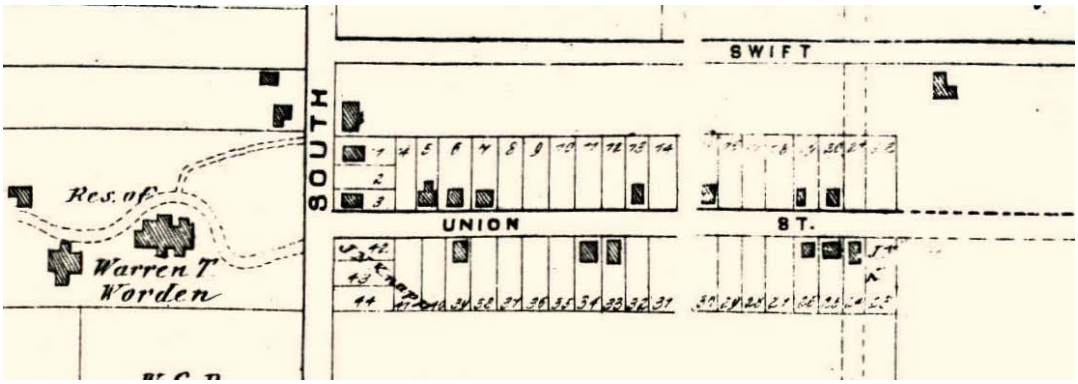
In 1857, William Henry Seward sold a seven-acre farm to Harriet Tubman on the south edge of Auburn, and, beginning in the 1860s, Tubman brought her family and many of her Maryland neighbors to Auburn, where they purchased property in newly-opened suburbs along Union (now Richardson) Avenue, Chapman Avenue, Garrow Street, Fitch Avenue, and Parker Street. Other freedom seekers, along with many Irish and American-born families, also bought homes in this area, and many of their descendants live here today. These have been remarkably stable neighborhoods for 150 years.



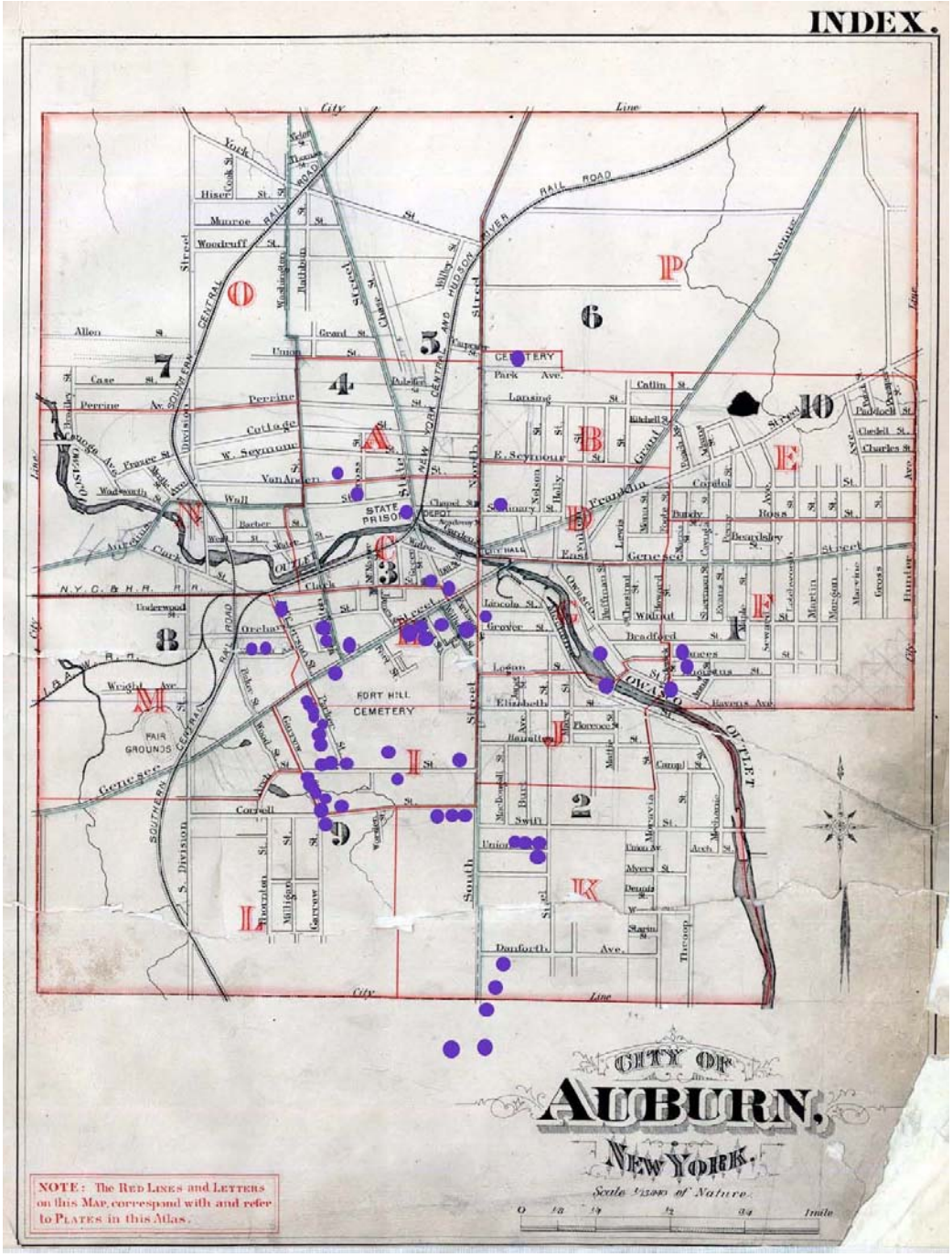
Clark, John S., “Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y.” A.C. Taber, Surveyor, September 1868. Cayuga County Clerk’s Office, Auburn, New York.



Cornell and Thornton (Chapman and Garrow), P.A. Cunnngham, *Map of Auburn* (Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871).



Union (Richardson), from
P.A. Cunningham, *Map of the City of Auburn, New York* (Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871)



Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn

Base Map: *City Atlas of Auburn, New York* (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1882)

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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2004-05

These buildings, and the people who built them and lived in them, carry their own stories. But to understand their context, let us look at some basic background about the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, and African American life in Auburn, and Cayuga County.

What was the Underground Railroad?

The term "Underground Railroad" became common in the 1830s, referring to a secret and effective system of moving people from slavery to freedom. Although many people associated the Underground Railroad with tunnels, no documented use of a tunnel has yet been found. "Underground" refers the hidden character of much of this work, not to any physical underground space. In the past, many people emphasized the importance of safe houses as links on the Underground Railroad. Today, the focus is often on freedom seekers themselves, and the Underground Railroad is most often defined as the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program defines it, as "the effort of enslaved African Americans to gain their freedom by escaping bondage."[1] This allows us to focus on individuals and their life stories, including where they escaped from, the routes they took, the people who helped them, the places they stayed on their journeys, and the homes, churches, and workplaces they formed in their ultimate destinations.

In this project, we have surveyed sites related to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life, because we think that all three of these themes are intimately intertwined. In upstate New York, it is often impossible to sort out one from the others, and it would certainly be impossible to understand how the Underground Railroad operated, without the context of the abolitionist movement and African American community life.

Auburn and Cayuga County as crossroads of the Underground Railroad.

Cayuga County played such an important role in the Underground Railroad primarily because of the county's geography. Like a wedge driven into the heart of New York State, Cayuga County funneled freedom seekers from Ithaca and points south (including Owego, NewYork, Montrose, Pennsylvania, and Friendsville, Pennsylvania) up through Cayuga Lake or overland (usually along what is now 34B through Sherwood) to Auburn. At Auburn, freedom seekers had three choices. They could go:

1. west along the Seneca Turnpike, Auburn-Rochester railroad, or other roads, often to Farmington and then to Rochester;
2. north to meet the Erie Canal at Weedsport or Port Byron or to connect with the spider's web of roads leading into Wayne County (especially Pultneyville) or northern Cayuga County through Cato, Ira, and Sterling to Fairhaven and the shores of Lake Ontario and then east to Oswego or west to Charlotte;
3. east to Skaneateles, Elbridge, Jordan and Baldwinsville to Fulton and Oswego.

The crossing of these main routes at Auburn, combined with the complexity of trails leading out of the city, made Auburn an ideal Underground Railroad node.[2]

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[1]Network to Freedom, "What Was the Underground Railroad? http://209.10.16.21/TEMPLATE/FrontEnd/learn.CFM.

[2] See interview with James R.Cox, Document No. 5, Elbert Wixom, "The Under Ground Railway of the Lake Country of Western New York," B.A. Thesis, Cornell, 1903, 30; Pass from John Mann to Slocum

Reproduced from an original 1853 map by Jonathan Sheppard Books, Albany, NY 12220.

Howland, April 9, 1840, Howland Stone Store Museum; S.C. Cuyler to Emily Howland, October 31, 1851, Howland Papers, Cornell University.

From Cayuga County GenWebsite

Before the Revolution, Cayugas had many settlements in the rich lands east of Cayuga Lake. Ironically, given later Quaker support for Indian land rights, all Cayuga villages were destroyed during the Revolutionary War in 1779 by a contingent of five hundred men led Colonel William Butler as part of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign.

European Americans and African Americans came to Cayuga County after 1789, when New York State purchased this land from the Cayugas. In what is now Auburn, John Hardenburgh and his family, which included people in slavery, built a house and mill along the Owasco outlet. In central Cayuga County, Aurora attracted some of the earliest settlers, who intended to make this village the county seat and the center of learning and government. Some of these central Cayuga County families—the Cuylers and the Woods, for example--brought people in slavery with them when they settled here.

Many families in Cayuga County were Quakers from eastern New York or from seacoast villages of New England. Some of them made their money from whaling voyages, sent out from New Bedford, Massachusetts. In central Cayuga County, they settled on former Cayuga lands, and they built their first meetinghouse for Scipio Monthly Meeting in 1810, which eventually had several preparative meetings. Two of these—North Street Friends Meeting (Orthodox), which met in the brick meetinghouse on the Sherwood-Aurora Road, and Skaneateles Preparative Meeting

(Orthodox)--became particularly important supporters of abolitionism and the Underground Railroad.

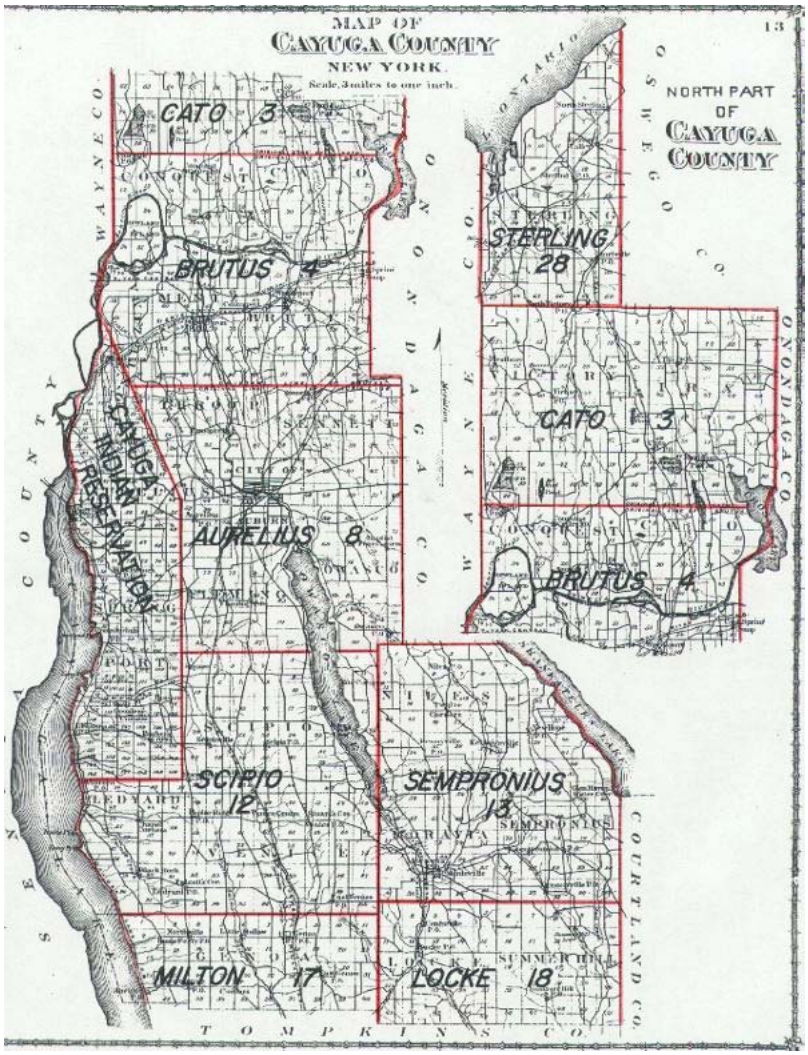
After 1800, European American and a few African American settlers filtered into the northern part of the county, creating farms and mill villages in the rolling hills among the drumlins and along the Ontario lakeshore.

Except for the Cayuga Reservation lands, all other lands in Cayuga County were part of the Military Tract, set aside after the Revolution by the new federal government to give to those who had served in the Revolutionary War. Most town names still reflect the classical names given to these military tract towns.

Cayuga County had 53 people living in slavery in 1800, 75 in 1810, 54 in 1814, and 48 in 1820. Many of these were manumitted in the 1820s or earlier. When freedom came for all of them in 1827, they formed the core of free black communities in Auburn, Aurora, Port Byron, and elsewhere. After 1830, these communities would be a key component of the network that provided a haven for people on their way from southern slavery to independence in the northern U.S. or Canada.[3]

The county's population grew rapidly in the early nineteenth century, expanding more than five-fold, from 10,817 people in 1800 to 38,897 people in 1820 to 47,948 in 1830 to 55,458 in 1850. By 1855, Cayuga County had 53,571 people, of whom 400 were African American.

[3] The 1855 census summarized the number of people living in slavery in each of these years.



Cayuga County Towns, showing Military Townships and Cayuga Reservation
Map from Cayuga County GenWeb Site

When did the Underground Railroad start in Auburn and Cayuga County?

It was certainly in operation by the mid-1830s. In Auburn, Morgan "Luke" Freeman, a barber, was born in slavery in 1803 to Harry and Kate Freeman. His obituary in 1863 noted that he had kept an Underground Railroad station for twenty-nine years, presumably since 1834. In Cayuga County, Jerome Griger was the earliest known freedom seeker to purchase land. He bought land in Levanna, Town of Ledyard, in 1837. This was consistent with its beginnings elsewhere in central New York. African Americans from Esopus, near Kingston, were living among the Onondaga in the late 1770s, and several well-known African Americans escaped slavery in New York State in the early nineteenth century (including Austin Steward and Thomas James), but freedom seekers began to move northward in large numbers in the early 1830s. James R. Cox, one of Seward's law associates, dated beginnings of the Underground Railroad in Auburn to 1832.

What kinds of people supported the Underground Railroad in Auburn and Cayuga County?

Four distinctly different types of people supported the Underground Railroad in Auburn and Cayuga. To some extent, they lived in different parts of the county, but they were interlinked:

1. *African Americans.* Both the City of Auburn, the Town of Ledyard (including the Village of Aurora), and the Town of Mentz (including the village of Port Byron) had relatively large African American communities, made up of people who had been born in slavery in New York State and also those who chose to settle in Cayuga County from the South. In 1855, 183 African Americans lived in Auburn, almost half the total of 400 in the county. Fifty-one lived in Ledyard, 48 lived in Mentz/Port Byron, and 28 lived in Brutus/Weedsport. Small numbers of African Americans also lived in Owasco (24), Springport (18), Aurelius (15), Sennett (9), Venice (8), Ira (6), Genoa (4), Moravia (3), Scipio (2), and Conquest (1).

   In case, these African American communities received support from local European Americans, included a group of lawyers and professionals in Auburn, Quakers and the Cuyler family in Ledyard/Aurora, and Nathan Marble, Ardchibald Green, Cassandra Hamlin, and William O. Duvall in Port Byron. This became particularly important when freedom seekers bought land, beginning in 1837, when Jerome Griger bought a homesite in Levanna, and continuing when freedom seekers bought more than twenty pieces of land on the south side of Auburn, near Harriet Tubman's home, from Abijah Fitch and others in the 1860s. Several descendants of these families still live in Auburn. This relationship extended into the second generation, when the children of Martha and David Wright, particularly David Osborne (who owned a large agricultural implement factory in Auburn) and Eliza Wright Osborne continued to look out for the welfare of Harriet Tubman and others.

2. *Quakers*. In central Cayuga County, abolitionist sentiment centered in the North Street Friends Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse), and Underground Railroad work was anchored in the home of Slcoum and Hannah Howland in Sherwood, New York. This group had ties to Underground Railroad network of Friends and free African Americans in Philadelphia and Delaware, including William Still, Dr. Bartholomew Fusell and his niece Graceanna Lewis, and Thomas Garrett in Wilmington, Delaware). The Howland Stone Store Museum owns an extremely rare pass, written by Quaker John Mann in Friendsville, Pennsylvania, to Quaker Slocum Howland in Sherwood, New York, carried by two freedom seekers from Maryland, brothers Thomas and James Hart, dated April 9, 1840, documenting their travel from Owego through Ithaca to Sherwood.

3. *Auburn-based lawyers and professionals*. These Quakers were linked to a small group of influential Whig-Republican lawyers, politicians, and professionals in Auburn associated with William Henry Seward, Frances Seward, and Frances Seward's sister Lizette Miller Worden. They included Abijah Fitch, real estate developer; Theodore Pomeroy, David Wright, and George Underwood, Auburn

lawyers who worked with Seward in his law practice; John Austin, Unitarian minister; and William Hosmer, Methodist newspaper editor. All of the lawyers owned large homes along South Street or Genesee Street. Both Frances Seward and Lizette Worden had ties to Martha Wright, sister of noted Quaker minister, Lucretia Mott. Both Frances Seward and Lizette Worden had been educated at a Quaker school in Aurora, where Martha Wright later taught. All three women maintained a strong friendship during their years in Auburn, a friendship that extended to Harriet Tubman and her family after Tubman arrived in Auburn. In the county, Seward's associates included two men from Port Byron, William O. Duvall, a radical abolitionist, and Archibald Green, a merchant and local politician, sister of Cassandra Hamlin, who organized the most important public women's antislavery work in Cayuga County. As Seward rose first to statewide and then national prominence, first as Governor of New York State and then as Senator and Secretary of State under both Lincoln and Johnson, the influence of this group helped Seward maintain his abolitionist commitment.

4. *Religiously-motivated abolitionists.* Several churches throughout Cayuga County became hotspots of abolitionism. Congregationalists and Presbyterians, who often joined in one group in this period (in Sennett, Northville, Sterling, and Moravia), Baptists (in Sennett and Sterling), Unitarians (in Auburn), and Methodists and African Methodist Episcopal Zion (in Auburn), as well as students at Auburn Theological Seminary in Auburn, were most active in this organized religious commitment to the Underground Railroad. Other church congregations, as yet unidentified, may also have participated.

How many freedom seekers came through Auburn and Cayuga County?

Without better data, we have no accurate estimates of the number of freedom seekers who actually came through Auburn and Cayuga County. In 1903, James R. Cox, a law associate of William Henry Seward, and himself an Underground Railroad activist in Auburn, in an interview to Elbert Wixom, a Cornell student, estimated that five hundred freedom seekers came through Auburn between 1832 and 1861. This is probably a conservative estimate.

This survey allows us several other ways of counting the number of freedom seekers who actually came through Auburn and Cayuga County. One way is to count the number of African Americans listed in census records who recorded their birthplaces as a southern state, unknown, or Canada. Some of these, of course, may have been legally manumitted, either in the South or after they were brought to New York State in slavery. We know from other sources that this was the case with Whittington Armwood. Thanks to the work of Donna Green of Texas, who saw the Armwood name on the database of African Americans in Cayuga County on the Cayuga County GenWeb site, we know that Whittington Armwood, born in Somerset Maryland in 1795, came to Cayuga County in slavery. Whittington Armwood almost certainly came to Barber's Corners, Ledyard, with Donna Reed's third great-grandparents, the Woods, from Maryland between 1806 and 1808. Armwood remained there for the rest of his life. His children, including his son, Timothy Armwood, continued to live and own property in the area.

Limiting our count to African Americans listed in the census between 1850 and 1870 (including state census years for 1855 and 1865), 487 African Americans in Cayuga County listed their

birthplaces as a southern state, Canada, or unknown. Of these, twenty-three are known from other sources (either Kate Larson's work with Harriet Tubman, Emily Howland's letters, Martha Wright letters, or William Still, Underground Railroad, 1872) to have been freedom seekers. These included:

1. Listed in three or four census records:

    Herman and Hannah Phillips and their four children—Scipio, 1850-1870 (Howland)
    Thomas Hart-Ledyard, 1850-1860 (Howland)

2. Listed in two census records:

    John and Milla Stewart, 1865-1870
    Thornton Newton—1865-1870
    Benjamin and Ritta Stewart (Harriet Tubman's parents)—1865-1870
    Henry Lemmons (Lemon)—1860-1865?
    Thomas Elliott and Anna Stewart Elliott, 1865-1870

3. Listed in one census record:

    Harriet Tubman Davis, 1870
    Plymouth, Alice, John, William Cannon—1870 (identified in Still)
    Thomas Stoop, 1865 (Larson)
    Richard Eastup, 1860 (identified in Martha Wright letter)
    Catharine Stewart, 1865 (Larson)

We also know of several others not found in the census records, including Nat Ambie and family—Auburn (Still); Harriet Eglin, Charlotte Gildes—Sennet (Still); James Harris and wife, Auburn (Still); Unnamed man in 1843, Auburn (Wright), and Jane Clark (biography in Cayuga Museum).

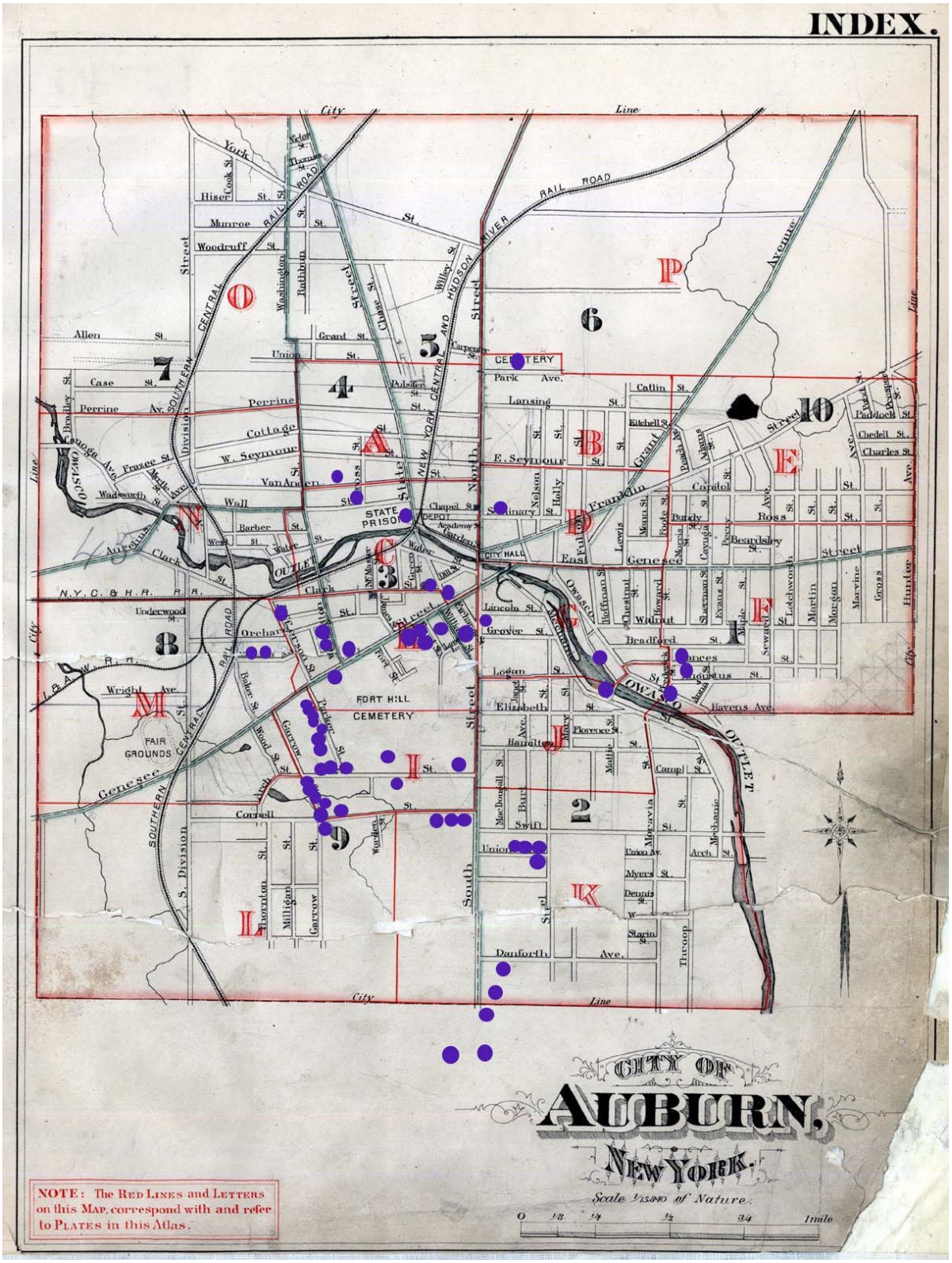
We also know that at least two African Americans born in NYS—Morgan "Luke" Freeman and P.R. Freeman—were active as helpers on the Underground Railroad. Luke Freeman was born in 1803 of parents who were enslaved by Hardenburgh. According to his 1863 obituary, Luke Freeman kept a station on the UGRR at his home at 3 Court Street in Auburn for 29 years. Nat Ambie noted, in a letter printed in Wm. Still that he was staying with P.R. Freeman in Auburn.

Of the 464 African Americans listed in the census who were born in a southern state, Canada, or an unknown place and who have not been definitely identified from other sources as freedom seekers, only 63 (14 percent) were listed in more than one census (compared to fifteen of the twenty-three known freedom seekers listed in the census, or 65 percent). This suggests that the other 401 were here for only a short time. The most logical assumption would be that they were traveling through on their way to Canada. This number is not inconsistent with James Cox's estimate of 500 people who came through Auburn.

Recognizing, however, that these census records take snapshots at five-year intervals, we also must assume that many freedom seekers stayed here only a few days, weeks, or months. So that it would reasonable to suggest that this figure of 401 people who were in the county only during

census years must be multiplied many times over. If someone were here in 1851, 1852, 1853, or 1854 (or in any year that was not a census year), they would not have been counted at all. By this reasoning, a figure of several thousand would not be an unrealistic estimate for the number of freedom seekers who came through Auburn and Cayuga County. Ultimately, however, we will probably never know the true number.

This project is part of a dialogue among all of us, past, present, and future. If you do not see here a person or site that you think may be associated with the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, or African American life, check the larger project database on the Cayuga County GenWeb site, which contains more than 600 names of people who had some relationship to these movements, or the materials on the Cayuga County Historian's Website, which will contains updates. We invite everyone to join this research network and to share the results of your work.



Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

III. ***Sites and Stories***

Auburn: East Side

Mechanic Street Historic District: "New Guinea"
Bogart House
Cromwell House
Worden House
Wise House

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
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2004-05

Mechanic Street (Osborne Street) Historic District
Earliest African American Settlement in Auburn ("New Guinea")
North of former Mill Street Bridge, west bank of Owasco Outlet
Auburn, New York

Significance: Earliest area of African American community development

House just north of former Mill Street bridge
East side of Osborne Street, looking east
June 2005

Looking north from west end of former Mill Street bridge along Osborne Street
June 2005

Looking north along Osborne Street
June 2005

House on west side of Osborne Street, across from Mill Street bridge
Occupied by African American in 1850s
Looking west, June 2005

Osborne Street, looking southeast, toward former Mill St. bridge
June 2005

The first clue to the existence of this settlement is its location, clearly indicated on the *Map of the Village of Auburn*, drawn by Hagaman & Markham and published by M.M. Peabody in 1837. Toward the east side of the village, between Mechanic Street (now Osborne) and the bank of the Owasco Outlet, Hagaman and Markham clearly labeled "New Guinea," Negro Settlement, and indicated seven houses.

Sean Connery researched this settlement, using local histories and census records. He noted the possibility that Cate and Harry Freeman, parents of Morgan "Luke" Freeman, were among the first settlers of New Guinea. The 1820 census listed several African American families living in close proximity in Auburn, including the Freemans, Fields, Browns, Williams, and Smiths. By 1830, the Freemans lived near the families of Solomon and Aaron Demun and Prentice Brown. Nearby lived the families of Mary Ann Counter, Adam Gray, Samuel Kunard, Elijah Rose, John Swarts, Thomas Venoe, Livingston Williams, Nathan Williams. Some of these families occupied the same household. The 1840 census listed sixteen African American families living in Auburn, including those of George Allen, David Bloomfield, Francis DeBoice, John M. DePuy, William Dunkenson, Lewis Freeman (Morgan "Luke" Freeman), Adam Gray, Sebio Horbeck, Catherine Johnson, Mary A. Newark, Betsy Smith, Thomas Tenoy (?), William Turner, George Williams, and Isaac Williams. Many of these probably lived in New Guinea.[1]

By 1850, the New Guinea settlement was clearly beginning to lose its distinct identity, as European Americans began to move into the area and as African Americans began to move into newer residential areas on Auburn's north side. In 1839, the new African American school had just opened on Washington Street, and in 1847, the AME Zion Church would occupy the same building. People such as Sebeo Hornbeck and Thomas Stoop would buy property on the north side in the 1850s, while many working class white families moved into houses along the outlet.

[1] From database produced by Survey of Historic Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African Life, Tanya Warren, Database Coordinator.

Today, houses that appear to date from the second quarter of the nineteenth century occupy the area once called New Guinea. Across the street and also farther north on Osborne Street, about four houses have been identified through city directories and census records as belonging to or having been occupied by African Americans. Further work (especially in census records, deeds, and assessment records) on the specific houses just north of what used to be the Mill Street bridge might help identify dates of construction and possible connection with African American residence for these buildings.[2]

[2] For an excellent overview of the New Guinea settlement and of the importance of the Freeman family, see Sean Connery, [“New Guinea Settlement: Auburn,” Unpublished student paper, 2004. Copy at Seward House, Auburn.

Nicholas and Harriet Bogart House
20 Miller Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of African American community leaders

February 2005
Looking East

Nicholas and Harriet Bogart represent those African American community leaders born in slavery in the North, who acted as a bridge between the local African American and European American communities, facilitating the work of abolitionists and Underground Railroad sympathizers. From the 1830s until the 1890s, they acted as leaders not only of this community but of the organized African American network in New York State. They also acted as a key link between African Americans and the Seward-Worden family network in Auburn and Washington, D.C., facilitating the work of these families as they assisted African Americans in both freedom and slavery, including those who escaped on the Underground Railroad.

According to an obituary, Nicholas Bogart was "one of the oldest and best known colored men in this State and a man of almost national reputation during the slavery agitation, from his connection as coachman with the family of the late Secretary of State William H. Seward." Bogart born in slavery in New York State on December 24, 1801. In 1826, he went to live with David Titus in Dutchess County, and three years later, he came with the Titus family to Cayuga County. In 1838, his name appeared on the first incorporation papers for the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on Washington Street. In 1839, he was a trustee of the "African School" in the village of Auburn, and he signed a "card of thanks" published in the *Friend of Man* for money raised for the school.[3]

[3]Special thanks to Peter Wisbey for sharing the photograph of Harriet Bogart and quotations relating to the Bogarts from collections of the Seward House, Auburn. *Friend of Man*, April 24, 1839; Religious Corporations of Cayuga County, NY, Vol. 1, 154, Cayuga County Records Retention Office.

David Titus was a close friend of William Henry Seward, and when Seward was elected Governor of New York State in 1839, Nicholas Bogart went with him to Albany as his coachman. There, in 1840 and 1841, Bogart was also appointed a delegate from Albany to black state conventions held in Albany and Troy. Bogart, whom the family called Nick, remained in Seward's employ in both Auburn and Washington, D.C., as a coachman and then as a gardener, until Seward's death in 1872, and the Seward family continued to provide for him until his death.[4]

By 1855, Nicholas Bogart was also working as sexton for the First Baptist Church,, where he was a member. He was, according to his obituary, "very religious."

Harriet C. Bogart was also a mainstay in the Seward household. She worked either for the Sewards or for Lazette Worden, Frances Seward's sister, from the 1830s on. She was born about 1810, somewhere in Cayuga County and moved to Auburn about 1830. She married a man named Hays and had two children with him, Willis and Lewis. Her marriage to Hays dissolved shortly after the birth of her second child. According to Lazette Worden's daughter, Frances Worden Chesebro, "Harriet was my mother's servitor, her main dependence when she commenced housekeeping and the one who received me from Doctor Little when I made my first appearance into this world. An unfortunate marriage had taken her from our family to which she returned in a few years with two *piccaninni* [?] boys and remained our own Harriet until persuaded into a second marriage by Nicholas Bogart." The Bogarts had one daughter, Harriet E., born about 1838.[5]

In 1855, Harriet and Nicholas Bogart lived with their daughter, Harriet E., then age 17. When Harriet married in 1857, Frances Seward wrote to her husband, William Henry Seward, that "Hattie Bogart vis Simpson had a beautiful wedding and party. I wish you could have been there."[6]

In 1857, the Auburn city directory listed the Bogarts as living at 3 Exchange Street, still near the Baptist Church, but Seward's land records suggest that they purchased a small house at 16 Miller Street (now 20 Miller Street) from William Henry Seward in that year. [**Is this correct?]** The deed for this house, recorded in 1868, was in Harriet Bogart's name, not Nicholas Bogart's.

In 1860, the census recorded them in a house worth $300, living with one-year-old Mary Simpson of Ohio, next door to William Cromwell, pastor of Zion Church. City directories in 1865-66 noted their continued residence at 16 Miller Street, although the 1865 census suggested they were "with Silas Bradley, Merchant," and that Nicholas Bogart's occupation was "none."

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[4] Obituary, Nicholas Bogart, n.d. and February 20, 1893, from Seward House, Obituary Scrapbook, in Peter Wisbey and Jennifer Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad in the William Henry Seward Papers and other Sources," February 2004.

[5][Frances Worden Chesebro], [Manuscript on the Underground Railroad], Seward Papers, University of Rochester, 5. Thanks to Kate Clifford Larson for discovering this. 1850, 1855, 1860, 1865, 1870 census; Obituary, Nicholas Bogart, n.d. and February 20, 1893, from Seward House, Obituary Scrapbook, in Peter Wisbey and Jennifer Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad in the William Henry Seward Papers and other Sources," February 2004.

[6] 1855 Census; Frances Seward to William Henry Seward, May 28, 1857, Seward Papers, in Peter Wisbey and Jennifer Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad," February 2004.

Harriet Bogart, c. 1860
Courtesy of Seward House, Auburn, New York

Throughout the 1850s, the Sewards were regular supporters of the Underground Railroad, As William Seward wrote to his wife, Frances, in 1855, "The 'underground railroad' works wonderfully. Two passengers came here last night. Watch (family dog) attacked one of them. I am against extending suffrage to dogs. They are just like other classes of *parvenus*."[7]

In 1859, William Henry Seward helped eighteen people escape from slavery on a steamer from Washington, D.C. He also sold seven acres of land to Harriet Tubman, a known freedom seeker, and about 1861, Tubman brought her niece (perhaps actually her daughter), Margaret Stewart, to Auburn, to live with Lazette Worden and the Sewards[8].

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[7] Cited in Frederick Seward, Seward in Washington, Vol. II, p. 256, in Wisbey and Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad in the William Henry Seward Papers and other Sources," February 2004.

[8] July 1870, Francis B. Carpenter, "A Day with Governor Seward at Auburn": "Among the visitors in the evening was Mr. Wormley, the well known colored landlord of Washington. Greeting him cordially and introducing him to his other guests, Mr. Seward said: 'Wormley and I went into the emancipation business a year and a half before Mr. Lincoln did, down on the James River. How was it Wormley – how many slaves did we take off on our steamer?' 'Eighteen,' replied Mr. Wormley. 'Among them was Harriet Freeman, who has never ceased to pray for you, sir, since night and morning!' A lady guest from Washington said: 'Mr. Seward, black Harriet wished me to say to you that she thanked God every day that she had a son old enough and strong enough to go with you accompany him on his journey.)" [handwritten mss., Seward Papers, University of

Local tradition associated the old kitchen with the Underground Railroad. The *Auburn Daily Herald* reported in 1891 that "it is said that the old kitchen was one of the most popular stations of the Underground Railroad, and that many a poor slave who fled by this route to Canada carried to his grave the remembrance of its warmth and cheer."[9]

The Bogarts would have been key players in this Underground Railroad network, acting as a bridge between the Seward family, the local African American community, and freedom seekers in need of help. Quite likely, Harriet Bogart also took care of Margaret Stewart, Harriet Tubman's Maryland-born niece, when she stayed with the family.

During the Civil War, Harriet's son, Willis A. Bogart, joined the U.S. Army. In Chicago on December 31, 1863, he mustered into Company B, 29th Regiment, U.S. Colored Infantry, as a Private. From Camp Casey, Virginia on May 8, 1864, he wrote a cheerful letter to William Henry Seward, then Secretary of State under Abraham Lincoln:

> Sir, Will you Please tell or let me know at your earliest opportunity If my father is in Washington with you. Or not As I have written home to Auburn & can get no answer from Home. I would like to know Whereabouts of Lt. Colonel Wm. H. Seward is and the No. of his Regt. I am well and in fine spirits in the 29 USC Troops at this Camp.
>
> No more at present,
>
> I remain your Humble Serv't
> Willis A. Bogart[10]

Willis Bogart was discharged October 21, 1864. Two years later, an exchange of letters between Harriet Bogart and William Henry Seward revealed something of what happened to Willis. The letters also suggest the mutual respect and love that existed between Harriet Bogart, family servant, and William Henry Seward, Secretary of State. Seward's reference to Harriet Bogart's "assiduous" attentions to his family during the past year certainly refer to Harriet's help during the attack on his own life at the time of Lincoln's assassination, as well as Frances Seward's death shortly thereafter. As Peter Wisbey, Director of the Seward House, has noted, Seward's request for a pardon for Willis went to the Governor of the late President Lincoln's own state, Illinois, in the difficult national context of Reconstruction politics.

> March 6, 1866 Harriet Bogart in Auburn to WHS in Washington:
>
> Mr. Seward,
> Kind sur I have neaver yet replied to your kind leter but will now try to do so. I am very glad to hear that your helth is better and I hope that it will continue to improve and that your whole family may be restored to perfect health with the blessing of god upon you. Mr. Seward did you receive a letter from Mr. Senter a short time ago which he wrote for me[.] If you did you may think it strange that I shold of gotten him to wright to you in sted of wrighting my self. I will tel you why that was. I went

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to China and take care of you!' (This referred to Mr. Seward's body servant who was to Rochester, "A Day with Governor Seward" folder, cited in Wisbey and Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad in the William Henry Seward Papers and other Sources," February 2004.

[9]*Auburn Daily Herald*, February 20, 1891, Seward House scrapbook, cited in Wisbey and Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad in the William Henry Seward Papers and other Sources," February 2004.

[10]Cited in Wisbey and Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad in the William Henry Seward Papers and other Sources," February 2004.

to him to make inquire of a society which I wisht to get some information and he thought that I had better wright to you. I asked him if he wold wright for me. He told me that he wold which was very kind in him. I have not sene him since. I felt then as if I cold not wright or do anything its ever again and I have not hardly been able to do much since for I some times think that I shall half to be cent to the asylum. I do not no what Mr. Senter wrote to you therefore I will wright you[.] I had a letter from mr. Isaac R. Hitt of Chicago, Ill. Real estate war claim and pension agency stateing that Willis my son had taken money from his safe which he was tride and sentence to the penitentiary for 2 years and 6 monts and I also had a letter from Willises attorney saying that if I wold send him one hundred dollars that he wold go to Springfield and procure a pardon for him that I have not got[.] Mr. Hitt ses that he given him information relation to his claim against the government for a pension for he was certainly disabled in the service. Mr. Seward you certainly have done a great deal for Willis which I can never re pay you for and now may I ask you if you will wright to the governor of that state for a pardon for him. I no he is un worthe but he is my son however un worthey.

Ever your unworthey,
Harriet C. Bogart
P.S. he gose by the name of Willis A. bogart"

March 12, 1866 WHS in Washington to Mrs. Harriet Bogart of Auburn:

My Dear Harriet,
I have received your letter of the 6th instant. I am glad to hear that you are well. We all here are improving. I will write to the Governor of Illinois of the case of Willis. Do not send One Hundred dollars, or any money whatever to any lawyer.

Very truly, your friend,
William H. Seward"

March 12, 1866 WHS in Washington to Gov. Richard J. Oglesby of Illinois:

Sir,
Willis A. Bogart, is a colored man who, I think, has been in some capacity in the military service; perhaps only a servant in the Quarter-masters or some other department. He certainly was disabled in the war. In former times he was a servant of mine. His mother, Harriet C. Bogart, is an exemplary and inestimable woman and has for more than thirty years been connected with my family by very affectionate relations. Her attentions in my family during the last year were assiduous, and attended with much personal sacrifice. She writes me that her son, Willis, has been convicted of a larceny and sentenced to the penitentiary for two years and six months. I understand the conviction to have occurred at Chicago, but the information in this respect is imperfect.

She writes, also, that her son's attorney applies to her to send him One Hundred dollars, upon receiving which he will go to Springfield and procure a pardon.

I beg leave of your Excellency to ask that you will give to the subject upon this application of mine the same consideration that would be procured if this poor, laboring colored woman had been able, and had sent One Hundred dollars to the attorney for the purpose of procuring an enquiry into the case.

I beg leave to extenuate the boldness of this request by saying that only in one other instance have I ever asked, or recommended to the Governor of any State an exercise of clemency. That other case concerned William Freeman, a demented Negro, wrongfully convicted of murder, whom I had defended on his trial at my own cost.

I beg leave to enclose to you Mrs. Bogart's letter, the original together with a copy. The original is precious to me, and I will thank you, therefore, to return it. I have the honor to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,
William H. Seward

March 16, 1866 Gov. Richard Oglesby of Illinois to WHS:

Your letter and two enclosures received today. I have made examination of the record of applications for pardon but have been unable to find that Willis A. Bogart has made such an application. I suppose he or his friends will [very] soon move in the matter or if not I will cause an examination to be made into the facts of his case and will be disposed to grant the pardon. There will be no necessity for sending one hundred dollars to any attorney for this purpose and his mother need not do so – your letter is all that will be necessary in the case as soon as I shall learn what there is of it when and where he was convicted &c.

I return herewith the letter addressed to you by Mrs. Bogart as requested.

September 23, 1867 Willis A. Bogart in Chicago, Ill., to WHS in Washington, DC:

To His Excellency the Hon Wm. H. Seward

Respectful Sir. Will you take upon yourself in your leisure moments to solve this mistery[sic] which to me is yet unexplained in the year '66 I received a bundle of Doc. From Messrs. Johnson, Brown & Co. No. 4 Intelligence Block of your City and after procuring them for my Attys. And after having my papers signed by the County Clerks at this City & forwarded to them & after a lapse of time I can hear nothing from them. I think it hard that after having fought, bled & got crippled for life in defense of my Country that I have not got my just dues & I am extremely glad as I have before written to you for your service in procuring my release from solitary confinement in which I am completely cured of all my former [merits?] & look to him who is Higher than all this World. I wish to know if they are trustworthy & have an Honorable reputation of such. As I need my Back Bounty to sustain me in my pilgrimage through this Wide Wide World that I take this step. If you deems it worthy in the name of Hiram the Widow, my God is there no Hope for the Widow's sons. Or a member of this [___ft.]

An Ans. Is fully requested. Please direct to my address in rear 242 East Madison Street, Chicago, Ills. I have written to day & before to them here.

Hoping that I may & this may find in your eye a favorable opinion of such that my request may be granted, I will in the name of the Most High god remain your most unworthy servant.

Willis A. Bogart

Give my love to Mr. Frederick Seward & all the family therein.
[In pencil, Seward's notation: "Is there any bounty due him. He is a colored man. Is there any bounty due him."][11]

In 1869-70, the city directory noted the Bogarts were living at 40 Main Street, but by 1879-80, they were back at 16 Miller Street. In 1876 they mortgaged their house for $300, with Augustus Seward, William Henry Seward's son, holding the mortgage. This seems to reflect Augustus Seward's general reorganization of accounts, for he remortgaged more than one property that year. Perhaps it was also Seward's attempt to give the Bogarts an annuity, much like a reverse mortgage would work for retirees today.[12]

[11]Cited in Wisbey and Haines, "Selected references to African-Americans, Slavery or the Underground Railroad in the William Henry Seward Papers and other Sources," February 2004.
[12] Deed recorded 1868, Cayuga County Clerk's Office Book 124, 493; Mortgage, Harriet C. & Nicholas Bogart to Augustus H. Seward, 27 June 1876, City of Auburn, Cayuga County, NY, Mortgage Book 93, 448-449. See attached abstract by Tanya Warren. [Is this deed dated 1868 or recorded 1868?]

Harriet Bogart, that "inestimable and exemplary women," died in 1888. Nicholas Bogart, "one of the oldest and best known colored men in this State and a man of almost national reputation during the slavery agitation," lived alone at 16 Miller Street, cared for by neighbor Betsey Shaver and her daughter, with support from the Sewards. Nicholas Bogart died February 15, 1893, age 91. Funeral services were held at his home, and he was buried at Fort Hill Cemetery.[13]

Written with the assistance of Peter Wisbey, Jennifer Haines, and Tanya Warren.

Mortgage Deed Abstract
Harriet C. & Nicholas Bogart to Augustus H. Seward
27 June 1876
City of Auburn, Cayuga County, NY
Mortgage Book 93, page 448-449

This indenture made this 27th day of June 1876 between Harriet C. Bogart & Nicholas Bogart, her husband of the City of Auburn, etc., and Augustus H. Seward of the same place, in consideration for the sum of $300…do grant and convey to (Seward) all that tract or parcel of land situate in the City of Auburn known and distinguished as lot # 16 on Plot 1 of lands in the City of Auburn on map of William H. Seward, executor of Elijah Miller, deceased, made by James Bostwick and filed in the office of the Cayuga County Clerk 26 January 1864. Being the same premises conveyed to the said Harriet Bogart by deed dated 28 March 1868 and recorded in Cayuga County Clerk's Office Book 124, page 493. This grant is intended as a security for the payment of the sum of $300 ongoing on this date with interest according to the condition of a bond this day executed and delivered by the said Harriet Bogart to the party of the second part…(payment details illegible)…also agreed by and between the parties that (Harriet Bogart) shall and will keep the building erected and to be erected upon the lands above conveyed covered against loss and damage by fire by insurance in an amount agreed to by (Seward) (additional insurance details illegible).

Signed by the hand of Harriet Bogart and the mark of Nicholas Bogart
Witness: F. G. Day.

Research and transcription by Tanya Warren

[13] 1880 Census; Obituary, February 15, 1893, Seward House scrapbook.

Rev. William Cromwell and Melinda and Julia Cromwell House
8 Francis Street
(Historic 6 Frances Street)
Auburn, New York 13021

Significance: Home of freedom seeker and early AME Zion minister

February 2005
Looking South

Set back from the road farther than its neighbors, this small house gives us that one tantalizing clue about its early origins. Its modest size, however, belies its importance to the nineteenth century African American community in Auburn. Rev. William Cromwell was pastor of the AME Zion Church at 9 Washington Street from about 1852-c. 1875. He purchased this land in 1855, and he (or his congregation) built the house itself before 1865. This small dwelling represents the organized African American community in Auburn as it integrated freedom seekers from the southern U.S. and Canada—including Rev. Cromwell himself--into the existing community of free people of color. This community included those who had been, although enslaved, among the first settlers of Auburn.

Cromwell had himself been born in either Maryland or Virginia, probably in slavery. According to the 1855 census, he had arrived in Auburn about 1852. In 1855, he was 34 years old, an AME Zion minister, married to Malinda, age 39, who had been born in Pennsylvania. Their four

children were Catharine E., age 14, born in Pennsylvania; Harriet, age 10, born in Chemung County; Elijah A., age 7, born in Oswego; and Mathilda, age 5, born in Oswego County. We can follow their migration pattern through their children's birthplaces, from Pennsylvania in the early 1840s to Chemung County (perhaps Elmira) about 1845 to Oswego about 1848 to Auburn about 1852.

In addition to his duties as AME Zion minister locally, Rev. Cromwell participated in local and state-wide black conventions. In 1853, he was one of those who issued a call to "a convention of the colored people in the counties of Ontario, Yates, Seneca, Cayuga and Wayne" to be held in Geneva to organize "a Society auxiliary to the state council of colored people; and to further consider the proceedings of the National Convention held in Rochester in July last." "Come ye fathers and mothers, young men and maidens, and let us take Council together," read the call.[14]

On October 1, 1855, William A. Cromwell purchased Lot No. 47 on plot 3 at 6 Frances Street, with a mortgage from William H. Seward, Executor of Elijah Miller, Seward's father-in-law. Cromwell did not immediately move there, however. The 1857 Auburn city directory listed his address as 206 Genesee. In 1859-60, he was at "Miller St. n Dam." In the 1860 census, William H. [?] Cromwell listed his age as 47. He still listed his birthplace as Maryland, and his occupation was "E. Zion Church." He was the owner of $600 worth of land. His wife Melinda listed her age as 45, and three children lived at home, Mathilda (10), Lucy A. 1(12), and Marietta (16).
By 1863-64, the family had moved to 79 Owasco. In 1865-66, however, the directory listed him at 6 Francis Street, so we know that the Cromwells had almost certainly constructed a dwelling there by that date. A house appeared on that lot on the map by W.W. Richie in 1871.

The 1865 New York State census listed William A. Cromwell as age 45, now a cook, born in Virginia, owning a frame house and land worth $600. Melinda was 46, born in Pennsylvania. Children at home included only Lela, 16, born in Oswego County, and Eliza, 18, born in Chemung County.

In 1870, the only William Cromwell listed in the census was a cook in a hotel, age 55, born in New York State. This was probably the same William A. Cromwell who was the AME Zion minister. Melinda Cromwell seems to have died, for by 1875, William A. Cromwell, still living on Francis Street, was listed with an occupation as "Clergyman ME," and his wife's name was Julia.

In 1876, Rev. William Cromwell recorded a mortgage for property at 6 Frances with Frederick Seward, William Henry Seward's son, for $300. On April 9, 1900, William Cromwell's heirs lost this house through foreclosure. In a suit brought by Frederick W. Seward against Julia E. Cromwell [William A. Cromwell's second wife], Effa Jackson, Alexander C. Davinger, F. Maude Wilson, Mary Melinda Cromwell, Laura Lewis, and Samuel Andrews, the judge ruled that the house was to be sold at sheriff's auction. Burt L. Rich purchased it for $475.16 and subsequently sold it to Thomas Hoyle.

In 1880, William Cromwell, cook, aged 58, born in Maryland, was living on Frances Street, with his wife, Julia, born in New York, aged 51.

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[14] *Frederick Douglass Paper*, December 2, 1853.

The house remained in the care of stable, long-term, single-family owners through most of its existence. After 45 years in the hands of the Cromwells, Thomas Hoyle kept the property only three years before selling it to the Clements family, who owned it for nineteen years. The next owners, Charles and Martha Harvey kept the house in the family for thirty-eight years. The Steigerwalds owned it for twenty-four years. Since 1984, the house has had only two owners.

Cromwell House: Deed Chronology

October 1, 1855	Seward to Cromwell. Mortgage C Book 94, p. 45.
1876	Mortgage, Frederick Seward to William Cromwell, Liber 9, page 45.
April 9, 1900	George S. Wood as Sheriff to Thomas Hoyle. Deed Book 30, p. 354.
1903	Thomas Hoyle to Clements. Deed Book 33, p. 87.
1922	Clements? Catharine to Charles Harvey. Deed Book 56, p. 17.
1960	Charles and Martha Harvey to Steigerwalds. Book 314, p. 72
1984	Henry White (executor of Ruth Steigerwald) to Dr. R.M. Tucker. Book 674, p. 194
1991	David and Rose Mary Tucker to Helen Gamba. Book 832, p. 42.
1996	Helen Rose Gamba to ? Book 939, p. 323.

Research by Tanya Warren.

Lazette Miller Worden House, 1856
2 Frederick Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of Abolitionist and Underground Railroad Activist

Looking southeast, July 2005

Looking northwest
Photo by Tanya Warren, March 23, 2005

Worden House, c. 1860s
Frances Seward, Lazette Worden, and Mrs. Perry
Courtesy of Seward House, Auburn, New York

Lazette Miller Worden
Courtesy Seward House

Descriptions: The Worden House is a classic Gothic Revival house. Its original bargeboards with gingerbread trim have been lost, but vestiges of its nineteenth century character remain in the stuccoed siding and the tracery in the Gothic window in the west gable.

Significance: The Lazette Worden House, known as Pisgah, after the biblical reference to the mountain ascended by Moses before the Israelites entered the Promised Land (Deut. 3: 17, 27) illustrates the importance of a women's Underground Railroad network in Auburn. This network incorporated two daughters of Elijah Miller—Lazette Miller Worden and France Miller Seward (whose grandmother was a Quaker), Quaker-born Martha Wright, Harriet Tubman, and perhaps several other women, as well. Lazette Worden, Frances Seward, and Martha Wright were close friends, and all three had all been influenced by Quaker ideals. While they were in Auburn, they formed a mutually supportive friendship that strengthened their radical abolitionist and woman's rights views. It may have been this group, connected to Philadelphia abolitionists through Martha Wright's sister, Lucretia Mott, that encouraged Harriet Tubman to come to Auburn in the late 1850s. Certainly, all three of them used their homes as safe houses on the Underground Railroad.

Lazette Maria Miller (November 1, 1803-October 3, 1875) was a daughter of Elijah P. Miller, judge in Auburn. With her sister, Frances, she grew up in the family home on South Street. Both Frances and Lazette attended a Quaker school in Aurora in 1817. Lazette Miller married Alvah Worden, and for much of her married life, she lived in Canandaigua. She spent many weeks of every year, however, visiting her sister and brother-in-law, William Henry Seward, in Auburn. In 1856, she returned to Auburn and built this house at 2 Frederick Street, on land inherited from her father.

In Auburn, her closest friends were Frances Seward and Martha Wright. The Wrights lived on Genesee Street, around the corner from the Sewards. Martha's husband, David, was a lawyer who had worked in 1846 as a partner with William Henry Seward on one of his most famous cases, defending William Freeman, an African American accused of murder, on a plea of insanity. Beginning in 1827, Martha Wright, raised a Quaker, taught at the Aurora school attended earlier by Frances Seward and Lazette Worden, and the three women shared a strong commitment to abolitionism and women's rights.

Lazette Worden's abolitionist and Underground Railroad sympathies extended throughout her life. Clearly, she was the radical abolitionist in her household, although he husband supported her efforts. As their daughter, Frances Worden Chesbro, remembered, Alvah Worden was "law abiding citizen and not an Abolitionist" but he was "' a just man and one that favored God.'" When he served in the New York State legislature in 1841, he supported two bills that his brother-in-law, William Henry Seward, then Governor, also supported, one giving African American me the right to vote and a second giving freedom to anyone brought in slavery from another state into New York State.[1]

After her death, Lazette Worden's daughter, Frances Worden Chesbro, wrote a 27-page handwritten reminiscence about her mother's Underground Railroad activity. This included reminiscences of several specific freedom seekers affiliated in some way with the Worden household. In Auburn, "The first passenger by "The Underground Railroad" with whom I made acquaintance was a middle aged Negro named Jacob, she recalled, "a most respectable appearing individual and as subsequent events proved a very woeful one."

[1] [Frances Worden Chesbro], untitled manuscript, 12-13, Seward Collection, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester. Thanks to Kate Clifford Larson for finding this.

> He drifted into my mother's kitchen when we lived on East Genesee Street in Auburn as a "Fugitive Slave" and at an opportune time when my mother's household was undergoing a succession of changes incident to the marriage of Harriet6 Hays to Nicholas Bogart [c. 1838]. . . ."Fugitive Slave" had an uncanny sound in my childish ears, and I remained in great awe of Jacob until his gentle ways and excellent cooking convinced me he was not dangerous. I do not know as he ever told our family his history or his claim he "had run away from slavery." My after experience with Southern Negroes inclines [?] me to think he must have been a favorite house servant for he had good manners, was neat and orderly, and I thought [?] could read for he would always sit when his work was done with a book in his hand. He left us after a few months "to go on still further," he said and I do not remember we ever heard of him after.[2]

The second person she wrote about was Richard Valentine, whom she knew in Canandaigua. Valentine married a Seneca Indian woman, Mrs. Valentine David, as she was called, who worked in the Worden household. Richard Valentine had been enslaved in New York State, so he escaped before 1827, and he worked in the Canandaigua hotel. Lazette Worden's daughter thought that

> he was one of the worse specimens of his race but a man of more than ordinary intelligence and faithful to those he liked.
>
> Richard had been a slave to Mr deZeng of Geneva [New York] but so utterly lawless as to cause his master great trouble. By the connivance of Mrs. deZeng he was made a passenger on the "Underground Railroad" one night and eventually drifted into Canandaigua where he became useful [?] man to Colonel Blossom landlord of the hotel. In his latter days he became a politician and made public speeches on divers [sic] subjects taking "Squire Worden" as his model, all to the great annoyance and mortification of his wife and daughters. Both Richard and his wife are now at rest in my cemetery lot near those she served so faithfully and the one he studied as a model.[3]

In 1842, her father cooperated with her mother in helping a woman and her two children, escaping from slavery, who were staying with the Valentine family.

> It was a bitter cold morning, [she remembered], when Richard Valentine appeared in our kitchen looking for everything he considered necessary to the comfort of a fugitive and her two children, my Father, Mother, our faithful Elsie and I eagerly listening. Elsie from the kitchen stoves soon supplied sufficient to satisfy the hunger of a trio that seemed to have dropped from the clouds in the night and during the day my mother shaped out innumerable garments and though I was but a child I was kept sewing far into the night to furnish warm clothing for this family. Before Spring I heard Richard tell my Father the woman had heard her Master was in pursuit and the order given to procure conveyance and take the family to Farmington, a Quaker settlement north of us in the direct road of

[2] [Frances Worden Chesbro], untitled manuscript, 4-6, Seward Collection, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester.
[3] [Frances Worden Chesbro], untitled manuscript, 7-8, Seward Collection, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester.

> "The Underground Railroad" leading into Canada. By the time the Master reached Canandaigua the good Quakers had his prey safe over "the line." [4]

After the death of Alvah Worden, Frances Worden returned to Auburn from Canadaigua and built a new house at 2 Frederick Street, a brick (probably stuccoed) Gothic Revival cottage that faced a large farm, on land inherited from her father, Elijah Miller. Her house was not far from one purchased the next year on Miller Street, along the Owasco outlet, by Harriet Day Bogart, Lizaette Worden's former household servant, and her husband, Nicholas Bogart, who were still employed by William and Frances Seward.

The impact of Lazette Worden and Frances Seward extended beyond Auburn to Washington, D.C., where they continued to espouse their antislavery sympathies, becoming friends with Charles Sumner, abolitionist senator from Massachusetts. Frances Chesbro herself hired a freedom seeker, Jane Thompson, whom she had first met in Washington, D.C., and who later escaped from the employ of Mr. Meredith, Secretary of the Treasury under Zachary Taylor. Frances Chesbro also helped at least one other person escape on the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, an Army officer named Captain George Williams (111th Regiment) brought a young boy to her from the South called Sam, who remained part of her circle throughout her life.[5]

In Auburn after 1856, Lazette Worden continued to spend a great deal of time with her sister and brother-in-law, Frances and William Henry Seward. She also met regularly for tea and social occasions with Martha Wright. It was this group who offered sustenance to Harriet Tubman, after she purchased land from William Henry Seward in 1857 and began gradually to move her family to Auburn, beginning in 1859.

In 1861, Tubman brought Margaret Stewart, most likely a niece but possibly her own daughter, to Auburn, to live with Lazette Worden. As Martha Wright reported in May, "Mrs. Worden was just here—she has taken a contraband 10 yrs. old to live with her, a niece of Harriet Tubman." Lazette Worden stayed for long periods at the Seward home, and she brought Margaret Stewart with her there to live, where Frances Seward helped raise her.[6]

Emily Howland, who wrote a history of Friends in Cayuga County, recalled that

> those whose privilege, it was to know these noble sisters, in their life at the Capital, can realize how unique and powerful a force they were; interested in the reforms proposed and agitated by the advanced minds of the time, they moved on the troubled sea of Washington life, during eighteen years of the darkest and most eventful period of the Nation's history. Mrs. Worden, with a wit keen as a Damascus blade, would pierce the sophistries of the enemies of human freedom, charming while she demolished. Severely plain in their dress, one delighted by her brilliant conversational power, the other refreshed by a beautiful and

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[4] [Frances Worden Chesbro], untitled manuscript, 14-15.
[5] [Frances Worden Chesbro], untitled manuscript, 16-21.
[6] Martha Wright to Francis Wright, May 28, 1862, Garrison Family Papers. Smith College, quoted in Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portait of an American Hero* (New York: Ballantine, 2004), 196, and Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman The Life and the Life Stories* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 367.

> saintly presence, and an ever ready sympathy. Thoroughly conversant with the politics of the day, they cheered a wearied Sumner, whose principles closed other homes to him, or discussed the cause of Woman with a distinguished foreign guest,--welcomed and gladdened a lonely teacher, or listened to the appeal of some poor Rachel grieving for children enslaved. Even animals basked in the glow of their kindness and love.[7]

After the death of her sister, Frances, in 1865, Lazette Worden often acted as hostess for her brother-in-law, William Henry Seward, both in Auburn and Washington.

The census of 1870 listed her as living alone in Auburn, aged 65 years old, with real estate valued at $6000 and a personal estate valued at $10,000. In 1872, she was at William Henry Seward's side when he died after a brief illness.[8]

Lazette Worden died October 3, 1875 and was buried in Fort Hill Cemetery, Auburn.[9]

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[7] Emily Howland, "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County, N.Y., Read before the Cayuga County Historical Society, April 8, 1880," *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society* 2 (1882), 49-90; Emails from Sheila Edmunds, Aurora Village Historian, January 17 and 31, 2005.
[8] Sherry Penney and James Livingston, *A Very Dangerous Woman: Martha Wright and Women's Rights* (Amherst, Masschusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004).
[9] Fort Hill Cemetery Internment Roster, http://www.cayuganet.org/forthill/roster/w.html. Lazette Worden's will is on file in the Cayuga County Surrogate's Office, NY-6-Y-272.

III. ***Sites and Stories***

Auburn: North Side

AME Zion Church, site of original
Auburn Prison
Cayuga County Courthouse
Fitch House
Freeman House, site of
Freeman barbershop (Cumpston Lane and South Street), site of
Hornbeck Houses: Jefferson Street Historic District?
Hosmer House
Huntington House-Auburn Theological Seminary
Mansfield House
North Street Cemetery
Northern Christian Advocate Publishing House
Seward House
Swarts House
Underwood/Kiah-Williams House, site of
Wall Street Methodist Church
Westminister Presbyterian Church
Wright House, site of
Northern Independent and African American Barbershop, site of

Site of First AME Zion Church
9-11 Washington Street (originally 5-7 Washington Street)
Auburn, New York

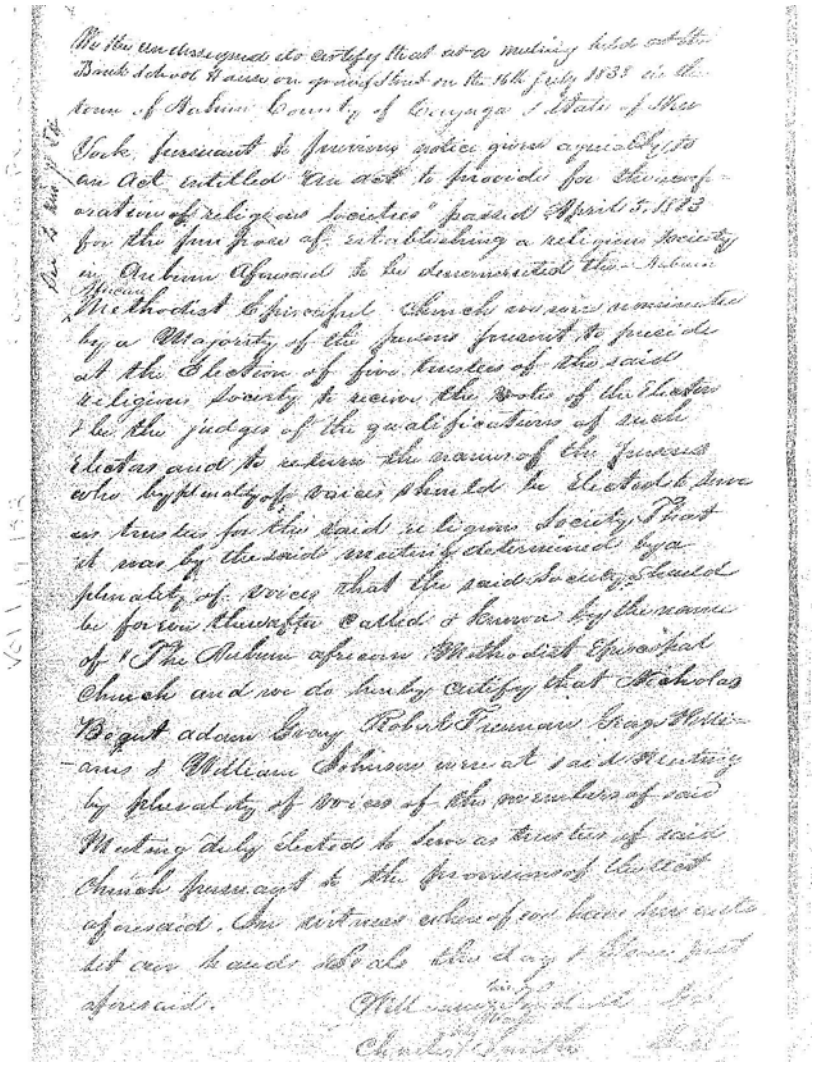
Significance: Site of first African American School (c.1839) and African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (c. 1847)

9-11 Washington Street
(Gray house with red trim)
February 2005
Looking northwest

Description: The original school/church on this site was a long narrow, gable-end-to the street building, with the door on the east end, altar on the east, and one aisle down the middle. A house belonging to Deborah Depuy was located at the back of this lot. Both were taken down shortly after 1905 and replaced with the current house.

Significance: In the nineteenth century, churches, schools, and clubs formed important identifying structures of community life. For African Americans in Auburn, the organization of the African American Methodist Episcopal Church was a major step toward a stable community presence. The church, like the school and local African American businesses (such as boarding houses and barbershops) gave aid to people on the Underground Railroad. They supported freedom seekers who wanted to travel to Canada, and they helped find jobs and homes for those who chose to stay in Auburn.

Incorporated in 1838, the church held its first meeting on July 16, 1838, and elected Nicholas Bogart, Adam Gray, Robert Freeman, George Williams, and William Johnson (almost certainly a freedom seeker himself) as trustees. William Terdell/Tudell and Charles Smith signed the incorporation papers with their marks.



We the undersigned do certify that at a meeting held at the Black School House on said Street on the 16th of July 1838 in the town of Auburn County of Cayuga & State of New York, pursuant to previous notice given agreeably to an Act entitled "An act to provide for the incorporation of religious societies" passed April 5, 1813 for the purpose of establishing a religious society in Auburn aforesaid to be denominated the Auburn African Methodist Episcopal Church we were nominated by a Majority of the persons present to preside at the Election of five trustees of the said religious society to receive the votes of the electors & be the judges of the qualifications of such electors and to return the names of the persons who by plurality of voices should be elected trustees for the said religious society. That it was by the said meeting determined by a plurality of voices that the said society should be forever thereafter called & known by the name of "The Auburn African Methodist Episcopal Church and we do hereby certify that Nicholas Bogart Adam Gray Robert Freeman George Williams & William Johnson were at said Meeting by plurality of voices of the members of said Meeting duly elected to serve as trustees of said Church pursuant to the provisions of the act aforesaid. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands & seals this day & year first aforesaid.

On August 24, 1847, trustees held a meeting at the home of Betsy Smith and elected Joseph P. Thompson, Chair, and Robert Freeman and Jacob Jordan, Secretaries and Sebeo Hornbeck, Adam Gray, and Jacob Jordon as trustees. J. P. Thompson and Robert Freeman signed the minutes. On May 3, 1847, they noted that the name of the church was now "The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church of Auburn." On October 26, 1847, they had two ministers, John S. Dallas and Pleasant Bouler and elected Charles Griffin, Sebeo Hornbeck, Adam Gray, George Williams and Robert Freeman as trustees. Reverends Dallas and Bouler signed the minutes.

About this time, with the help of Rev. Mr. Johnson, a few families began worshipping in "an abandoned wooden schoolhouse" on Washington Street that the Village of Auburn had built "for a separate school for colored children, and later turned over by the new city authorities to the colored people for church uses." This was undoubtedly the same building constructed about 1839, when Nicholas Bogart (sexton of the Baptist Church and employee of William Henry Seward), Adam Gray, and Josiah Churchill printed a card o thanks in the *Friend of Man* for contributions toward building a school for African American children in Auburn. Rev. Mr. Johnson may be the same man that Frances Seward referred to in 1852, when she wrote her husband, William Henry Seward, that "a man by the name of William Johnson will apply to you for assistance to purchase the freedom of his daughter. You will see that I have given him something by his book. I told him I thought you would give him more. He is very desirous that I should employ his daughter when he gets her which I have agreed to do conditionally if you approve."[1] Of these named trustees and ministers, Sebeo Hornbeck, Charles Griffen, and William Johnson were probably freedom seekers.

On July 6, 1870, a second African American church, St. Mark's, was organized in Auburn. The church held a meeting in Markham Hall in Auburn and elected as trustees Nelson Davis [Harriet Tubman's husband], John Purnell, Isaac White, John H. Waire and John Sanford. Zadoc Bell and and John Waire were added for the record. Signed by the mark of Zadoc Bell and the hand of John Waire. Of these people, at least Davis, Purnell, White, Bell, and Waire were freedom seekers. [2]

Rev. James E. Mason, speaking at the dedication of the Harriet Tubman monument at the Cayuga County Courthouse in 1914, remembered the day he first met Harriet Tubman at this church on Washington Street about 1880:

> It was on a beautiful September Sunday morning. The monarch of the day had risen in Oriental splendor. The rich and varied hues of the autumnal woods added their attractions to our environment. The eloquent Bishop J.J. Clinton was conducting the Genesee Annual Conference in your city.
>
> The early morning exercises were held in the long one-aisled frame Zion A.M.E. Church, on Washington Street. The lovely feast was practically ended but the rapturous songs of Zion were borne outward through the windows, across the avenue and the passerby's listened with rapture and rejoiced.
>
> I entered and seated near the altar, facing the audience. Singing, soul-stirring and reviving, continued. Seated four pews from the front, on my right, was a woman with shoulders somewhat stooped, and head bent forward. She had a broad forehead, piercing eyes, think lips and strong, masculine features.
>
> At the close of a thrilling selection she arose and commenced to speak in a hesitating voice. I understood her impediment resulted from a violent blow, which broke her skull,

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[1] "History of Cayuga County," Cayuga County Historical Society, 1908, 220; *Friend of Man*, April 24, 1839; Frances Seward to William Henry Seward, July 1, 1852, Seward Papers, University of Rochester. Found by Peter Wisbey.

[2] "Religious Incorporation," Vol. I, 152, 195, 196, 198, 241, Cayuga County Records Retentions Office. Research by Tanya Warren.

> when a child. In a shrill voice, she commenced to give testimony to God's goodness and long suffering. Soon she was shouting, and so were others also. She possessed such endurance, vitality, and magnetism, that I inquired and was informed it was Harriet Tubman—the "Underground Railroad Moses."
>
> Here was a modern Priscilla, a prophetess, telling out of the fullness of her heart God's revelation to her in the secret of His presence.
>
> Service ended, I greeted her. She said, "Are you save?" I gave an affirmative reply. She remarked: "Glory to God," and shouted again.
>
> We have met on many important occasions during the intervening years. In the cottages of the lowly and the palatial homes of the wealthy; in private and in public place of responsibility. Everywhere she was the same determined, generous, enthusiastic, race-loving, cheerful heroic soul. A many chorded harp was her broadly sympathetic nature, sensitive to every touch of her race's sorest travail.
>
> Her wit, humor and originality were striking compelling characteristics. She was directing a band of fugitives over Mason and Dixon's line, when something unexplainable occurred and they hesitated. She is reported as saying:
>
> "Come along, come along,
> Don't be a fool,
> Uncle Sam is rich enough
> To send us all to school."[3]

The church property itself was intimately connected with the family of Deborah Depuy, who lived at the rear of the church all her life and who may have acted as caretaker. Deborah Depuy was an important member of the local African American community, related to the Freemans. She had testified in the trial of William Freeman in 1846. Deborah Depuy was 29 years old in 1850, wife of Hiram S. Depuy, a 39-yeard-old laborer. Both were born in New York State. They had four children, Mercent (Morris or Morrison, age 9), John (age 8), Ruth (2), and Jane (2 months).

In 1848, John Bland and William Cropp/Cross came into possession of the Washington St. property via John Bartlett and Horace Knight of Auburn and Charles Merrill of Waterloo. Beginning in 1854, Deborah Depuy paid taxes on part of this property, "at the rear of the African Church." In 1857, John and Charlotte Bland from Charlotte, Ontario, Canada, and William Cropp/Cross, "of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania," formally sold part of this land to Deborah Depuy, who lived here for the rest of her life.

Wm. Cropp/Cross was not found in the Pennsylvania census of 1860, but John H. Bland and Charlotte Bland appeared in the Ontario census for 1880. Both were listed as African, born in the USA. They lived in Hamilton, Ontario. John was a barber, age 60. Charlotte was a dressmaker,

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[3] Rev. James E. Mason, "Pays Tribute to Harriet Tubman," *Auburn Advertiser-Journal*, June 6, 1914, quoted in Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman: The Life and the Stories* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 333-34.

age 37. They had two children (age 19 and 15) both born in Ontario, and a 70-year-old woman named Mary Young also lived with them. John Bland was Baptist.[4]

By 1865, Deborah Depuy was a widow. Her son Morrison had become a barber, and she owned property worth $1000. The 1870 census listed her occupation as laundress. She died in 1879.

Deborah Depuy was assessed $100 for her land at the rear of the church from 1854 until 1859. From 1860 until her death in 1879, she was assessed between $350 and $475 for a house and lot. After her death, the property at 3-11 Washington Street remained off the tax rolls from 1879 until 1905. The church was most likely torn down shortly after 1905 and the current house erected. [5]

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[4] Ontario Census, C-13257,Ward 6, Hamilton, Ontario.
[5] Assessment Records, Cayuga County Records Retention Office.

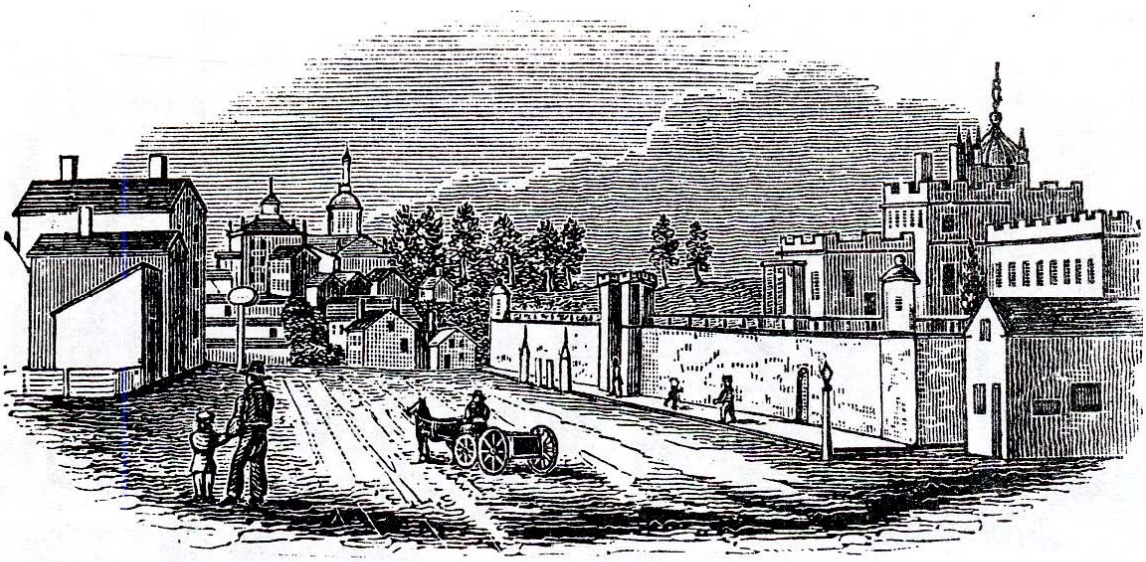
Auburn Prison Front Gates, c. 1825
Auburn, New York

Significance: Site of release and rescue of freedom seeker George Washington, 1854

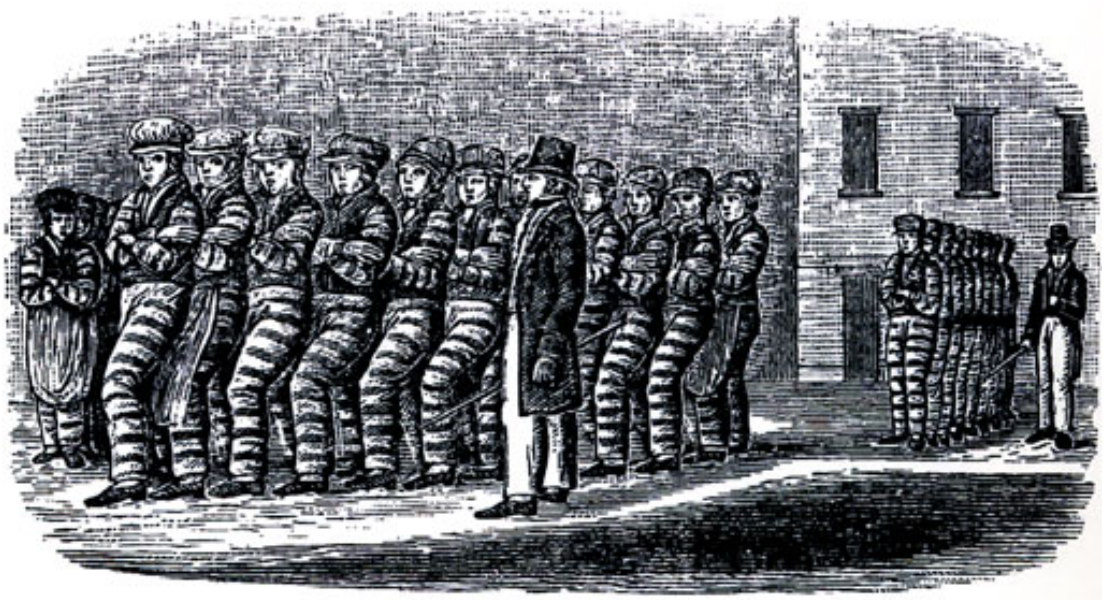
February 2005
Looking SW

Auburn Prison, from Hagaman and Markham, *Village of Auburn* (1837)

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05



State Prison at Auburn.



Prisoners at the State Prison at Auburn.

John Barber and Henry W. Howe, *Historical Collections of the State of New York* (New York, 1842).

Site Description: In continuous since its original construction as a reform prison in 1825, Auburn Prison retains its original limestone front gates, built in octagonal form with crenellated battlements.

Significance for the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life: Auburn Prison represents the complex nature of freedom and slavery and the widespread abolitionist sympathy of people in upstate New York, where even government officials did not always support the Fugitive Slave Act. George Washington escaped from slavery in South Carolina, only to find himself in prison in Auburn, New York. But, in 1854, when slave catchers tried to return him to slavery under the terms of the Fugitive Slave Act, William Titus and Col. Lewis, wardens of Auburn Prison, delivered him instead to Underground Railroad activists, who took him to safety in St. Catherine's, Ontario. [1]

This story involved hundreds of characters:

1. Most important was George Washington. Born in South Carolina, George Washington was arrested in Wayne County for burglary and sent to Auburn Prison in 1844. He had been sentenced, according the *Auburn Daily Advertiser* in 1854, to ten years and one month in prison. He was listed as mulatto, 24 years old, in the 1850 census. George Washington was to be released from prison in late March 1854. He had been in jail since he was eighteen years old.

2. William Ashley, keeper of the jail in Lyons, Wayne County had come to Auburn with the man who claimed to be Washington's owner. They had interviewed Washington in prison, and Washington had acknowledged that he had been a slave. Ashley went to Rochester with the owner, filled out the appropriate affidavits, and obtained a warrant for Washington's arrest under the terms of the Fugitive Slave Law. [2]

3. William Titus, born in Sempronius (now Moravia), New York, in 1803, warden of Auburn prison from 1852-54, Barnburner Democrat (abolitionist), successful businessman and officeholder in Ira, Hannibal and Moravia; postmaster at Locke and Hannibal Centre, Oswego County; later owner of mills at Hannibal Center and Moravia; New York State Assemblyman from Cayuga County; unsuccessful candidate for Congress; officer in the Southern Central Railroad. He had business dealings in Moravia with Isaac Cady and Grover Stoyell, whose families were also associated with the Underground Railroad.[3]

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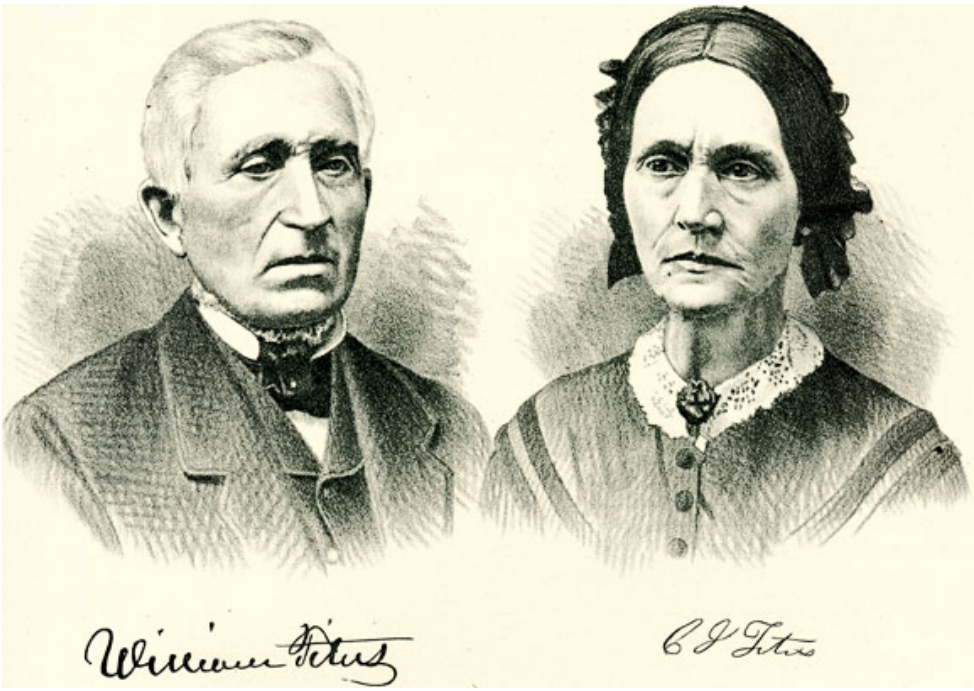
[1]Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County, New York* (Syracuse). Primary research for this site was done by Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian, with assistance from Christopher Densmore, Curator, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore; Tanya Warren, Database Coordinator for this project, Sean Connery, intern for the Seward House; and Kate Clifford Larson, author of *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, An American Hero*.

[2] *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, March 27, 1854. Found by Sheila Tucker.

[3]



William Titus and Clarissa J. Titus
Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County*, 1879.

4. Col. Lewis, Warden of the Prison after William Titus, who "did much to allay the excitement by the straight forward, frank and manly course he pursued during the progress of the affair."[4]
5. Mr. Kirkpatrick, Inspector in charge of the prison at the time of George Washington's release, who assured people that "the colored man would be discharged from the Prison in the usual way and at the usual hour in the morning, and that no [?] process, arresting him as a fugitive slave would be allowed to be served on him while he was inside the Prison walls." [5]
6. W. Smith Ingham, primary businessman in Cato Four Corners (now Meridian), owner of hotel and what was probably the largest store in Cayuga County north of Auburn, who helped organize the rescue of George Washington from the prison gates.
7. James Hickock, store-owner in Meridian. Lived as a stage driver with William and Clarissa Titus according to census of 1850. Part of the rescue effort.
8. H.R. Perry, lived in Auburn, part of the Underground Railroad network and probably a clerk for W. Smith Ingham. Otherwise unidentified.
9. "Colored people" who sought legal aid on Washington's behalf.
10. Two "sable brethren" who grasped George Washington as he emerged from prison and "with the crowd at their heels" "ran 'like mad' up the street with him to a place of safety."

[4] *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, March 27, 1854.
[5] *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, March 27, 1854.

11. Two hundred "friends of freedom" from Auburn and central New York, especially the "Free city of Syracuse," both black and white, who were ready to rescue George Washington by force, if necessary.

On March 20, 1854, W. Smith Ingham and H.R. Perry, wrote to William Titus, warden of Auburn Prison, from "Cato 4 Corners" that

> Matters here are exceedingly quiet, Just now know of a throw bill passed through the county writing the friends of 'Law and Order' to rally at Auburn for the release of one George Washington who is to be discharged from prison and is to be claimed as a fugitive by his master on his release this evening or tomorrow morning (Tuesday). You know this gentleman, I have no doubt . . .[6]

An article in the *Auburn Daily Advertiser* on March 27, 1854, revealed what happened next. Washington had been sentenced to prison for ten years and one month for burglary. Two weeks ago, "some legal gentlemen here were consulted by the colored people in reference to his case." The lawyers concluded that, since George Washington was scheduled to be released on Sunday, a warrant could not legally be served, since this was not a criminal process,

> and the friends of freedom were advised accordingly. It followed of course, that resistance, in such case would be strictly lawful and the officer should he make the attempt would be answerable for the consequences. The rumor that such an attempt was contemplated soon became general, and our citizens, as also those of the Country round about, and of other cities in the vicinity, particularly those of the Free city of Syracuse, became a good deal excited upon the subject, and it became evident that should an attempt be made to arrest Geo. Washington on Sunday, as he should be discharged from prison, the officers would be resisted at all hazards.

The *Auburn Daily Advertiser* continued the story in detail:

> The case was in this state until Saturday last, when the same William Ashley again appeared in the city, claiming to have in his possession a bench warrant, issued by the District Attorney of Wayne County (Mr. Welling) for the arrest of George upon an old indictment against him in that county for burglary, committed more than ten years ago. Several of our citizens called upon Mr. Ashley, in the course of the day, to ascertain what he was after, and from his own admission came to the conclusion that he was not an officer of Wayne County at all, and of course not authorized to serve any such process as he claimed to have; that the process itself was not strictly regular, and of doubtful authority, They said that he was rather in the area to get possession of the person of George, to deliver him to the Marshal to be taken to the South. Rumors were flying that the Governor would pardon George so that he could be discharged on Saturday evening and that the Marshal would then be ready and arrest him before it should be known by his friends that he was at liberty. This rumor derived plausibility from

[6] W. Smith Ingham and H.R. Perry to William Titus, March 20, 1854, from *Sterling-Fair Haven: Where the Trails, Sails, and Rails, Met on the Shores of Lake Ontario in the Nineteenth Century* (K-Mar Press, 1973).. Research by Sheila Tucker.

> the fact that Marshal Matt of Utica, and several of his Deputies were known to have been in the city during the week, and that one or more of them were here on Saturday. . . Marshall had appeared with a similar bench warrant issued from Wayne County. About the same time the Sheriff of Wayne county appeared with papers he had borrowed from Ashley.
>
> At the same time there appeared strangers in town who were devising ways of protecting the man. Many of these were from our sister cit of Syracuse; others from various localities—all appeared to have but one determination—that George Washington should not be carried out of Auburn on the morrow under the fugitive slave act, by any claimant, or by any man, neither by the U.S. Marshal under any warrant to him directed, nor by any other official, claiming to be a state officer, but ?ting in collusion with the claimant and his Marshals.
>
> In the mean time, some of our legal gentlemen had examined the process which was in the hands of the Sheriff of Wanye as also the one that had benn delivered by the U.S. Marshal to the Sheriff of Cayuga, and both were at least of doubtful validility.

The night passed off quietly, disturbed only by the quiet foot fall of the sentinels of Freedom, many of whom patrolled the live long night, in front and in the vicinity of the Prison, notwithstanding there was at the time one of the severest snow storms of the winter, in progress. In the morning there appeared in the vicinity of the prison several hundred quiet, orderly, but determined looking men. But little was said amongst them, and that in whispers, but an observer could easily detect in their countenances, manner and bearing, a determiniation that should the crisis come, they had counted the cost and were ready for the occasion.

At this time nothing could be heard or seen of any U.S. official, nor could any of those present be distinguished as the aiders or abettors of any kidnapper, with or without the sanction of the lower [?] law.

As the time for George's liberation drew nigh, much interest began to be felt in regard to the intentions of the Sheriffs, by virtue of their warrants from the District Attorney, and some of our citizens called upon them to advise with them in regard to the matter. It had become evident that the people in attendance, and particularly the colored people, could not be made to believe that any officer could be acting in good faith, and with a view to take George to Wayne County upon any such warrant. They had become suspicious of any process that had come through Mr. Ashley, or the U.S. Marshal. The Sheriffs soon found that if they undertook to execute the warrants and to arrest George, they would need more assistance than could be procured in Auburn at that time. . . .While they were debating the matter, . . . George was discharged from the prison and emerged to the street at 8 1-2 o'clock in the forenoon, and our citizens may rest assured the crowd were neither slow nor silent in receiving him. Two of his sable brethren had hold of him, one on each side, as nearly upon the instant as an active man can well imagine, and with the crowd at their heels, they ran "like mad" up the street with him to a place of safety.

After all the excitement leading up to George's release, "the people began to wonder at the quietness of the whole operation. They expected at least to have the face of an official. But no one had made his appearance."

The crowd then looked for "that Ashley," who was reportedly stayed at the American Hotel, but someone had already warned him of the rescue, and he had left for "parts unknown." "And thus ended," reported the *Daily Advertiser*, "the first Fugitive Slave case in Auburn."[7]

Raymond Sant, who had in his possession several letters (whose location is now unknown) from W. Smith Ingham and H.R. Perry to William Titus, reported that

> a letter from Mr. Ingham stated that seven men on horseback from Cato-4 Corners met the fugitive shortly after midnight (he had been released early) and brought him north of the Seneca River. Here an elaborate system was in effect. At Jakeways Corner (Cato) the John T. Knapp cobblestone house at Blind Sodus the home of W. G. Brown, near Fair Haven the Overrocker farm home, and at Sterling Centre the home of William Kirk were later known to have been stations on the underground. The leaders were in contact with the Harriet Tubman forces at Auburn through one H.R. Perry. Also involved were the Garrett Smith land office at Oswego and probably the Frederick Douglas group at Rochester.[8]

On April 8, 1854, W. Smith Ingham wrote to William Titus that

> The cow is all right and commands annual praise. I am afraid she will not calve at 8 o'clock and 10 minutes first of October. She has been acting a little suspicious. What say Fowler, Shepherd, and Cochrane?

This may be well be a coded reference to others in the "Law and Order" group who were involved in the Underground Railroad in Cayuga County.[9]

Finally, on April 10, H.R. Perry wrote to William Titus from Cato 4 Corners that

> You can say to your Custom house folks that fugitive slaves cannot be taken from Auburn Prison. Not even that devil George Washington whose master came here after him a few days since when he was discharged. But G. W. went to Canada and his master went back disappointed.[10]

Perry's reference to "that devil George Washington" may have had something to do with Washington's reputation as a ladies' man. In April, shortly after Washington's escape, one of the Auburn papers reprinted an article from the *Lansingburh* (New York, near Troy) *Democrat*, reporting that

> the fugitive negro George Washington, about whom such a rumpus was recently kicked up at Auburn on his discharge from State Prison, and who was run off to Canada, in fear that he would be arrested as a fugitive slave, formerly lived in Lansingburgh. He was

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[7] *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, March 27, 1854. Found by Sheila Tucker.
[8] Raymond Sant, *Sterling-Fair Haven: Where the Trails, Sails, and Rails, Met on the Shores of Lake Ontario in the Nineteenth Century* (K-Mar Press, 1973), 114. Research by Sheila Tucker.
[9] Raymond Sant, *Trails, Sails., and Rails*, 114. Research by Sheila Tucker.
[10] H.R. Perry to William Titus, April 10, 1854. Cayuga County Historian's Office. Transcribed from original by Kate Clifford Larson.

> brought before Esquire Ransom, and charged with theft, and afterwards claimed by two white women as their husband, having as they said been married to each of them, the full particulars of which we published at the time. It turned out, however, that the negro was married to neither of them.[11]

George Washington did make it to Canada. Kate Clifford Larson found a George Washington in St. Catherine's, Ontario, living near Harriet Tubman's brother, William Henry Stewart, Sr., in 1861, age 48. He was still there in 1871, age fifty, and in 1881, age 60. (His age in 1861 may have been misidentified.)

The rescue of George Washington from Auburn Prison in 1854 made national news. On April 8, 1854, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* reprinted an article from the *Cayuga Chief*, noting that there were armed people, both locally and from Syracuse, ready to free George Washington by force if necessary. They titled the article, "A Jerry Rescue Almost," referring to the earlier rescue from Syracuse of William "Jerry" Henry in October 1851. The first trials for these rescuers had occurred in the Cayuga County Courthouse in Auburn. On July 24, 1854, the *Anti-Slavery Bugle* in Salem, Ohio, carried the same article. [12]

The attempt to take George Washington back to slavery under the terms of the Fugitive Slave Law was only the second known attempt in central New York. The first had been been William "Jerry" Henry in Syracuse in October 1851. Both resulted in successful rescues by a combination of African American and European efforts.

Thanks to Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian, for first uncovering voluminous details about this story. Thanks also to Christopher Densmore; Kate Clifford Larson; Tanya Warren; Shawn Connery; Justin White; and Lowell Newvine, Town Historian of Hannibal for research for this site. See also Sheila Tucker, "Historic Tale: Historian digs up details of 1854 rescue of slave in Auburn," *Post-Standard*, *Neighbors*, *Cayuga*, December 2, 2004.

[11] Email from Sheila Tucker, Mary 6, 2005.

[12] Thanks to Christopher Densmore for finding these articles.

Cayuga County Courthouse, 1836, 1922
152 Genesee Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Site of trial of William Freeman, 1846. Site of first hearings for trial in rescue of William "Jerry" Henry, 1851, in challenge to Fugitive Slave Law.

February 2005
Looking SW

The Cayuga County Courthouse (CCC) played an active role in two significant trials of the nineteenth-century which left lasting impressions on the Underground Railroad and Abolitionism within New York State.

The first trial, held in 1846, involved the defense of William Freeman, a free black arrested for murdering four members of the Van Nest family who resided in Fleming, NY. Hon.William Seward, one of Freeman's defense attorneys and a major figure in the anti-slavery movement, took a radical stance in Freeman's case. Earlier that year Seward had defended a convict in the state prison named Henry Wyatt who had murdered fellow inmate James Gordon. Seward and his colleagues, Christopher Morgan and Samuel Blatchford, maintained that Wyatt's crime was an act of insanity rather than criminal motive. Not only was Seward's defense a bold step in the field of social justice but also a reflection of increasing awareness of mental illness in the nineteenth century. In the case of Freeman, Seward was able to argue the case for insanity upon similar grounds with Wyatt. Freeman, a former convict at the State Prison in Auburn, NY, had reputably suffered pernicious abuse at the hands of his care-takers. Upon his release, it was

argued that Freeman suffered from "an insane delusion", that he was somehow the victim of a conspiracy against him.[1] Freeman's delusionary behavior clouded sound judgment and was thus the stronger agent in Freeman's violent acts than any premeditated intent. The success of such a defense did not shine fortuitously after the June 23rd, 1846 verdict of Wyatt, sentenced to hang August 17th, 1846. Two days later, Freeman's trial commenced. On July 5th, the jury issued the following statement, "We find the prisoner sufficiently sane in mind and memory to distinguish between right and wrong".[2] Freeman's trial could therefore proceed without deference to the plea of insanity.

Convincing the jury that insanity fell under the category of legal irresponsibility consumed Freeman's defense. Compelling a local jury to maintain impartiality proved an even fiercer challenge. Seward gathered testimony from a number of reputable physicians, including Dr. Amariah Brigham, superintendent of the State Lunatic Asylum at Utica, NY, and made several correlations to similar insanity cases throughout the state, including the murder trial of Andrew Kleim.[3] Finally, Seward and his colleagues made the strongest and most controversial statement yet. They argued that Freeman had been driven insane not merely by a family predisposition to mental illness but by a fiercely segregated society which ignored the plight of African Americans. An uneducated black man alienated from a predominately white community, Freeman was the offspring of deep-rooted racial prejudice. However noble their efforts, Seward and members of his defense could not sway the opinion of the jury which handed in a verdict on July 23rd, 1846 of guilty. Seward made last minute provisions for an appeal to sway the September execution and was granted a new trial by the New York State Supreme Court. Such a coup on the part of Seward and his supporters would not come to fruition. In declining health by June of 1847, Freeman died on August 21st, 1847.

The William Freeman trial, beyond its large implications for the future of the U.S. Justice System, attracted the interests of several noted abolitionists including Gerrit Smith, Wendell Phillips, and James McCune Smith.[4] The William Freeman trial is a landmark case in African American history. It is not a simple argument for sanity vs. insanity, but a call for social responsibility across racial lines. The fervor with which the case stirred the emotions of local citizens had varied results. Some would claim Seward's paternal attitude toward Freeman and his language inspiring "inferiority of race" reinforced negative stereotypes of African Americans.[5] Antagonism of local citizens toward what they deemed an insult to vigilante justice only alienated blacks further from the community. In many instances, abolitionists found themselves more distanced from their neighbors than ever. The effect the trial lent to Underground Railroad activities in Auburn, NY and across Cayuga County is an increasingly important subject for further exploration. The degree of national attention this case attracted cannot be over-emphasized. A free black man accused of violently murdering four members of a white family in the evening hours of March 12th, 1846 was cause for terror and anger among local citizens. A potential verdict of not guilty under reason of insanity was a concept highly suspect in the minds of many citizens reeling in the wake of wanton brutality. The William Freeman trial was successful in drawing attention to the disparities in social advantage among whites and blacks,

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[1] Arpey, Andrew W., The William Freeman Murder Trial, (Syracuse (NY): Syracuse University Press, 2003), 74.
[2] Arpey, 65.
[3] Arpey, 163 n40.
[4] Arpey, 136-137.
[5] Arpey, 137.

but also succeeded in inciting paranoia, suspicion, and further prejudice within similar communities across the region.[6]

The Fugitive Slave Act passed under the mantle of the Great Compromise of 1850 presented new challenges to the African-American community throughout central New York. The Cayuga County Courthouse became a dramatic setting for questioning the moral justice of such legislation in the fall of 1851. On October 1st, a delegation of the Liberty Party gathered in Syracuse, New York for their annual convention. At the same time, four federal marshals from Rochester, Auburn, Canandaigua, and Syracuse gathered to arrest fugitive slave William 'Jerry' Henry at his work in Syracuse. The response of citizens sympathetic to the plight of 'Jerry' was explosive from his seizure until his eventual escape. Initially taken to the office of U.S. commissioner Joseph F. Sabine, Jerry was forcibly seized by abolitionists making his first attempt at freedom in the streets of Syracuse. Jerry was quickly recaptured and sent to the Police Station for trial later that afternoon. Meanwhile, citizen protest was growing to such a visible tenor that Commissioner Sabine was compelled to move the time of trial to the following morning. Before this could transpire, Syracuse citizens mounted an armed attack against the police station. Marshal Fitch who stood guard over Jerry was injured in the fray and escaped from the insurgents by jumping out of a second-story window. Jerry was spirited away over the next several days by local abolitionists who were able to eventually secure his passage to Kingston, Ontario.

Seemingly an appropriate place to end this success story, the Jerry Rescue narrative expands to include tales of presidential indignation, accusations of treason, and growing resentment among northern and southern constituents. There is some confusion as to the number of individuals charged in connection with the Jerry Rescue. The *Auburn Daily Advertiser* from October 15th, 1851, mentions the arrival of twenty Syracuse citizens brought to Auburn for examination under the charge of treason. A month later, according to the Thirteenth Annual Report of the American & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society published in May 1853, the number had increased to between twenty and thirty individuals. David Yacovone's work, Samuel *Joseph May and the Dilemmas of the Liberal Persuasion*, accounts for four white and approximately 20 black men.[7]

The Jerry Rescue trial began its preliminary proceedings at the Cayuga County Courthouse in Auburn, New York, on the 15th of October, 1851. United States District Judge Alfred Conkling presided. The trial was intended to address the charge of aiding a fugitive slave to freedom by force against the orders of a warrant issued by his Missouri owner. The implications of treason weighted against the defense carried more serious considerations. On Saturday, October 18, court was adjourned until the following Monday when a decision was expected. The final verdict dismissed the charge of treason as Conkling concluded there was "no evidence of previous combination and arming for the purpose of "levying war against the United States"".[8] Twelve defendants were charged with having "aided, abetted and assisted" the fugitive Jerry from the custody of Deputy Marshal Allen, a violation of section seven of the Fugitive Slave Law.[9] The defendants had the choice to post bail or go to jail until further trial. A second session was scheduled at Buffalo's District Court where formal indictment would be carried out by a Grand Jury. Bail was set at two thousand dollars for the white men and five hundred for the

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[6] Arpey, 12.

[7] Yacovone, Donald, Samuel Joseph May and the Dilemmas of the Liberal Persuasion, 1797-1871, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 148.

[8] Ed. Thomas, John, "Judge Conkling's Decision in the Case of the Rescue of Jerry", *The North Star*, (Rochester: Thursday, Oct. 30, 1851).

[9] Ibid.

black. William Seward took a proactive stance in opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law by paying the bail for the black defendants. The Jerry Rescue Trial continued over the next two years with only one man, Enoch Reed, finally convicted. Before the case could be appealed, the convict died. Abolitionists responded by suing Marshal William Allen for kidnapping.

The Jerry Rescue trial, severely extenuated over a period of three years, conducted hearings in no less than five courts including Albany, Canandaigua, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Auburn. Of the five court structures only two remain: the Cayuga County Courthouse and the Canandaigua Courthouse.

Cayuga County was established in 1799 as it split from Onondaga County to the east. The first Cayuga County Courthouse was located in Aurora, New York, south of Auburn along Lake Cayuga. Auburn became the county seat in 1809. The Cayuga County Courthouse located at 158 Genesee Street, Auburn, New York was built in 1836 for $30,000 by John I. Hagaman to replace an earlier wooden structure built in 1809.[10] The structure is typical of Greek Revival Architecture prevalent in America during the 1830s and 40s. The characteristic features of this style include facing-columns, simple moldings, and heavy cornice-work inspired by Grecian models. The courthouse is a fitting example of democratic ideals emulated within the built environment.

A 1922 fire wrought significant damage to the Courthouse requiring many original elements of the structure to be reproduced including the 1836 Doric columns and the entablature. The original entablature was constructed of wood and included a traditional architrave and frieze with triglyph, metopes, and cornice. The architrave, now constructed of Onondaga Litholite, or cast stone, contains the inscribed words, “Cayuga County Courthouse”, which are framed by bronze medallions.[11] During this period, a third floor was added to the structure and many decorative elements were changed to accommodate the Neo-Classical Revival Style of the early twentieth-century. The front entrance was moved from its facing-left position to a central position on the structure’s north side. The roof which underwent severe damage during the 1922 fire has undergone the most serious renovation. Originally surmounted by a raised dome with a cupola structure, the current roof has eliminated this feature in exchange for a more fireproof alternative. The gable roof is composed of wood planking below ¾-inch asphalt covering steel girders.[12] The entire interior of the courthouse was also replaced as the fire caused irreparable damage.

In 1979 the Courthouse undertook a major renovation project intended to connect the structure to the adjacent Old County Clerk’s Office built in 1882. At this time, handicap accessibility was made available to visitors. Today, the site continues to function as both a county and federal courthouse. The structure maintains a high degree of architectural integrity, as recognized by the National Register, regardless of various renovations undertaken during the twentieth-century. The site stands along a major city artery, opposite the Historic Old Post Office Building built from 1888-1890 and alongside the County Office Building (1967).

Written by Carrie Barrett
Text submitted as part of nomination of the Cayuga County Courthouse to National Park Service’s National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program

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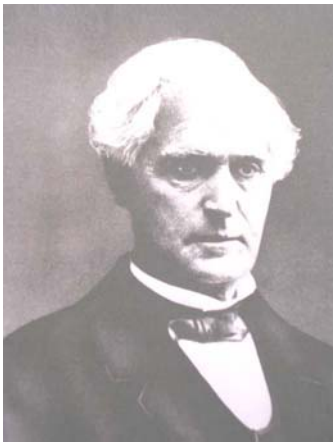
[10] Auwaerter, John, “National Register Nomination Draft”, Cayuga County Historian’s Office, (No date given), 8.
[11] Auwaerter, 2.
[12] Ibid, 4

Fitch House
197 Genesee Street

Significance: Site of Home of Abijah Fitch, abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter

Looking north
November 2004



Abijah Fitch
Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County*, 1879

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Abijah Fitch is one of the most important European American abolitionists and Undergrond Railroad supporters in Auburn, part of a small, cohesive, and longstanding network that included the Seward, Wright, Austin, and Underwood families. As a real estate agent, Fitch was also important in selling land on Fitch, Parker, and Garrow Streets and Chapman Avenue to many freedom seekers, some of whose descendents still retain this property today.

Abijah Fitch was born about 1799 in Cooperstown, Otsego County, New York, to Stephen and Hannah Betts Fitch, natives of Connecticut. Fitch married Lanah, daughter of Thomas and Sarah Martin Nelson about 1823 in NY. They had 10 children, Sarah S., Nelson, b. 1826 in Auburn, NY, Helen Eliza, b. 1827, Charles P., b. 1830, Henry B., b. 1832, Frances, b. 1834, Edward M., b. 1836, Cornelia, b. 1838, Horace B. b. 1839 and Emma, b. 1842.[13]

Fitch may have come to Auburn sometime before 1819, when he first bought land here, although his name did not appear in the 1820 census for Auburn. He became a prominent real estate agent and businessman in Auburn, affiliated especially with the Auburn and Syracuse Railroad. He also became an extremely active abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter. A member of the First Presbyterian Church, where he sang in the choir, he helped organize the Cayuga County Anti-Slavery Society in 1838. He supported *Frederick Douglass's* Paper, and, in 1847, he received 10,091 votes for prison inspector on the Liberty Party ticket. In 1851, he collected funds to defend a fugitive named Long, challenging the constitutionality of the Fugitive Slave Law. In 1852, he went as delegate from Cayuga County to a convention for "friends of freedom" at Pittsburgh, 1852, along with William R. Smith of Wayne County and James R. Cox of Cayuga. Friend of abolitionist and woman's right activist Martha Wright, Fitch was also a confidant of William Seward. He accompanied Seward on his trip around the world at the time of Seward's purchase of Alaska. When Fitch died in 1883, his obituary noted that "at the beginning of the anti-slavery excitement and all through the contest to the triumph of the principle of natural right, Mr. Fitch was one of the most ardent and enthusiastic advocates and promoters of the new idea, his house being one of the stations on the 'underground railroad' for the aid and assistance of escaped slaves.'[14]

Fitch also sold many lots to freedom seekers who settled in Auburn, particularly after the Civil War on property her purchased in 1868 on the former Garrow and Richardson farm. These became Fitch, Parker, and Garrow Streets and Chapman Avenue. In all, we know of about twenty lots that Fitch sold to African Americans in this neighborhood.[15]

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[13] All genealogical research and land research for this report done by Tanya Warren. Maps created by Bernard Corcoran.

[14] *The Biographical Review*, 734; Joel M. Monroe, *Historical Records of a Hundred and Twenty Years* (Geneve, New York, 1913), 136; *Case and Allied Family Histories, A Documented Compilation of Genealogy and Biogaphy*)New York: National Americana Society, 1937), 16; Elliot Storke, *History of Cauga County* (Syracuse: D. Mason, 1879), 541 and 200; "Death of Abijah Fitch," February 1, 1883, *Weekly News and Democrat*, found by Beth Crawford; Eliza Wright Osborne, "A Recollection of Martha Coffin Wright by her daughter," typescript, 15, Osborne Papers, Syracuse University; *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, January 8, 1851; *National Era*, December 23, 1847; *Frederick Douglass Paper*, June 10, 1852, August 13, 1852.

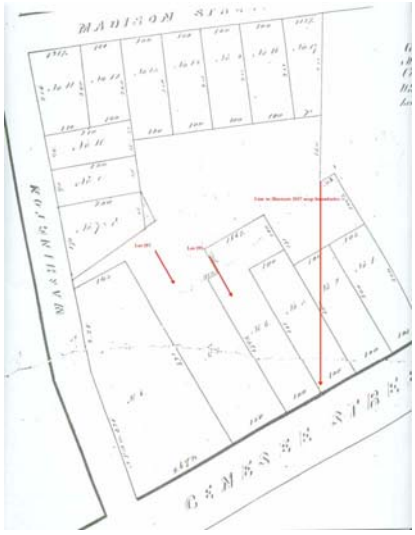
[15] "Abijah Fitch, Grantor Deeds, 1823-36" and "Sales to Blacks," Cayuga County Historian's Office; Clark, John S., "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y." A.C. Taber, Surveyor, September 1868; Deeds. These sources show that Fitch sold at least twenty properties to African American families, including eight on Chapman Avenue and Garrow Street to the Stoop, Lucas, Belt, Stewart, White, Griffen, Griffen, Purnell and families, six on the west side of Parker Street north of the AME Zion Church (47, 45, 43, 41, 39, and 37); four on Fitch (to the Diggs, Dail, Cannon, and Cale families), and at least two in the downtown area to Morgan Freeman.

The location of Fitch's own house poses a mystery. The following discussion is a very brief summary of a detailed report based on extensive research by Tanya Warren in genealogies, deeds, assessment records, local histories, and maps, assisted by Bernard Corcoran. This entire report with maps and supporting material, is in file in eight local libraries, historical societies and museums.

Between 1830 and 1836, Abijah and Lanah Fitch lived on the northeast corner of Washington and Genesee Street, in a building known as The Mount, or Mount Pleasant, the grand house of the village, according to one account. This house appeared on the 1837 Hagaman and Markham map of Auburn. In 1837, however, the house became the Auburn Female Seminary, and in 1849, it burned, to be replaced the following year by a house built by Fitch's son, Nelson.

Hagaman and Markham, 1837

When The Mount became the Auburn Female Seminary, Fitch created others lots just east of the Seminary. He created a survey map of his property, showing these divisions. Of particular interest are two, identified currently as 195 (Lot 4) and 197 (Lot 5) Genesee Street.



Survey map of Abijah Fitch's land, corner Genesee and Washington Streets, dated May 5, 1836

Map prepared from deed descriptions of Abijah Fitch lands, corner Washington and Genesee Streets, Bernard Corcoran, May 2005

195 Genesee Street

The house currently at 195 Genesee Street was built between 1842 and 1844 by Spencer Parsons and Daniel Hewson, as Tanya Warren has suggested, based on the following evidence:

> In 1842, A. Fitch sells 195 Genesee St. **(Deed Book 66, p. 120)** to Spencer Parsons and Daniel Hewson (Mayor of Auburn) with express instructions that "when a dwelling house is put on said lot that the front…shall not be placed within 50 feet of the north side of Genesee St. and the house shall have a value of no less than $1500.00". In 1844, Spencer Parsons and Daniel Hewson then sell 195 Genesee St. to Jesse Ives Parsons. **(Deed Book 68, p. 207).** There is a big jump in value from the sale of this house from A. Fitch to Parsons and Hewson –for $1200.00, to when Parsons and Hewson sell to Jesse Ives Parsons- for $3800.00 and minus the comment about building restrictions. This is evidence that 195 Genesee St, was built between 1842 and 1844 and that it was NOT the home of Abijah Fitch (Warren report, May 2005).

197 Genesee Street

Evidence suggests that Abijah Fitch built the house currently at 197 Genesee Street between 1837 and 1841. In 1840, the census listed Fitch as living next door to Benjamin Ashby, to whom Fitch had sold lot 3, just east of this lot, in 1839.

In 1841, Fitch sold lot 3, just east of the current 195 Genesee Street, to Israel F. Terril for $1200. He measured the lot "Beginning at a point on Genesee St. on the north side (2) chains and 38 ½ links east of the east side of the east wall of said Fitch's dwelling house" (Deed Book 63, p. 49, recorded April 22, 1841). If Fitch did not have a house standing at 197 Genesee Street, the Auburn Female Seminary, Fitch's former home, was only other building this deed could have referred to. Although Fitch was a Seminary trustee, would the deed have called the Seminary in 1841"Abijah Fitch's house"? It seems unlikely.

We know that Fitch still owned the property at 197 Genesee Street in 1846, and there was probably a house on it, since Abijah Fitch sold it that year to Spencer Parsons for $9300.00. (Deed Book 72, p. 514).

To summarize the evidence:

•Abijah Fitch owned all the land on the northwest corner of Genesee and Washington Street in 1837.

•In March 1837, Fitch sold his house and land on the corner of Genesee and Washington to the Trustees of the Auburn Female Academy (of which he was one), and they began to use his former home, The Mount, for the Female Seminary.

•In 1839, Fitch began to sell off lots east of the Female Academy.

•In 1840, Fitch was living next door to Benjamin Ashby, to whom he had sold land just east of this lot in 1839.

• An 1841 deed for lot 3 (Fitch to Terril), east of the current 195 Genesee Street, mentioned "Abijah Fitch's house" in approximately the location of the current 197 Genesee Street.

•In 1846, Fitch sold the lot at 197 Genesee Street for $9300, a sum large enough to suggest that the lot contained a house on it.

•Architectural form and details are consistent with construction in the late 1830s or early1840s. The house is Federal in form, five-bay, with its broad side to street. Greek Revival details surround the front door, including columns and a lintel.

It is reasonable to conclude that Abijah Fitch built the house currently at 197 Genesee Street between 1837 and 1841 and that the Fitch family lived in it between 1837 and 1846.

The Auburn Female Seminary burned in 1849, and shortly thereafter, Abijah Fitch's son, Nelson, built a new house on the site. By 1857, according to the first city directory, Lanah and Abijah Fitch were living at 216 Genesee Street, a house that no longer stands.

Fitch House, 216 Genesee Street, Courtesy of Cayuga Museum

Many thanks to Tanya Warren for her extraordinary research work, to Bernard Corcoran for his professional maps, to Sheila Tucker and Mary Gilmore for locating biographical material about Fitch, and to Beth Crawford for finding Fitch's obituary.

This report written by Judith Wellman and Tanya Warren.

Site of Morgan and Catharine Freeman House and Barbershop
3 Court Street (Lumber Court) and northeast corner of South Street and Cumpston Lane (now Lt. Dwyer Lane)
Auburn, New York

Significance: Site of one of Auburn's most important Underground Railroad stations and home of one of Auburn's most important African American families

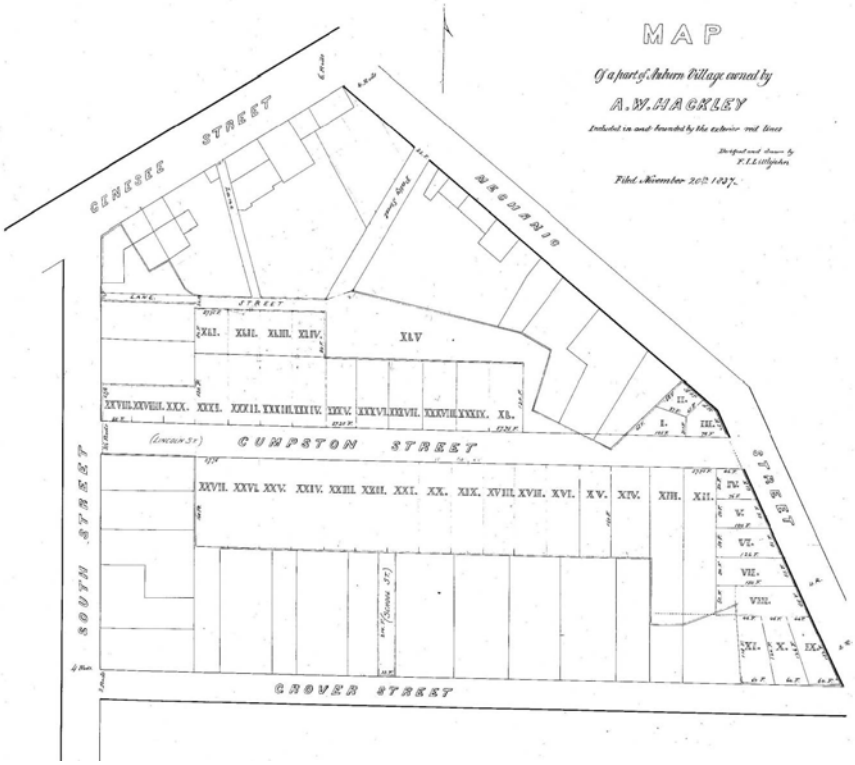
211
November 2004
Looking SW

Born enslaved of John Hardenburgh, European American founder of Auburn, in 1803, of Kate and Harry Freeman, Morgan Lewis ("Luke") Freeman grew up to become an anchor of the African American community in Auburn. At his barbershop on the southeast corner of Cumpston Lane and South Street (and then, after 1857) on the northeast corner of State and Genesee Streets, and at his home at 3 Court Street, Morgan Freeman, with his wife, Catharine Freeman, kept an Underground Railroad Station for twenty-nine years.

Luke Freeman's father, Harry Freeman, was a childhood friend (as well as a slave) of John Hardenburgh, white founder of Auburn. In 1889, Michael S. Myers remembered Harry Freeman as "a darkie of the deepest dye, who lived amongst us to a good old age, (said to be 100) and was always foremost in wild adventures, or rather in relating them. He will be remembered by our old citizens as an original character, whose ruling passion was to tell big stories, and great devotion to the Hardenbergh family." Given land by Hardenbergh along the Owasco outlet, he and his family

formed the core of what became known as the Negro Settlement or New Guinea, shown on the 1837 Hagaman map of Auburn. His land ownership did not spare him from poverty, however, and he spent some time in the poorhouse, where his health was "good" and his habits "temperant." He was released on April 19, 1845. He died December 20, 1845, age 92.[16]
John Hardenbergh recorded Morgan Freeman's birth in Town of Aurelius records. "This may certify that on the 27th day of May in the year 1803 was born a male child whom I call Lewis being a son of my servents [sic] Harry & Cate. Entered 3rd may 1804. John L. Hardenbergh. I. Haring T. Clk." [17]

Luke Freeman probably grew up with his parents and other family members in New Guinea. He became, said his obituary, first a gunsmith, a trade that he followed with "considerable success," and then a barber.[18] He did well enough to purchase two pieces of property from Abijah Fitch on June 5, 1847, and July 1, 1848, the first for $250 on Lot 31 Cumpston Street (now Lincoln Street) and the second for $250 on the northeast corner of Cumpston Lane and South Street, next to the Presbyterian Church and just north and across from the Seward House.[19]

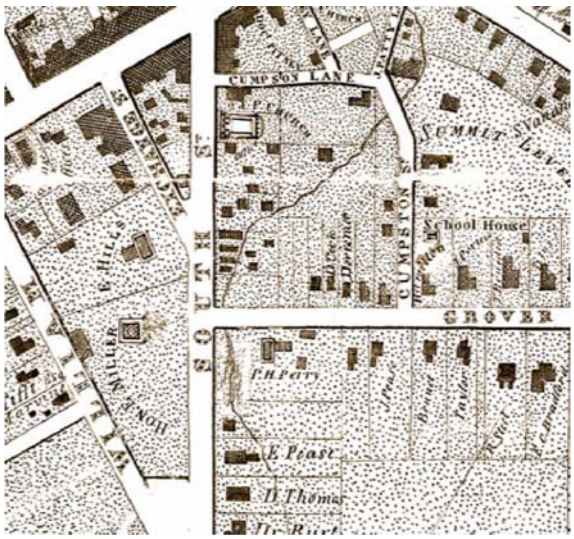


Morgan Freeman bought Lot XXXI in 1847 and Lot at northeast corner of

[16]Michael S. Myers, "Recollections of Auburn," *Collections of the Cayuga County Historical Society*, 7 (1889), 117. Thanks to Peter Wisby for finding this. Poorhouse records, transcribed by Tanya Warren.
[17] Town of Aurelius Records, 441a, Cayuga County Historian's Office. Online at Cayuga County GenWeb site, http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~springport/pictures77/aureliusminutes/page441a.jpg.
[18] Obituary, *Auburn Advertiser and Union*, April 10, 1863.
[19] Deed book 75, page 93, and book 77, page 470, Cayuga County Clerk's Office.

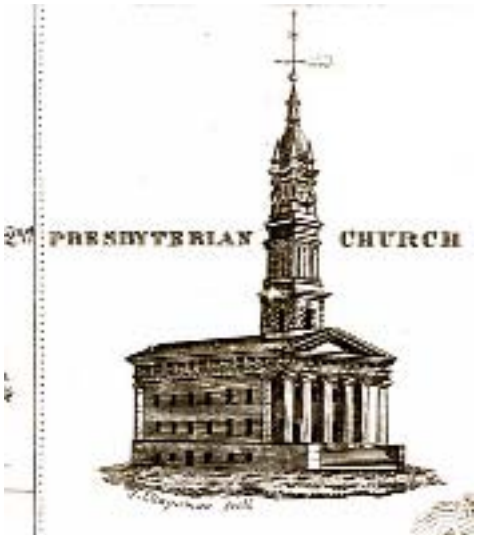
Cumpston Lane ("Lane") and South Street in 1848
A.W. Hackley, "Map of Part of Auburn Village," 1837.[20]

Cumpston Lane
Looking east, November 2004
Lot purchased by Morgan Freeman in 1848 was on the south (right) side of this lane



Hagaman and Markham, *Map of the Village of Auburn* (Auburn: Peabody, 1837)
In 1837, Morgan Freeman's property at the northeast corner of Cumpston Lane and South Street (just north of Second Presbyterian Church) had a building on it.

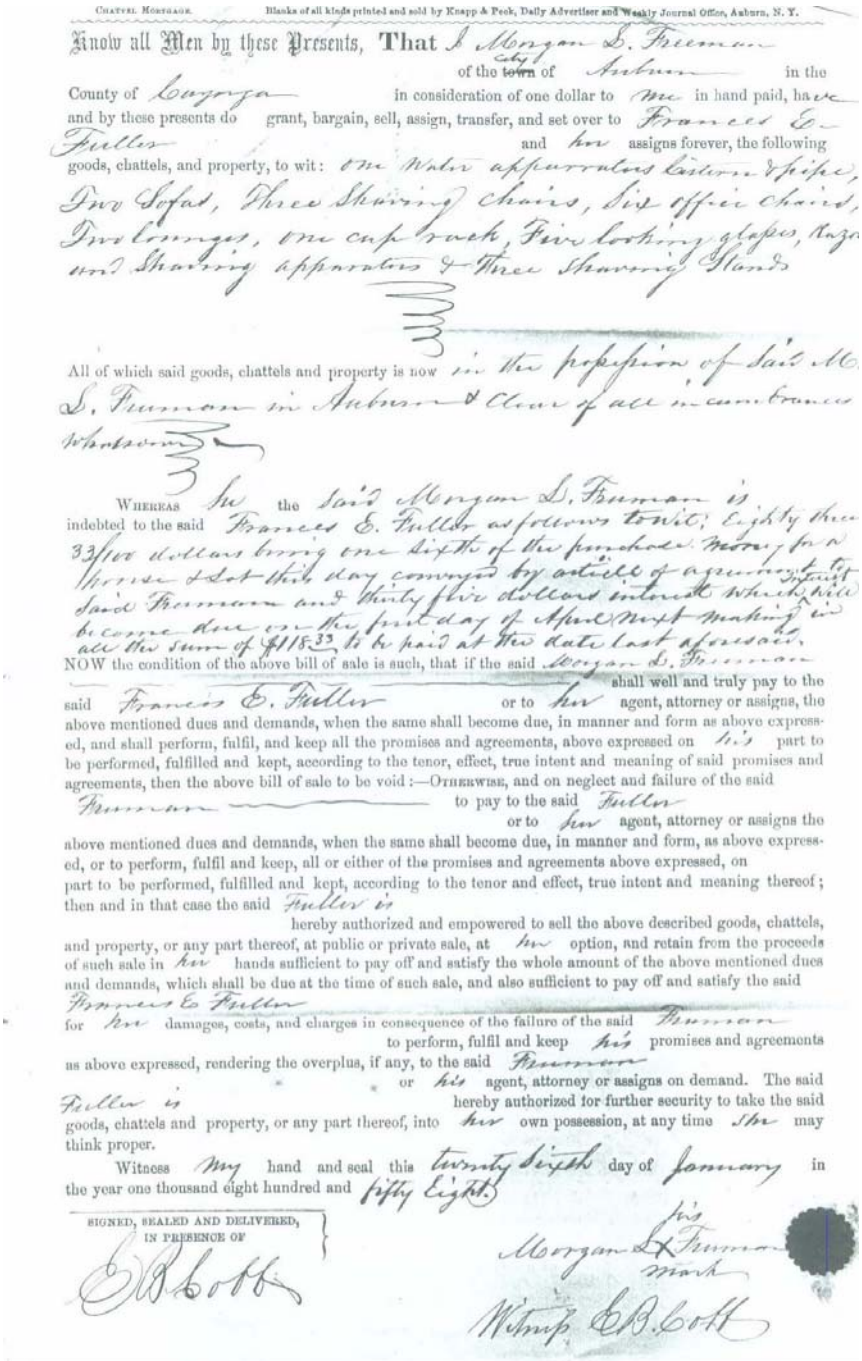
[20] Cayuga County Clerk's Office, Map 1-11. Thanks to Bernie Corcoran for finding this.



Second Presbyterian Church, 1837
Hagaman and Markham, *Map of the Village of Auburn*, 1837
This stood just south of Morgan Freeman's lot at the corner of Cumpston Lane and South Street, when he purchased it in 1848.

Whether Freeman kept his barbershop here, or whether he used these lots for some other purpose is not known. An advertisement in the *Auburn Daily Advertiser* on January 9, 1851, noted that Luke Freeman's barbershop was located in the American Hotel on Genesee Street. By 1857, the city directory noted that Freeman had moved his barbershop to a new site, 113 Genesee Street, at the northeast corner of Genesee and State Street.

The following year, on January 26, 1858, he signed his mark on a mortgage for much of what he owned (including two sofas, three shaving chairs, six office chairs, two lounges, one cup rack, five looking glasses, razors and shaving apparatus, and three shaving stands) to Frances E. Fuller, along with $83,33, which was one-sixth of the purchase price for a house and lot at 3 Court Street.



CHATTEL MORTGAGE. Blanks of all kinds printed and sold by Knapp & Peck, Daily Advertiser and Weekly Journal Office, Auburn, N. Y.

Know all Men by these Presents, That I Morgan S. Freeman of the ~~town~~ city of Auburn in the County of Cayuga in consideration of one dollar to me in hand paid, have and by these presents do grant, bargain, sell, assign, transfer, and set over to Frances E. Fuller and her assigns forever, the following goods, chattels, and property, to wit: One Water apparatus Cistern & pipe, Two Sofas, Three Shaving chairs, Six office chairs, Two lounges, one cup rack, Five looking glasses, Razor and Shaving apparatus & Three Shaving Stands

All of which said goods, chattels and property is now in the possession of said M. S. Freeman in Auburn & Clear of all incumbrances whatsoever

WHEREAS he the said Morgan S. Freeman is indebted to the said Frances E. Fuller as follows to wit; Eighty three 33/100 dollars being one sixth of the purchase money for a house & lot this day conveyed by article of agreement to said Freeman and thirty five dollars interest which will become due on the first day of April next making in all the sum of $118.33 to be paid at the date last aforesaid.

NOW the condition of the above bill of sale is such, that if the said Morgan S. Freeman shall well and truly pay to the said Frances E. Fuller or to her agent, attorney or assigns, the above mentioned dues and demands, when the same shall become due, in manner and form as above expressed, and shall perform, fulfil, and keep all the promises and agreements, above expressed on his part to be performed, fulfilled and kept, according to the tenor, effect, true intent and meaning of said promises and agreements, then the above bill of sale to be void:—OTHERWISE, and on neglect and failure of the said Freeman to pay to the said Fuller or to her agent, attorney or assigns the above mentioned dues and demands, when the same shall become due, in manner and form, as above expressed, or to perform, fulfil and keep, all or either of the promises and agreements above expressed, on part to be performed, fulfilled and kept, according to the tenor and effect, true intent and meaning thereof; then and in that case the said Fuller is hereby authorized and empowered to sell the above described goods, chattels, and property, or any part thereof, at public or private sale, at her option, and retain from the proceeds of such sale in her hands sufficient to pay off and satisfy the whole amount of the above mentioned dues and demands, which shall be due at the time of such sale, and also sufficient to pay off and satisfy the said Frances E. Fuller for her damages, costs, and charges in consequence of the failure of the said Freeman to perform, fulfil and keep his promises and agreements as above expressed, rendering the overplus, if any, to the said Freeman or his agent, attorney or assigns on demand. The said Fuller is hereby authorized for further security to take the said goods, chattels and property, or any part thereof, into her own possession, at any time she may think proper.

Witness my hand and seal this twenty sixth day of January in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty Eight.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED, IN PRESENCE OF

E B Cobb

Morgan S. Freeman his X mark

Witnes E B Cobb

According to census records, this was a small frame building worth less than $500, which stood through 1875.[21]

William Still, who kept the main safe house in Philadelphia, recorded one specific instance of an Underground Railroad event in which P.R. Freeman, probably either Luke Freeman or his son

[21] Thanks to Scott Anderson for sharing his extensive assessment research.

Burgett Freeman, were involved in 1858. Nat and Lizzie Amby escaped from Cambridge, Maryland, to Auburn and wrote a letter back to inform their family. Their story is best told in the words of William Still and in Nat Amby's own letter. As Still reported,

> Nat is no ordinary man. Like a certain other Nat known to history, his honest and independent bearing in every respect was that of a natural hero. He was full black, and about six feet high; of powerful physical pro-portions, and of more than ordinary intellectual capacities. With the strongest desire to make the Port of Canada safely he had resolved to be "carried back," if attacked by the slave hunters, "only as a dead man." He was held to service by John Muir, a wealthy farmer, and the owner of 40 or 50 slaves. "Muir would drink and was generally devilish." Two of Nat's sisters and one of his brothers had been "sold away to Georgia by him." Therefore, admonished by threats and fears of having to pass through the same fiery furnace, Nat was led to consider the U. G. R. R. scheme. It was through the marriage of Nat's mistress to his present owner that he came into Muir's hands. "Up to the time of her death," he had been encouraged to "hope" that he would be "free;" indeed, he was assured by her "dying testimony that the slaves were not to be sold." But regardless of the promises and will of his departed wife, Muir soon extinguished all hopes of freedom from that quarter. But not believing that God had put one man here to "be the servant of another--to work," and get none of the benefit of his labor, Nat armed himself with a good pistol and a big knife, and taking his wife with him, bade adieu forever to bondage. Observing that Lizzie (Nat's wife) looked pretty decided and resolute, a member of the committee remarked, "Would your wife fight for freedom?" "I have heard her say she would wade through blood and tears for her freedom," said Nat, in the most serious mood.
>
> The following advertisement from *The Cambridge Democrat* of Nov. 4, speaks for itself-
>
>> $300 REWAKD.---Ran away from the subscriber, on Saturday night last, 17th inst., my negro woman Lizzie, about 28 years old. She is medium sized, dark com-plexion, good-looking, with rather a down look. When spoken to, replies quickly. She was well dressed, wearing a red and green blanket shawl, and carried with her a variety of clothing. She ran off in company with her husband, Nat Amby (belonging to John Muir, Esq.), who is about 6 feet in height, with slight impediment in his speech, dark chestnut color, and a large scar on the side of his neck.
>>
>> I will give the above reward if taken in this County, or one-half of what she sells for if taken out of the County or State. In either case to be lodged in Cambridge Jail Cambridge, Oct. 21, 1857. ALEXANDER H. BAYLY. P. S.-For the apprehension of the above-named negro man Nat, and delivery in Cam- bridge Jail, I will give $500 reward. JOHN MUIR.
>
> Now since Nat's master has been introduced in the above order it seems but appropriate that Nat should be heard too; consequently the following letter is inserted for what it is worth:
>
> AUBUBN, June 10th, 1858.

> MR. WILLIAM STILL:-Sir, will you be so Kind as to write a letter to affey White in straw berry alley in Baltimore city on the point Say to her at nat Ambey that I wish to Know from her the Last Letar that Joseph Ambie and Henry Ambie two Brothers and Ann Warfield a couisin of them two boys I state above I would like to hear from my mother sichy Ambie you will Please write to my mother and tell her that I am well and doing well and state to her that I perform my Relissius dutys and I would like to hear from her and want to know if she is performing her Relissius dutys yet and send me word from all her children I left behind say to affey White that I wish her to write rne a Letter in Hast my wife is well and doing well and my nephew is doing well Please tell aftey White when she writes to me to Let me know where Joseph and Henry Ambie is
>
> Mr. Still Please Look on your Book and you will find my name on your Book They was eleven of us children and all when we came through and I feal interrested about my Brothers I have never heard from them since I Left home you will Please Be Kind annough to attend to this Letter When you send the answer to this Letter you will Please send it to P. R. Freeman Auburn City Cayuga County New York Yours Truly
>
> NAT AMBIE[22]

In 1859, Luke Freeman appears to have had a stroke. He remained paralyzed until his death on April 9, 1863. His obituary noted that

> Luke had become almost 'an institution' in Auburn, not only on account of his general cleverness and usefulness, but as the leading sympathizer with his race yet in bondage. For more than 29 years his house was a refuge of the fleeing fugitive, derisively called 'The Underground Railroad Depot.' His practical sympathy for those unfortunates won him the esteem of all those who were cognizant of his labors.[23] [*Auburn Advertiser and Union*]

His funeral, held at his house, attracted hundreds of Auburn citizens, both black and white. As the *Auburn Daily Advertiser* noted:

> The funeral of Luke Freeman took place yesterday from his residence in Court Street, and was one of the most solemn and imposing scenes of the times. Luke was the 'Uncle Tom' of his people here—clever, kind, generous, good. He had been the benefactor, indeed, of hundreds and perhaps thousands of his race. He had been so good in so many ways that white folks had forgotten that he was black. He had most emphatically conquered the prejudices existing against his race.
>
> To the everlasting credit of the white people of our city they turned out in large numbers to Luke's funeral, just as they usually do to the funerals of our most respectable white citizens. Five of our most distinguished clergymen officiated. Rev. Dr. Hawley read the Scriptures, Rev. Mr. Ives offered the prayer, Rev. Mr. Fowler and Rev. Mr. Hosmer delivered short discourses, Rev. Dr. Huntington pronounced the benediction. And all the services were deeply impressive and solemn.

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[22] William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 103-104.
[23] Obituary, *Auburn Advertiser and Union*, April 10, 1863.

> Fourteen carriages full of people, white and black, followed his remains to the grave in the old North street cemetery, where he was buried with his ancestors. Rev. Dr. Hawley addressed the people and invoked benediction there.
>
> It seemed to be a tribute to remarkable goodness on the part of an old colored Patriarch, in which all our people (?) to join. There was interest in the fact that he had been a slave. There was interest, also, in the fact that the surviving mother of his wife was born in Africa over a hundred years ago, and remembers the evacuation of New York by the British and the entry there of Geo. Washington, whose person and deportment she minutely describes. She remembers the time when Sinclair Smith, of this county, was U.S. Marshal, and when he arrested certain parties for the complicity in the treasonable projects of Aaron Burr. There was more of interest, however, in the fact that he had risen above the clouds which hung over his race, and conquered the prejudices of the people against those of his color. As he himself had said in his life time, 'Nobody in Auburn regarded him as a Negro—they respected him as Luke.'
>
> Well, death reduces all distinctions created by wealth or color: and none of our most courtly aristocrats went to their graves with any higher honors then were borne by good old Luke. He was a good man. Peace to his ashes.[24]

After Freeman's death, his wife, Catherine Freeman, continued to live there. When she died in 1866, she left an estate worth about $1400 to her six children.[25]

Primary research by Tanya Warren, with assistance from Scott Anderson, Bernie Corcoran, Sheila Tucker, Peter Wisbey.

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[24] *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, April 11, 1863. From Seward House scrapbooks.Transcribed by Seward House.

[25] Will of Catherine Freeman, Book Z, 635.

Will of Catherine Freeman, wife of Morgan Luke Freeman
Cayuga County Records Retention, Book Z, p. 635.
Found and transcribed by Tanya Warren

Dated 28 November 1866
Petitioner, Matilda Haines
Executor, Charles Burris

Heirs:
1. Lewis H. Freeman of Phil., PA
2. Burgett Freeman of Cleveland, OH
3. Harriet A. Dubois of St. Catherine's, Canada
4. Helen Elizabeth Freeman of Auburn, NY
5. George E. Freeman of New Orleans
6. Matilda Freeman Haines of Auburn

Her children, all of full age, no surviving husband.

Value of Estate not to exceed $1400
Will proved, 5 July 1878
Signed: Matilda Alice Haines and written in by Matilda, "Hellin Elisabeth Freeman", her mark X.
Witnesses to will: Charles P. Williams of Auburn, Royal P. Stow, Edward Groot and Charles H. Stow for Royal Stow, deceased 1878.

Will:
I, Catherine, of sound mind, etc., age 60 years give the following:
1. Charles Edward Freeman, $1.00
2. Burgett Freeman, $1.00
3. Lewis Henry Freeman, 1 undivided half of all the barber's tools and fixtures now in my possession.
4. George and Edgar Freeman, the other undivided half of the above.
5. To Matilda Alice Haines, my gold watch and chain.
6. All residue of personal and all realestate to my three daughters, Harriet Augusta Butler, Helen Eliz. Freeman and Matilda Haines.

Hornbeck Family Houses
38 and 40 Jefferson Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Homes of freedom seeker (Sebeo Hornbeck) and African American community leaders (including John Hornbeck, barber, and Stephen Murray, postal worker)

Sebeo and Mary Hornbeck House, 40 Jefferson Street (gray house on left)
John and Cornelia Hornbeck House, 38 Jefferson Street (pink house in middle)
Looking southeast, April 2005
Photo by Tanya Warren

Sebeo and Mary Hornbeck House, 40 Jefferson Street
Looking east, April 2005
Photo by Tanya Warren

These Hornbeck-Murray houses represent four important themes:

1. the settlement of African Americans in Auburn on the north side of Genesee Street, as they expanded beyond the original "New Guinea" settlement located between the Owasco Outlet and Osborne Street (once called Mechanic Street).
2. the earliest settlement in Auburn of freedom seekers from the South. Sebeo Hornbeck, who listed his birthplace in the 1860 census as Maryland, may have been a freedom seeker. He arrived in Auburn about 1840, near the beginning of Underground Railroad activity in Auburn.
3. the continuity of African American families in Auburn. Several generations of Hornbecks and Murrays resided in Auburn, from the 1830s until at least the early twentieth century.
4. The economic success of many African Americans in Auburn. Sebeo Hornbeck worked as a laborer. Their sons John and Alfred became barbers. Between 1865 and 1870, their daughter, Cornelia, married Stephen Murray, who became the first African American clerk in the post office in Auburn.

These Hornbeck houses were very difficult to locate, because Auburn addresses in this area changed three times. As houses continued to be built on the large blocks between here and Genesee Street, more addresses were added on Jefferson Street. A deed search, however, revealed a clear title to the property going back directly to the Hornbecks, who first acquired these lots in 1854.

In 1854, Thomas Howe sold lot 26, as identified on the Lewis Clark map of 1835, to Sebeo Hornbeck and his son John Hornbeck. (See attached deeds.) Tracing deed ownership from the Hornbecks to current owners, and following street number changes through city directories and Auburn's 9/11 conversion directory, we can identify Sebeo Hornbeck's house as 40 Jefferson Street and John Hornbeck's house as 38 Jefferson Street. As reported by Tanya Warren, who did the research on these houses, "lot measurements still reflect the division in lot 26 [from the original Hornbeck deeds] down to the present day and match the original map exactly. The "Laneway" in the map is now seen as a wider gap between Sebeo's house and the next house to the north." Later in the century, John Hornbeck's son owned the house north of Sebeo Hornbeck's home. Other African American families owned several more houses in this block, on the same side of the street as the Hornbeck homes. [1]

The first African Americans in Auburn came as some of the first settlers. They were counted as slaves of John Hardenburgh, who later gave them land along the west side of the Owasco outlet, between the outlet and Mechanic (now Osborne) Street, just north of the bridge. By the 1830s, however, Auburn was expanding west along the Seneca Turnpike and north toward the prison. Here, most of Auburn's people—whether black or white, rich or poor—settled.

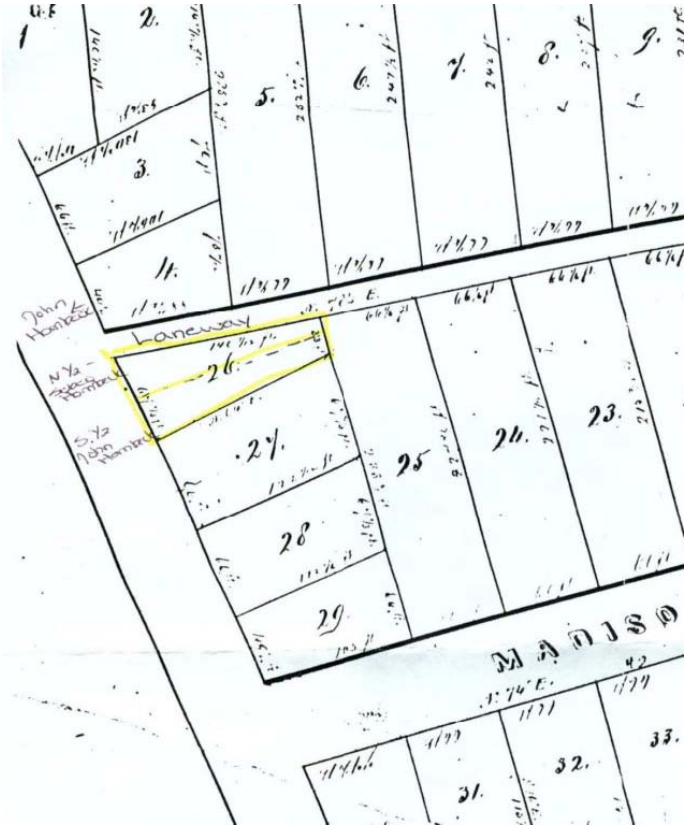
Among them was Sebeo Hornbeck, who appeared as a free person of color in the 1840 Auburn Census. He probably arrived shortly before the census was taken, since the 1855 census reported that he had lived in Auburn for 15 years. Sebeo Hornbeck was probably born about 1785 in Maryland. (He reported his birthplace to the census taker in 1850 as New York, but this was just before passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, when reporting accurately your place of birth to a

[1] Many thanks to Tanya Warren for such careful detective work.

federal official, if you were born in slavery, might jeopardize your freedom. In 1855, Sebeo Hornbeck left his birthplace blank. In 1860, he reported that he had been born in Maryland.) If he was born in Maryland, he was one of the earliest documented African Americans born in the South to settle in Cayuga County. Quite likely, he arrived on the Underground Railroad.

By 1850, Sebeo Hornbeck was 65 years old. He and his wife, Mary, age 51 (who reported her birthplace as Rhode Island), had four children at home: John, 22, a barber; Sarah, 19; Alfred, 15, a barber; and Cornelia, 8. Several children may have died or moved away, for the 1865 census reported that Mary had been the mother of eleven children. Sebeo and Mary Hornbeck also had two boarders in 1850: George Swartz, age 32, a barber, and Dean Blufield, age 30, a laborer.

On April 2, 1850, Sebeo Hornbeck made a contract with Thomas Howe. When it was "fully performed," in return for $62.50, he received the north half of lot 26, at what is now 40 Jefferson Street, in a deed recorded March 31, 1854 (Book 87, p. 471-472). At the same time, recorded in the same deed, John Hornbeck "of Skaneateles," then 26 years old, received the south half of the same lot, now 38 Jefferson Street. (The 1855 and 1860 census listed John and Cornelia Hornbeck and their children in Springport.)



1835 Lewis Clark Map of Jefferson St. (going SE to NW)
Lot 26 on this 1835 was divided into two sections.
The north half was Sebeo Horbeck's. The south half went to John Hornbeck.

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

W.W. Richie, *Map of Auburn,* 1871
Note Lot 16, divided into two sections.
Sebeo and Mary Hornbeck House is the north half.
John and Cornelia Hornbeck House is the south half.

. In 1855, Sebeo Hornbeck was 69 years old. Mary was 55. The only child left at home was their youngest, Cornelia, age 14. By 1860, Sebeo (now 76, born in Maryland), Mary (62, who listed her birthplace as New Jersey), and Cornelia (18, born in New Jersey) still lived in the same house.

By 1865, Sebeo Hornbeck had died. Mary, age 65, was now listed as "owner of land." John, age 35 and still a barber, and Cornelia, age 30, had returned from Springport. They lived in the same house with his mother, Mary, and his sister, Cornelia, age 22. John and Cornelia had two children: Frank, age 12, and Alfred, 6. A niece, Jane Buck, age 14, also lived in their household, as did Stephen Murray, a laborer, age 27. In 1865, John was listed as an owner of land worth $1000. Perhaps this included both these houses, and they rented out one of them.

John's brother, Alfred, age 29, and also a barber, lived with his wife, Susan, age 28, in a boarding house that included John Stewart, one of Harriet Tubman's brothers, and his new wife, Milla.

By 1870, John and Cornelia Hornbeck had three children: Frank, 17, now a barber; Alfred, 12; and a new son, Frederick, 4. Mary Hornbeck, age 67, still lived with them, but Cornelia Hornbeck had married Stephen Murray. The Murray family moved into the former Sebeo Hornbeck house on the north half of lot 26 at 40 Jefferson Street. Stephen, age 35, worked as a laborer. Cornelia,

24, kept house for their new son, Louis, four months old, and her father-in-law, Isaac Murray, age 60.

In March 1877, Stephen Murray was appointed a clerk in the U.S. Post Office in Auburn. He worked there into the early twentieth century and became the oldest employed clerk in the office.[2]

By 1880, the census taker listed Stephen Murray as 39 years old and a clerk in the post office. Cornelia Murray, 34 was keeping house for her husband, five children (Louie, age 10; Archie, 8; William H, 6; and Mary, 5), and her father-in-law, Stephen Murray (born, like his son, in Massachusetts) and her mother, Mary Hornbeck, age 81. Next door, her brother John, age 48 was a barber, living with his wife Cornelia, and their son, Frederick. They shared the house with John's brother, Frank, also a barber, age 27, and Frank's wife, also named Cornelia, and their children, Maude M., 3; John, 2; and George J., six months.

[2] *Auburn Souvenir: New York State Association of Letter Carriers: Fifth Annual Convention 1904* (Auburn: Knapp, Peck & Thomson, 1904). Thanks to Mary Gilmore and Anthony Gero for finding this information.

S.B. Murray
Auburn Souvenir: New York State Association of Letter Carriers: Fifth Annual Convention 1904
(Auburn: Knapp, Peck & Thomson, 1904).
Courtesy of Seymour Library
Research by Mary Gilmore and Anthony Gero.

LAST	FIRST	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	ACRES	REAL-$	PERS-$	TOTAL-$	MISC.
Hornbeck	Sebeo	Auburn	1850	Shanty	Jefferson	0.50		0.50	
Hornbeck	Sebeo	Auburn	1851	H/L	Jefferson	150.00		150.00	
Hornbeck	Sebeo	Auburn	1852	H/L	Jefferson	150.00		150.00	
Hornbeck	Sebeo	Auburn	1853	H/L	Jefferson	150.00		150.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1853						no other data
Hornbeck	Sebeo	Auburn	1854	H/L	Jefferson	150.00		150.00	
Hornbeck	Sebeo	Auburn	1857	H/L	Jefferson	150.00		150.00	no entry '55-'56
Hornbeck	Sibbie	Auburn	1860	H/L	Jefferson	0.50		0.50	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1860	H/L	Jefferson	100.00		100.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1861	H/L	3rd ward	100.00		100.00	Paid by John H.
Hornbeck	Estate (Sebeo)	Auburn	1861		3rd ward	250.00	100.00	350.00	Paid by John H.
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1864	Jefferson	H/L	200.00		200.00	
Hornbeck	Sebeo	Auburn	1864	Jefferson	H/L	25.00		25.00	
Hornbeck	Estate (Sebeo)	Auburn	1866	H/L	3rd ward	50.00		50.00	Paid by John H.
Hornbeck	Estate (Sebeo)	Auburn	1868	Jefferson	H/L	100.00		100.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1873	18 Jefferson	H/L	250.00		250.00	
Hornbeck	Mary (wife Sebeo)	Auburn	1873	14 Jefferson	H/L	75.00		75.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1874	H/L	18 Jeff.	575.00		575.00	
Hornbeck	**John**	**Auburn**	**1874**	**18 Jefferson**	**H/L**	**575.00**		**575.00**	
Hornbeck	Mary (wife Sebeo)	Auburn	1874	14 Jefferson	H/L	150.00		150.00	
Hornbeck	Mary (wife Sebeo)	Auburn	1878	H/L	14 Jeff.	200.00		200.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1878	H/L	16 Jeff.	300.00		300.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1882	28 Jefferson	H/L	300.00		300.00	
Hornbeck	**Mary (wife Sebeo)**	**Auburn**	**1882**	**30 Jefferson**	**H/L**	**400.00**		**400.00**	
Hornbeck	Mary (wife Sebeo)	Auburn	1883	30 Jefferson	H/L	300.00		300.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1884	28 Jefferson	H/L	300.00		300.00	
Hornbeck	Mary (wife Sebeo)	Auburn	1884	30 Jefferson	H/L & residence	400.00		400.00	
Hornbeck	John	Auburn	1891	28 Jefferson	H/L	400.00		400.00	
Hornbeck	Mary (wife Sebeo)	Auburn	1891	30 Jefferson	H/L	400.00		400.00	

Tanya Warren, April 2005

38 Jefferson St., Auburn, NY (previously 36)

Current Owner: Thomas Redmond & Charlene A. Angotti
Tax Map # 115.59-1-38
Book 747, p. 94
Date purchased: 29 Sept 1987
Grantor: Cuddeback

DiMora to Cuddeback
Book 501, p. 121
Date purchased: 11 Aug 1976

Tutino to DiMora
City Book 65, p. 563
Date: 28 Sept 1929
Description excerpts:
All that parcel on Lot 26 of Lewis Clark map being 33.66 feet wide on the east side, 135 feet deep and 16.5 feet wide in rear, bounded south by John Holliday's lot (1865), west by Jefferson St., north by the north half of Lot 26 conveyed to Sebeo Hornbeck 31 Mar 1854. Being the same as conveyed to Tutino by Parrino 14 Sept 1921 in City Book 54, p. 484.

Maude Flanagan to Tutino
City Book 50, p. 356
Date: 20 Nov 1918
Description Excerpts:
All that parcel on Lot 26 of Lewis Clark map being 33.66 feet wide on the east side, 135 feet deep and 16.5 feet wide in rear, bounded south by John Holliday's lot (1865), west by Jefferson St., north by the north half of Lot 26 conveyed to Sebeo Hornbeck 31 Mar 1854, east by Lot 25, being the same premises conveyed to Cornelia Hornbeck by Catherine Freeman 13 Nov 1865 and recorded in Book 111, p. 201 and being the same as conveyed to Maude Flanagan by Augustus Hornbeck and wife by deed dated 21 Oct 1918 with John Hornbeck, Willard Hornbeck, Alfred Hornbeck and Jennie Hornbeck.

Catherine Freeman of Auburn to Cornelia Hornbeck of Springport
Book 111, p. 201
Date: 13 Nov 1865
Description Excerpts:
For $500 all that certain ½ of Lot 26 on a map of Lewis Clark, said lot on the east side of Jefferson St in Auburn and is about 33.66 feet wide on Jefferson and about 135 deep and 16.5 feet wide in rear being bounded south by John Holliday's lot, west by Jefferson , north by the north ½ of said lot deeded to Sebeo Hornbeck on 31 March 1854 and east by lot 25.

Note: On the same day, in Book 111, p. 200, John and Cornelia Hornbeck of Springport sell to Catherine Freeman of Auburn for $500, same property as described above.

Thomas and Sarah Howe of Auburn to John Hornbeck of Skaneateles
Book 87, p. 471-472
Date: 31 March 1854
For $62.50, all that certain ½ of lot 26 on the east side of Jefferson St. (south ½), etc.

This deed is made pursuant to a contract made between Thomas Howe and Sebeo Hornbeck on April 2, 1850 which has been fully performed on the part of said Sebeo Hornbeck.

40 Jefferson St (previously 38)

Current Owner: Pamela A. Tinti
Tax Map # 115.59-1-37
Book 783, p. 267
Date purchased: April 26, 1989
Grantor: Julia Stefaniw

Carmello Signorelli to John and Julia Stefaniw
City Book 91, p. 267
Date purchased: April 5, 1951

Luciano Signorelli to Carmello Signorelli
City Book 90, p. 7
Date purchased: 30 Jan 1950

Matteo Carnicelli to Luciano Cignorelli
City Book 64, p. 279
Date purchased: Aug 1 1928
Description extracts:
North ½ of lot 26 bounded on the south by the south ½ of lot 26, etc. being the same as conveyed to Sebeo Hornbeck by Thomas Howe in 1854. Also being the same premises as conveyed to Matteo Carnicelli by Stephen B. and Cornelia (Hornbeck) Murray by deed dated Jan 24, 1920.

Stephen B. and Cornelia Murray of Rochester, NY to Matteo and Margaret Carnicelli
City Book 52, p. 86
Date: 4 Jan 1920
Description extracts:
North ½ of lot 26 bounded on the south by the south ½ of lot 26, etc. being the same as conveyed to Sebeo Hornbeck by Thomas Howe in 1854, for $1.00 to the Carnicelli's, tenants in kind. Also being the same as conveyed to Cornelia Murray by John Hornbeck and wife by deed dated Mar 31, 1890 in City Book 23, p. 380.

John and Cornelia Hornbeck of Auburn to Cornelia Murray of Auburn
City Book 23, p. 380-81 (see note below)
Date: March 31, 1890
Description extracts:
For $75, all that certain north ½ of Lot # 26 on a map, etc., being 33.66 feet wide on Jefferson St., about 135 feet deep and 16.5 feet wide in the rear, being bounded south by the south ½ of said lot deeded to John Hornbeck on March 31, 1854; west by by Jefferson St. and east by lot 25 and are the same premises conveyed to Sebeo Hornbeck by Thomas How, Jr. March 31, 1854 in Deed Book 87, p. 471. The interest of the party of the first part hereby inteded to be conveyed, is such as he owns as heir at law of said Sebeo Hornbeck and heir at law of deceased children of said Sebeo Hornbeck, deceased. Signed by the mark of John Hornbeck and the hand of Cornelia Hornbeck.

Thomas and Sarah Howe of Auburn to Sebeo Hornbeck of Auburn
Book 87, p. 471-472
Date: 31 March 1854

For $62.50, all that north half of lot 26 on the east side of Jefferson, etc. This deed is made pursuant to a contract made between Thomas Howe and Sebeo Hornbeck on April 2, 1850 which has been fully performed on the part of said Sebeo Hornbeck.

Note: Dec 21, 1886, deed of **Georgette Minns of Syracuse and Ruth Jackson, heirs and next of kin of Deborah Depuy, deceased and Sarah Morris, a daughter of Sebeo Hornbeck, deceased to Cornelia Murray** in **City Book 23, p. 380**, for $1, all that certain north ½ of Lot # 26 on a map, etc., being 33.66 feet wide on Jefferson St., about 135 feet deep and 16.5 feet wide in the rear, being bounded south by the south ½ of said lot deeded to John Hornbeck on March 31, 1854; west by by Jefferson St. and east by lot 25 and are the same premises conveyed to Sebeo Hornbeck by Thomas How, Jr. March 31, 1854 in Deed Book 87, p. 471, and being the same premises of which Sebeo Hornbeck, deceased, died seized, and which were conveyed to him by Thomas How, etc.

Note: County Tax Sale
City Book 21, p. 649-650
Date: Oct 3, 1888
Description:
County of Cayuga to Cornelia Murray, occupant: You are hereby notified that at the annual sale of lands by the treasurer for delinquent taxes thereon, the following described land, viz, Auburn City, 8th Ward, Jefferson Street, East side, Lot 30 Mary Hornbeck-bounded north 140.7 feet by a lane; east 16.6 by Hardwick; south 135 feet by John Hornbeck and west 33.8 feet by the east line of Jefferson St. was sold for such delinquency to Stephen B. Murray, highest bidder, for the sum of $6.65 being the amount of tax, expenses and interest upon said land to the day of said sale.
Stephen B. Murray, upon being duly sworn, says that on the 23rd day of July, 1889, he served the foregoing notice upon Cornelia Murray, the occupant of said premises and that such service was made by delivering personally, etc.
This indenture made this 4th day of October 1889 between Horace Cook, county treasurer and Stephen B. Murray of Auburn…whereas such taxes of $$3.51 were in arrears and not paid and against Mary Hornbeck on the land hereafter described….do now convey to the party of the 2nd part all that parcel in Auburn City, 8th Ward, Jefferson Street, East side, Lot 30 of Mary Hornbeck-bounded north 140.7 feet by a lane; east 16.6 by Hardwick; south 135 feet by John Hornbeck and west 33.8 feet by the east line of Jefferson St. excepting and reserving thereout the undivided 1/5 part thereof, heretofore redeemed from such sale by John Hornbeck for himself as heir at law of Sebeo Hornbeck, Alfred Hornbeck and Catherine Owens, to have & to hold, etc.

William Hosmer House
29 Washington Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of Abolitionist Editor, Author, and Underground Railroad Supporter

William Hosmer House
Looking west, May 2005

Influenced by ideals of Christian perfectionism and believing that it was both possible and necessary to implement God's laws on earth, William Hosmer was a nationally important figure, both as editor and author. Hosmer was also part of the tightly-knit abolitionist and Underground Railroad network in Auburn, centered around the Seward-Wright-Underwood-Fitch families.

As editor of the *Northern Christian Advocate*, published at 16 Clark Street, Auburn, Hosmer believed that "holiness or moral purity is one of the most essential principles of the gospel, but slavery is a violation of that right." His radical abolitionist views alienated leaders of the Methodist General Conference and led him to establish, with the help of a sympathetic Methodist publication committee, a new abolitionist newspaper, the *Northern Independent*, published at 113 Genesee Street from 1856-65. Its motto was "No compromise with sin, no silent submission to wrong in church or state, a bold advocacy of all the moral issues of the age and especially of an uncompromising Christianity." In 1859, it had a circulation of 10,000. Copies of both of these papers are located in the Cayuga County Historian's Office. [3]

Hosmer's book, *The Higher Law in Its Relations of Civil Government, with Particular References to Slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law* (Auburn: Derby and Miller, 1852), was dedicated to William Henry Seward. Hosmer was not alone in advocating adherence to a higher law. (William Lloyd Garrison, in Boston, burned the U.S. Constitution because he thought it was a proslavery document, "an agreement with death and a covenant with hell.") As an Auburn resident, however, Hosmer may have had a particular influence on his neighbor, William Henry Seward, who gave a famous speech on the "higher law" in 1850, in opposition to the Fugitive Slave Act. In a second book, *Slavery and the Church* (Freeport, New York, 1853), Hosmer explored the connection between slavery and religion. He also edited the *Autobiography of*

[3] *Newspapers of Cayuga County*. [Check]

Rev. Alvin Torry, First Missonary to the Six Nations and the Northwestern Tribes of British North America (Auburn, 1864).

Both William Hosmer and his wife were interested in temperance and women's education, as well as antislavery. Mrs. Hosmer helped form a Martha Washington Society in Auburn in the 1840s, promoting the teetotal principle of temperance, i.e. abstinence from all forms of alcoholic consumption. William Hosmer was involved in trying to form a female college in Auburn.[4]

In February 1861, Martha Wright, who lived on Genesee Street not far from the Hosmers, wrote a letter to her sister, Lucretia Mott, clearly indicating that William Hosmer was part of the local abolitionist-Underground Railroad network that included the Wright, Seward, and Tubman families:

> I called at Mrs. Seward's on my way home, [wrote Martha Wright]. D. [David Wright, her husband]…lent me a letter to shew them, enquiring after Harriet Tubman written by Chas. Mills of Syracuse, saying that she left Canistota en route to Auburn, & that a slaveholder was there the day before enquiring as to the possibility of retaking slaves here—Mr. Mills sd. they cd. learn nothing about Harriet & wished to know if she was here—He also sent a word of caution to fugitives here. D. sent the letter to Mr. Hosmer, & he read it [to] Harriets folks—She has not been heard from, but I told one of her slaves that I tho't most likely Mr. Smith had sent her to Canada.[5]

In 1877, Elliott Storke summed up William Hosmer's career in an article for the Cayuga County Historical Society. "His convictions were earnest and sincere," wrote Storke, "and at all times plainly expressed. He was an 'agitator and reformer' of no mean ability and as such always stood in the front ranks--boldly confronting the opponents of his opinions, and challenging their admiration by the firmness and consistency of his course. Slavery and intemperance were especially obnoxious to him, and no one ever contended against them with greater zeal and energy."[6]

Hosmer's unwavering commitment to equality and a higher spiritual law strengthened abolitionist sentiment not only among Methodists but also for his fellow townsman, William Henry Seward. Through Seward, this doctrine of a higher law became a powerful influence in national politics in the years immediately before the Civil War.[7]

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[4] Hall, 158, 287.

[5]Chas. Mills was Charles C.D.B. Mills, a Syracuse abolitionist. Martha Wright to Lucretia Mott, [February 1861], Garrison Papers, Smith College. From Seward and African Americans.

[6] Ellott G. Storke, "History of the Press of Cayuga County from 1798 to 1877," *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society* Vol. 6-7: 269-70.

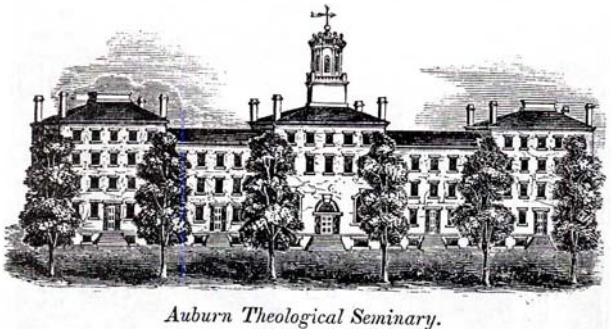
[7] Research by Joni Lincoln, Sheila Tucker, and Tanya Warren.

Ezra A. Huntington House, c. 1861
11 Seminary Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Represents abolitionist and Underground Railroad activity of Auburn Theological Seminary

November 2004, Looking NE

Built in 1861 as a residence for Rev. Dr. E.A. Huntington, Professor of Biblical criticism at Auburn Theological Seminary, this building is the only remaining pre-Civil War structure of the Auburn Theological Seminary that once occupied this entire block. This house represents the national and international importance of this biracial Presbyterian seminary, as well as the impact of its students and teachers on abolitionism and the Underground Railroad. A hidden attic room may have been built as an Underground Railroad safe place, although no written documentation substantiates this.



From John W. Barber and Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of the State of New York* (New York: S. Tuttle, 1842).

Founded in 1819 under the direction of President D.C. Lansing, Auburn Theological Seminary became, along with Union Seminary in New York City, one of the main centers for training Presbyterian ministers in the nineteenth century. In the debates over slavery, revivalism, and theology that divided many

Protestant denominations in the pre-Civil War years, Auburn was in the eye of the hurricane. The early commitment of many of its students and faculty to abolitionism, as well as its willingness to accept African American students, placed it clearly in the camp of reformers and contributed to the division in 1837 of Presbyterians into separate northern and southern churches.

African American students included Andrew Harris, from the Cayuga Presbyterian parish, a graduate of Middlebury College, who preached in Philadelphia until his death in 1836,, and Rev. Brother Holmes, who preached in Brooklyn in the 1860s.[8]

In March 1834, students at Auburn Theological Seminary started one of the first antislavery societies in New York State. By 1836, forty-two of the seventy-five students enrolled at Auburn (or 56 percent of the student body) belonged to the society, They held monthly prayer meetings, and "no discussions," they assured the public, "have been held, . . without the consent, either expressed or tacit, of the Faculty." On July 30, 1836, the adopted the following resolutions, which they published in the *Friend of Man*, the newspaper of the New York State Anti-Slavery Society:

> Resolved, That the existence of Slavery in this country, being hostile to the genius of our government and the spirit of the gospel—interfering vitally with the cause of human rights, and crippling the energies of the American Church, calls for the immediate, united and decisive action of every friend of God and man.
>
> Resolved, That as prospective ministers of the cross, we feel ourselves imperatively called upon, while in a course of preparation for the vast responsibility of the holy office to which we aspire, "to remember those who are in bonds as bound with them"—to extend the sympathies and charities of our souls to every being created in God's image, especially to those whose rights are wantonly outraged—to act on the firm ground of enlightened, Christian principle, and to take a deep and lively interest in all the moral questions which are agitating the religious community, and stand intimately connected with the salvation of men.
>
> Resolved, That we regard the free and untrammeled discussion of the subject of Slavery as by no means "*foreign* to the purpose for which we are here assembled," but on the contrary, as perfectly accordant with that purpose and a solemn duty which we owe ourselves, the millions of suffering colored brethren, and the church of God, in which we expect soon to become public teachers.
>
> Resolved, That while we are unwilling to endorse all the language employed by the friends of immediate emancipation as *faultless*, we are prompt to say, as far as we are acquainted, that it exhibits in the main that spirit of love and adherence to moral principle which accords with the Gospel.
>
> Resolved, That the measures of the Abolitionists instead of having a *tendency* to increase the severities of the masters towards the slaves, are designed and calculated to melt the oppressor's heart, and restore the oppressed to the possession of their divinely chartered rights. Was Moses chargeable with the increase severity inflicted upon his brethren by their oppressors, when he demanded their immediate emancipation from Egyptian bondage?

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[8]Florence Pharis McIntoch, *History of Cayuga Village* (1927), 62; John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), 251-52. Thanks to Anthony Gerow for finding these references to Andrew Harris. Reference to "Rev. Mr. Holmes" is from Junius, "Brooklyn Correspondence," *The Christian Recorder*, September 12, 1863. *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, July 30, 1852.

> Resolved, That while we firmly adhere to our principles, relying on divine aid for success, we will study to cultivate a spirit of forbearance and kindness towards those who do not agree with us in sentiment, on this important and vital question.
>
> T.T. Bradford, president.
> H.S. Redfield, Secretary.
> Auburn, July 30th, 1836[9]

Because of Auburn Theological Seminary's importance, its ideas influenced debate throughout the Presbyterian General Conference. These abolitionist sentiments undoubtedly contributed to the split in the national body at its national meeting in Philadelphia the following year. There, issues of slavery combined with theological disputes led the General Conference to excise almost every presbytery in upstate New York from the national body.

In 1838, the student antislavery society was undoubtedly responsible for generating signatures on two antislavery petitions sent to Congress. The first was sent by students and professors of the Auburn Theological Seminary on February 12, 1838, and asked Congress to abolish slavery in Washington, D.C. and in the territories and to abolish the slave trade. It included two columns of signatures. Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County historian, checked these signatures against Seminary records and found the following names listed as either students or faculty at the Seminary:

Albert C. Willson
Francis Child
Edwin Reynolds
Daniel Gibbs
Lewis Hamilton
E.B. Fancher
Nehemiah Cobb Jr.
Charles O. Mill
Samuel C. Wilcox
Henry Bannister
O. Fraser
Elliot H. Payson
Ransom R. Kirlt
Erasmus M. Kellogg
Horan M. Crasit
William M. Hoyt
Hannibal Smith
John E. Claghorn

On a second petitions sent from Auburn in 1850, more than half of the signers were associated with the seminary, including the following:

Amon Spencer
Sidney H. Barteau
Francis H. Sulye
J.E. Blakely
A. Fergrison
H.B. Morgan
Alfred M. Stowe
John Campbell
Richard G. Keyes
T.D. Austin
William A. Niles

[9] *Friend of Man*, August 11, 1836.

Daniel B. Lyons
J.C. Moses
Robert H. Booth
Martin L. Gaylord
William A. Fox
Edward D. Morris
C.L. Adams
David E. Blair
George G. Smith
Stephen Summix
A.H. Lilly

Some of these, perhaps most of them, carried their antislavery commitments into work outside the Seminary. In 1852, a student named Bascom was involved with the biracial abolitionist McGrawville College in Cortland County, where, reported Frederick Douglass, he delivered an address that "exhibited considerable talent; but the speaker labored so hard to say witty and pretty things, and went so far aside from his subject to make his attack on those ladies who wear the Bloomer Costume, as to show most clearly that he had mistaken his own qualifications, the character of his hearers, and the claims of the occasion."[10]

Rev. Charles Anderson, who graduated from the Seminary in 1843 and went to the Sennett Congregational Church, where he and his wife, Elizabeth, used the parsonage as an active stop on the Underground Railroad. According to Anderson's obituary, "so great an interest did he take in the Southern slave that his home in Sennett, while he was a pastor of a congregation there was made one of the underground stations for runaway bondsmen and much of his time was occupied in caring for the fugitives."[11] In 1856, Harriet Eglin, freedom seeker from Maryland, stayed several months with the Andersons and wrote three letters to William Still, keeper of the main safe house in Philadelphia, which Still published in his 1872 book, *The Underground Railroad*.[12]

Faculty members sympathetic to abolitionism most likely included Samuel Miles Hopkins, professor of church history, who arrived at the Seminary in 1847. His sister,Sarah Bradford, worked in 1868 with Harriet Tubman to record and publish the first book-length version of Tubman's life history.[13]

The Rev. E.A. Huntington came to the Auburn Theological Seminary in 1855 as professor of Biblical criticism. A graduate of Union College, he had been pastor of Third Presbyterian Church in Albany for eighteen years before coming to Auburn. For most of his tenure, Huntington served not only as a faculty member but as virtual president of the seminary. He retired in 1893, at the age of 80, but he remained active as professor emeritus until his death in 1901.

Built in 1861, Huntington's house on Seminary Avenue[14]served as his residence from then until his death in 1901. The house is stucco, with wide unsoffited eaves. It has a large gable with asymmetirical wings on each side and another wing to the rear. Windows on the first and second floor have flat lintels. Those on the front of the main gable have six-over-six sashes. Several windows on the wings have four-over-four sashes. Some are side-by-side, with four-over-four sashes and a mullion down the middle. Simple Florentine windows in the attic gables reflect an Italianate influence, as do the porch supports.

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[10] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, July 30, 1852.
[11] Church records, as transcribed by Sheila Tucker; Obituary for Rev. Charles Anderson, *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, January 4, 1900; "Graduates and Students Auburn Theological Seminary," *General Biographical Catalogue of Auburn Theological Seminary, 1818*-1918 (Auburn: Auburn Seminary Press, 1918), 85
[12] William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 221-23.
[13] *History of Cayuga County* (1908), 182.
[14] *History of Cayuga County*, 185.

In 1863, Rev. E. A. Huntington pronounced the benediction at the funeral of Morgan "Luke" Freeman, an African American barber born in slavery in 1803, who kept an Underground Railroad station in Auburn for 29 years.[15] Although we have found no other evidence connecting Huntington's name with any abolitionist or Underground Railroad activity, the house does contain two intriguing hidden rooms with a cistern in the attic. Could these have been built as possible hiding places?

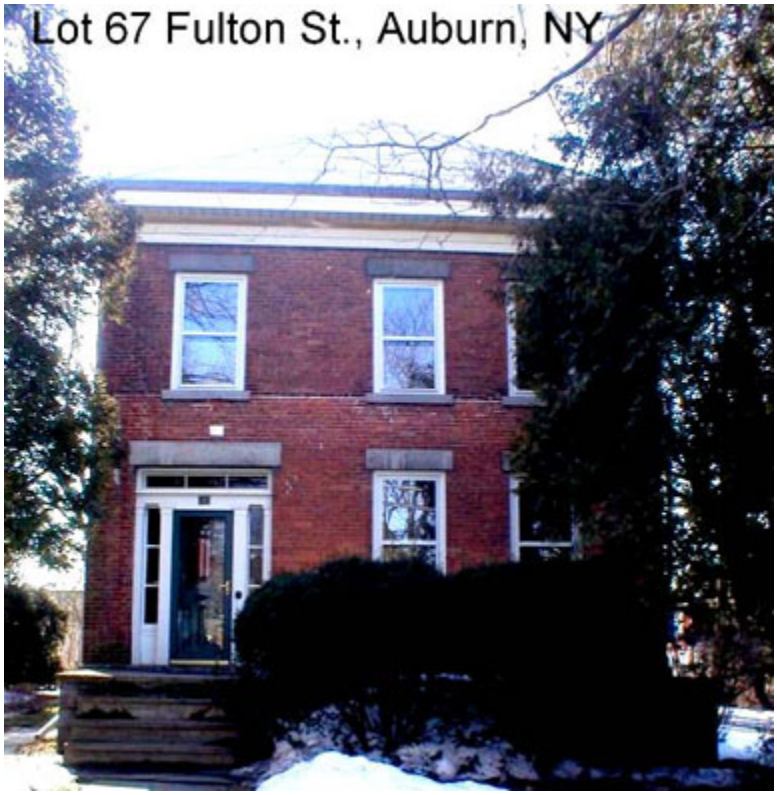
In 1903, James R. Cox, former law associated of William Henry Seward, recalled that "the fugitives that came to Auburn were, during the summer time, hidden in the Theological Seminary."[16]

Research assistance by Sheila Tucker and Anthony Gero.

[15] *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, April 11, 1863.
[16] James R. Cox interviewed by Elbert Wixom, "The Under Ground Railway in the Finger Lakes Country," B.A. Thesis, Cornell, 1903, 30.

L.D. Mansfield House
67 Fulton Street
Auburn, New York
(Tentative Identification)

Significance: Home of well-documented Underground Railroad supporter.



Mansfield House
Fulton Street, Looking west
Photo by Tanya Warren
March 2005

Description: This square brick Greek Revival house, with limestone lintels, hipped roof, and a recessed doorway with sidelights makes a substantial high-style addition to this northside neighborhood. Although it appears to be missing an original porch, it nevertheless retains an air of quiet elegance.

Significance: L. Delos Mansfield appears not to have been in Auburn long and never to have owned property, which makes identification of his residence difficult. Based on his residence, as listed in the 1857 city directory, he apparently lived here in this house while he was involved in his Underground Railroad activities in the mid-1850s.

He left a dramatic and well-documented Underground Railroad legacy, emerging from his work as pastor of a biracial Christian church called the Tabernacle and from his strong connections with an African American Underground Railroad network that included Rev. Jermain Loguen (AME Zion minister and organizer of the main Underground Railroad station in Syracuse) and William Still (Secretary of the Vigilance Committee and keeper of the main Underground Railroad station in Philadelphia).

Rev. Mansfield first appeared in the abolitionist press in *Frederick Douglass' Paper* in 1853, when he wrote a letter praising Douglass and explaining his own situation, then in New York City, ministering to a chapel supported by Gerrit Smith, Arthur Tappan, and other abolitionists:

> By the blessing of God, New York is to have one more Church where a free gospel is to be preached to all, without distinction of color. The Advent Mission Church of which I have care have erected a neat and comfortable chapel at 39 Forsyth Street, where Negro pews have not place and we intend never shall. Where colored people are at home, by an acknowledged right not by an especial patronage, sometimes quite as humiliating as actual depreciation of place. I hope sometime to hear you earnest and eloquent appeals within the walls of our chapel in behalf of your injured race, with whom I deeply sympathize and for whose good I am ever ready to be used.[1]

One of Rev. Mansfield's most memorable rescues involved a young man named James Harris. As William Still recorded it in his book, *The Underground Railroad,*

> JAMES HARRIS escaped from Delaware. A white woman, Catharine Odine by name, living near Middletown, claimed James as her man; but James did not care to work for her on the unrequited labor system. He resolved to take the first train on the Underground Rail Road that might pass that way. It was not a great while ere he was accommodated, and was brought safely to Philadelphia. The regular examination was made and he passed creditably. He was described in the book as a man of yellow complexion, good-looking, and intelligent. After due assistance, he was regularly forwarded on to Canada. This was in the month of November, 1856. Afterwards nothing more was heard of him, until the receipt of the following letter from Prof. L. D. Mansfield, showing that he had been re-united to his wife, under amusing, as well as touching circumstances:
>
> AUBURN, Dec. 15th, '56.
>
> DEAR BRO. STILL:-A very pleasant circumstance has brought you to mind, and I am always happy to be reminded of you, and of the very agreeable, though brief acquaintance which we made at Philadelphia two years since. Last Thursday evening, while at my weekly prayer meeting, our exercises were interrupted by the appearance of Bro. Loguen, of Syracuse, who had come on with Mrs. Harris in search of her husband, whom he had sent to my care three weeks before. I told Bro. L. that no such man had been at my house, and I knew nothing of him. But I dismissed the meeting, and went with him immediately to the African Church, where the colored brethren were holding a meeting. Bro. L. looked through the door, and the first person whom he saw was Harris. He was called out, when Loguen said, in a rather reproving and excited tone, "What are you doing here; didn't I tell

[1] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, August 19, 1853.

> you to be off to Canada? Don't you know they are after you? Come get your hat, and come with us, we'll take care of you." The poor fellow was by this time thoroughly frightened, and really thought he had been pursued. We conducted him nearly a mile, to the hotel where his wife was waiting for him, leaving him still under the impression that he was pursued and that we were conducting him to a place of safety, or were going to box him up to send him to Canada. Bro. L. opened the door of the parlor, and introduced him; but he was so frightened that he did not know his wife at first, until she called him James, when they had a very joyful meeting. She is now a servant in my family, and he has work, and doing well, and boards with her. We shall do all we can for them, and teach them to read and write, and endeavor to place them in a condition to take care of themselves. Loguen had a fine meeting in my Tabernacle last night, and made a good collection for the cause of the fugitives.
>
> I should be happy to hear from you and your kind family, to whom remember me very cordially. Believe me ever truly yours, L. D. MANSFIELD.
>
> Mr. and Mrs. Harris wish to be gratefully remembered to you and yours.[2]

L.D. Mansfield was also involved in assisting Henry Lemmon and his sister, Catherine, who took the name of Jane Clark. When a friend of Henry Lemmon's died on the way North, Mansfield wrote to Still on his behalf:

AUBURN, NEW YORK, MAY 4TH, 1857.

DEAR BR. STILL:-Henry Lemmon wishes me to write to you in reply to your kind letter, conveying the intelligence of the death of your fugitive guest, Geo. Weems. He was deeply affected at the intelligence, for he was most devotedly attached to him and had been for many years. Mr. Lemmon now expects his sister to come on, and wishes you to aid her in any way in your power-as he knows you will.

He wishes you to send the coat and cap of Weems by his sister when she comes. And when you write out the history of Weems' escape, and it is published, that you would send him a copy of the papers. He has not been very successful in getting work yet.

Mr. and Mrs. Harris left for Canada last week. The friends made them a purse of $15 or $20, and we hope they will do well.

Mr. Lemmon sends his respects to you and Mrs. Still. Give my kind regards to her and accept also yourself, Yours very truly, L. D. MANSFIELD.

William Still included in his book an appreciative comment about Mansfield's work on the Underground Railroad. "Rev. Mansfield was," wrote Still, "one of the rare order of ministers, who believed it right 'to do unto others as one would be done by' in practice, not in theory

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[2] William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 516-17, http://www.quinnipiac.edu/other/ABL/etext/ugrr/ugrrmain.html

merely, and who felt that they could no more be excused for 'falling down,' in obedience to the Fugitive Slave Law under President Fillmore, than could Daniel for worshiping the 'golden image' under Nebuchadnezzar."[3]

[3] Still, *The Underground Railroad*, 54.

North Street Cemetery
North Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Burial Place of Many People Associated with the Underground Railroad Abolitionism, and African American Life

People such as Morgan "Luke" Freeman (1803-1863), born in slavery, whose obituary noted that he kept an Underground Railroad station in Auburn for twenty-nine years; John Stewart, one of Harriet Tubman's brothers; and Lydia P. Mott, Quaker abolitionist who kept a school in Skaneateles, are buried in North Street cemetery.

***Northern Christian Advocate* Office**
16 Clark Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Site of publication of *Northern Christian Advocate*

February 2005
Looking NW

Abolitionism threatened to disrupt the Union, and many Americans, sympathetic as they might to the plight of people in slavery, were not willing to challenge slaveholders and risk dissolving the country.

This building represents the considerable opposition to abolitionism that existed throughout central New York. Built by the Methodist Publishing House, 16 Clark Street was the site of major publishing efforts of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Here they published their journal, the *Northern Christian Advocate*, for 28 years, beginning in 1841. In 1844, William Hosmer became editor of this newspaper, but his antislavery views made him too radical for Methodist authorities. In 1856, he left the editorship of the *Northern Christian Advocate* to assume control of a new publication, the *Northern Independent*. He published this staunchly abolitionist newspaper at 113 Genesee Street, the same location where Morgan "Luke" Freeman, born in slavery in Auburn in

1803, kept his barbershop, beginning in 1857. For 29 years until his death in 1863, Freeman also kept one of the most important Underground Railroad stations in Auburn, undoubtedly with the assistance of William Hosmer.

Note signs on side of buildings: “PrintingBinding,” “Book Bindery.”

Researched by Joni Lincoln, Cayuga County Historian’s Office.

Site of Morgan Freeman Barbership (after 1857) and of Hornbeck, Waire, and Swarts Barbershops later in the century.
Site of William Hosmer's *Northern Independent* newspaper (after 1856).
111-117 Genesee Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: One of most important Underground Railroad sites in Auburn; important African American business site from 1857 through early twentieth century; important reform/abolitionist newspaper published here

June 2005
Looking northeast

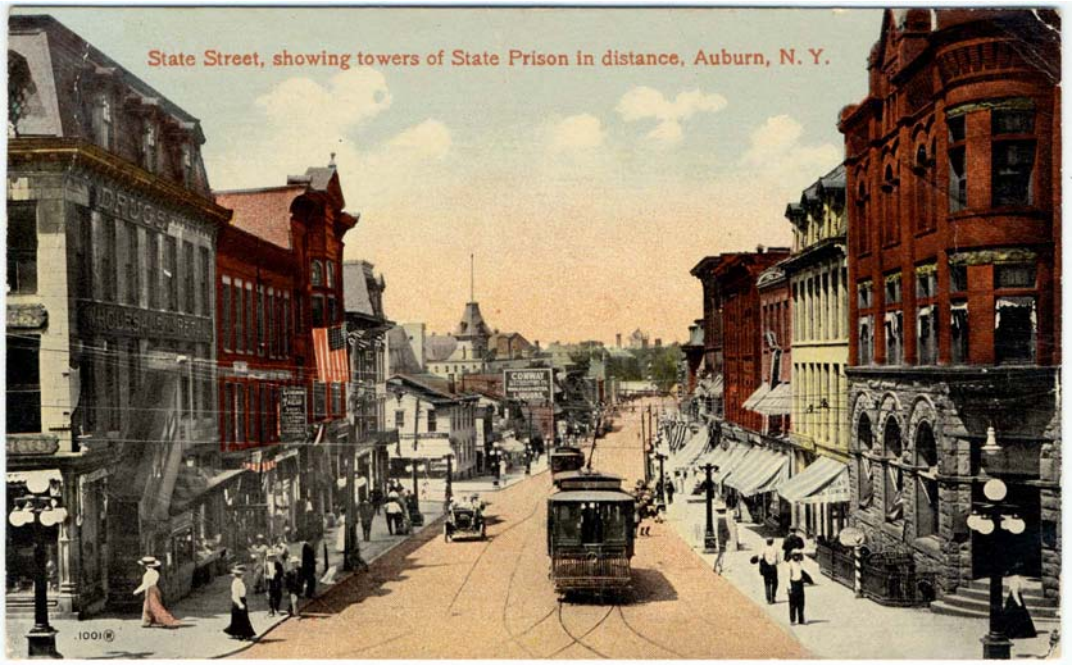
Beginning in 1856, the building that stood on the site of the current First Niagara Bank building was occupied by William Hosmer and the offices of the *Northern Independent*. Beginning in 1857, a succession of African American barbers had their shops in this building and its successor, a Richardsonian Romanesque structure. In 1857, following the movement of Auburn's business district west along Genesee Street, Morgan "Luke" Freeman moved his barbershop from the corner of Cumpston Lane and South Street to this site. Morgan Freeman died in 1863, and his obituary noted that he had kept an Underground Railroad station for 29 years. Probably this barbershop was a key anchor for that station.

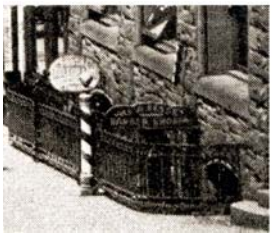
Morgan Freeman suffered a stroke in 1859, and Burget Freeman took over his shop. It was here, in B. C. Freeman's "shaving saloon," that African American men in Auburn organized the Auburn Suffrage Club in October 1860. As reported by the local newspaper:

The colored people of Auburn held a meeting last evening to consider the propriety of forming a club to attend to the suffrage question at the polls. They desired to enjoy the elctive franchise; and they know that they are dependent on white men to give it to them—They will attend at the several polls in the city on election day, and distribute tickets "for the amendment of the constitutions."[4] John Stuard (Stewart), Harriet Tubman's brother, was elected treasurer of the new organization, and B.C. Freeman was secretary.

African American barbers continued to maintain their businesses at this site into the twentieth century, including John Hornbeck, John Waire, and George Swarts. For many years, Anthony Shimer, the jeweler with whom Harriet Tubman and her brother John Stewart were involved in a gold scheme in 1873, had his store in this building.

[4] The *Auburn Daily Advertiser* noted that the "old and popular barber of Auburn" suffered a severe attack of paralysis yesterday." His "entire right side was rendered useless." July 26, 1859. Unknown newspaper, October 30, 1860. Thanks to Anthony Gero for finding this.





State and Genesee Streets, Looking East
Barber pole at corner of bank on SE corner.
1890-1910

The building on the right replaced an earlier building on this site. Note the barber pole on State Street. Photo found by Bill Hecht.

117 West Genesee Street
King Ferry Antique Shop (Walley Drugstore)
Auburn, New York

Genesee and State Street, northwest corner, Looking NW
Limestone Building, King Ferry Antiques (Walley Drugstore)

Visible at the left in the historic photo above (with a Mansard roof), this building is still standing on the northwest corner of State and Genesee Streets. Dating from the mid-nineteenth century, it is currently the King Ferry Antique Shop. While it has no direct documented connection with the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, or African American life, it looks much as it once did when Morgan Freeman had his barbershop and William Hosmer had his publishing business in the building across State Street.

1875 Cayuga County Atlas

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Auburn City Directories
Occupants of 111, 113, 115 and 117 Genesee St
Research by Tanya Warren

1857: 111 W. Genesee Street Businesses:
-KEYES & SMITH, CLOTHING STORE
-MORRIS, M.E., DAGUERREAN AND AMBROTYPIST
-MYERS, MICHAEL S., LAWYER
-PEASE, ANN M., AMBROTYPIST
-UPHAM, LEWIS S., CLERK
-GREENFIELD, EDWIN, CUTTER

113 W. Genesee Street Businesses:
-HOSMER, JOHN G., CLERK
-HOSMER, REV. WILLIAM, EDITOR OF NORTHERN INDEPENDENT
-SHIMER, ANTHONY, WATCHES, JEWELRY AND MUSIC
-BETTYS, JOHN R., JEWELERY
-NORTHERN INDEPENDENT, OFFICE

115 W. Genesee Street Businesses:
-ONGLEY, EDWARD S., CLERK
-SCHENCK, SAMUEL L., BARBER (lives at Lumber Court)
-TELEGRAPH OFFICE
-WARRINER, ABNER E., TELEGRAPH OPERATOR
-COBB, E.B., BOOT AND SHOE STORE

117 W. Genesee Street Businesses (still standing):
-WALLEY, AMOS T., DRUGGIST/APOTHECARY, COR. W GENESEE/STATE
-WEEKLY AMERICAN, OFFICE 117 W GENESEE, COR. STATE

1863-1864:
-SWARTZ, GEORGE-BARBER, COR GENESEE & STATE
-FREEMAN, BERGET-BARBER, COR GENESEE & STATE
-BECKER, D. E.-PRINTERS, COR GENESEE & STATE
-MCCREERY, DAVID-TOBACCONIST, COR STATE & GENESEE
-MYERS & ADAMS, LAWYERS, 109 GENESEE
-BRIGGS, CHARLES-CROCKERY, CHINA & GLASSWARE, 111 GENESEE
-WORDEN & PINGREE-LAWYERS, 111 GENESEE
-SHIMER, A.-WATCHES & JEWELRY, 113 GENESEE
-NORTHERN INDEPENDENT-NEWSPAPER, 115 GENESEE
-WALLEY, A. T. & CO.-DRUGGIST, **117 GENESEE**

1867-1868:
Briggs, Charles-Crockery, etc., 111 Genesee
Walley, Amos-Druggist, cor Genesee & State
Hornbeck, John-Barber, 113 Genesee

1900:
-Cayuga County Savings Bank-113-115 Genesee/-Walley, Martin-druggist, **117 Genesee**

William and Frances Seward House
National Historic Landmark
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of William and Frances Seward. As Lincoln's Secretary of State, Seward was Auburn's most significant political figure. Both William and Frances harbored freedom seekers in this house.

November 2004
Looking NE, from rear

Description: The Seward home was built in 1816-17 in the Federal style, one of the first brick houses in Auburn, by Elijah Miller, Frances Seward's father. One of the workmen was sixteen-year-old Brigham Young, later a leader of the Mormon Church. In the 1840s, the Sewards enlarged the house, adding a dining room, Italianate tower, and north wing. In 1866-68, they enlarged it again, using designs of architect Edward Tucerkman Potter, adding a south tower, drawing room, and several bedrooms.[1]

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[11] Brochure from Seward House. Many thanks to Peter Wisbey and the entire staff of the Seward House for their incredibly helpful support of this project.

Significance: William Henry (1801-1872) and Frances (1805-1865) Seward devoted themselves to reform and social justice causes, especially the abolition of slavery. Their home has a clear history as a hub of activism in Auburn.

William Seward was born in Florida, New York. His parents, like many homeowners in the Hudson River Valley, owned several slaves. Young William, the fourth of six children, found relief from the severity of his parents, in the company of the family slaves. He noted that they were "vivacious and loquacious, as well as affectionate, toward me. What wonder that I found their apartment more attractive than the parlour, and their conversation a relief from the severe decorum which prevailed there?"[2] Soon however, the young boy discerned the inequity between the races living within his own home. "I early came to the conclusion," he wrote, "that something was wrong. . . and [that] determined me, at that early age, to be an abolitionist."[3]

Shortly after his graduation from Union College, Seward moved to Auburn and joined Judge Elijah Miller's law practice. In 1824, he married the judge's youngest daughter, Frances, and they moved into Judge Miller's 1816 home (now Seward House) on South Street. Frances, although a practicing Episcopalian, had received a Quaker education in Cayuga County and at the Troy Female Seminary. Abolition of slavery was the core principle that drew the couple together.

Six years after his marriage, William Seward began a career in politics. He served as a state senator (1830-1834) and ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1834. In 1838, as a member of the new Whig Party, Seward won election as governor. During his two gubernatorial terms (1839-1843) he established himself nationally as an outspoken abolitionist. Governor Seward carried on a public (and prickly) correspondence with the Governor of Virginia following his refusal to allow the extradition of three sailors who had assisted in a fugitive slave's escape attempt. In 1840, he oversaw the passage of legislation empowering state agents to return persons kidnapped into slavery.[4]

In 1846, once again a private citizen, Seward became the defense counsel for William Freeman, a mentally-ill Auburn resident of African American and Native American descent, who murdered a white farmer and his family. Seward's argument that Freeman's mental state should exculpate his actions is one of the first uses of the "insanity defense" in the United States. Although his argument failed to sway the jury, Seward's defense was widely reprinted and circulated by capital punishment reform groups.[5i]

William Seward returned to the political arena in 1849 as a United States senator. In January 1850, Seward, now a recognized leader of the abolitionist faction of the Whig Party, was thrust into the debate over California's admission into the Union as a free or slave state. In a speech to

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[2] Frederick W. Seward, ed., William H. Seward: An Autobiography from 1801 to 1834, New York: Derby and Miller, 1891, p. 27.
[3] Ibid., p. 28.
[4] This legislation, "An act more effectually to protect the free citizens of this state from being kidnapped, or reduced to Slavery," passed on May 14, 1840, was used to rescue Solomon Northrup from slavery in 1853. See Soloman Northrup, Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Soloman Northrup, a Citizen of New York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and rescued in 1853, electronic edition, http://docsouth.unc.edu/northrup/northrup.html.
[5] For an in-depth examination of the Freeman trial, see Andrew Arpey, The William Freeman Trial: Insanity, Politics, and Race, Syracuse University Press, 2003.

the Senate, Seward reminded his listeners that there was a "higher law" than the Constitution and warned of the effects of expanding slavery into the new territories of the west. The mood of the country was too strong to tackle the issue of slavery. In the Compromise of 1850, legislation granted statehood for a free California but included the bitter pill of the Fugitive Slave Law.

Although supportive of her husband's political career, Frances Seward did not choose to move with him to Washington. Ongoing health problems, the care of her aging father and a general dislike for the responsibilities of being a politician's wife, kept Frances in Auburn. Senator Seward's travel, speechmaking and legal activity suggest that it was Frances who played a more active role in local Underground Railroad activities. In the excitement following the "Jerry Rescue" in Syracuse on October 1, 1851, Frances wrote, "Last evening Mr. May the Unitarian clergyman from Syracuse called with Mr. Austin to enquire the fortune of the letter from Mr. Wheaton and was very desirous that I should forward it immediately. He expects with Mr. Wheaton to be arrested today. . . . There is considerable excitement here. 2 fugitives have gone to Canada – one of them was our acquaintance John."[6]

According to secondary sources, there are two areas of the Seward House that are associated with Underground Railroad use. An oral history from the Sewards' granddaughter, Frances Messenger, recalls that Mrs. Seward referred to the area over the woodshed as her "dormitory."[7] Also, an 1891 newspaper article reports "it is said that the old kitchen was one of the most popular stations of the Underground Railroad, and that many a poor slave who fled by this route to Canada carried to his grave the remembrance of its warmth and cheer."[8] On November 18, 1855, writing from Auburn, William Seward noted "the 'underground railroad' works wonderfully. Two passengers came here last night. Watch [the family dog] attacked one of them."[9]

That same fall, John Austin, Unitarian minister who lived on William Street, just behind the Seward house, wrote in his diary, that:

> Yesterday at the suggestion of Gov. Seward collected some money of the benevolent to help forward a poor Fugitive Slave from the South to Canada. After I collected the money (some six dollars) went over to the Governors and gave it to the poor fugitive. He was inexpressibly thankful. He took the 51/2 p.m. train for Rochester and Niagara Falls. Before I write these words he has undoubtedly crossed the Suspension Bridge, and escaped from "the land of Freedom!!! and found refuge and Liberty under the protection of a monarchical government!"[10]

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[6] Letter, Frances Seward to William Henry Seward, October 16, 1851. Seward Papers, University of Rochester, Rush Rhees Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections (hereafter "Seward Papers.")

[7] Memo from Betty Lewis, "Underground Railroad" file, Seward House collection, dated July 13, 1998.

[8] "The Home of Seward," *Auburn Daily Herald*, February 20, 1891, Scrapbook, Seward House collection.

[9] Cited in Frederick W. Seward, Seward at Washington as Senator and Secretary of State . . . 1846-1861, New York: Derby and Miller, 1891, p. 258.

[10] John Austen, Diary, September 13, 1855. Found by Audrey and Ken Mochel.

Mrs. Seward was also an advocate for education and advancement of African Americans. In 1849, Miss Elizabeth Parsons, headmistress of the Samuel S. Seward Institute, a school founded in Florida, NY, responded to a letter from Frances regarding "whether I can in any way take a pretty little colored girl into my school & give her the benefits of instruction &c."[11] In another instance, Mrs. Seward enrolled an African American boy named John in the primary school associated with the McGrawville College in Cortland County. While it is unclear whether these children were fugitives or not, they were living within the Seward household for periods of time.[12] In July of 1852, Mrs. Seward, after a visit to the Auburn Orphan Asylum, reported to her husband "I was greatly interested in the Orphans. . . . One of them has died & is to be buried this morning. As he was a poor colored child placed there by my advice, I am going round and shall defray the funeral expenses."[13]

Having inherited money from both sides of their family, the Sewards used their personal wealth to support the abolition movement. They were financial backers of Frederick Douglass' *North Star* newspaper in Rochester. On July 1, 1852, Frances wrote to her husband, "A man by the name of William Johnson will apply to you for assistance to purchase the freedom of his daughter. You will see that I have given him something by his book. I told him I thought you would give him more. He is very desirous that I should employ his daughter when he gets her which I have agreed to do conditionally if you approve."[14] Frances Seward also helped raise Margaret Stewart, Harriet Tubman's niece, after Tubman brought her from Maryland in 1861. [15]

In addition to Frances' work, there is an indication that William Seward, while a senator in Washington, DC, worked with African American hotelkeeper, James Wormley, to transport fugitives to freedom. A c. 1870 manuscript by Francis B. Carpenter in the Seward Papers notes: "Among the visitors in the evening was Mr. Wormley, the well known colored landlord of Washington. Greeting him cordially and introducing him to his other guests, Mr. Seward said: 'Wormley and I went into the emancipation business a year and a half before Mr. Lincoln did, down on the James River. How was it Wormley – how many slaves did we take off on our steamer?' 'Eighteen,' replied Mr. Wormley."[16]

Finally, the Seward's support and patronage of Harriet Tubman is well known and documented.[17] In 1859, William Henry and Frances conveyed seven acres of land to Tubman as a home. The

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[11] Letter, Elizabeth Parson to Frances Seward, November 3, 1849. Seward Papers.
[12] Letter, Frances Seward to William Henry Seward, May 23, 1852: "Johnny is with us and seems in high favour with the boys of the town. I do not think our Fanny [the Seward's 7-year old daughter] has any thoughts at all on the subject of color – certainly none detrimental to John." Seward Papers. Milton Sernett documents the rise and fall of the abolitionist New York Central College in McGrawville in North Star Country: Upstate New York and the Crusade for African American Freedom, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002, p.68-70.
[13] Letter, Frances Seward to William Henry Seward, July 23, 1852. Seward Papers.
[14] Letter, Frances Seward to William Henry Seward, July 1, 1852. Seward Papers.
[15] Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*: *Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2004), 198.
[16]Francis B. Carpenter, "A Day with Governor Seward at Auburn," handwritten mss., no date [prob. July 1870], Seward Papers.
[17] See Sarah Bradford, Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman, Auburn: W.J. Moses, 1869, p. 81 and Harriet Tubman: Moses of Her People, New York: George R. Lockwood, 1886. More recent

property, the nucleus of the present day Harriet Tubman Home museum, was not paid off until after William Seward's death in 1872, emphasizing what Sarah Bradford recorded as the Sewards' "very favorable terms" to Tubman. The Seward account books do record occasional payments on the debt and additional loans to Tubman over the next several decades.

The striking roles played by both William and Frances Seward in abolition activism have been largely overshadowed by William Seward's career as Civil War Secretary of State and his purchase of the Alaska Territory in 1867.

Adapted from nomination for the Seward House written by Peter Wisbey as part for the New York State Underground Railroad Heritage Trail.

Frances Seward, 1844
Courtesy of the Seward House, Auburn, New York

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scholarship records the Seward's land transfer to Tubman. See Kate Clifford Larson, Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero, Ballantine, 2003, p. 163-166, and Catherine Clinton, Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom, Little, Brown & Co., 2004.

Senator William Henry Seward, 1855
Courtesy of Seward House, Auburn, New York

Seward House, 1853
Courtesy of the Seward House, Auburn, New York

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Seward House Woodshed before 1866
Courtesy of Seward House, Auburn, New York

Seward Kitchen, where many freedom seekers reputedly stayed.

Swarts Home
97 Van Anden
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of African American barber and his family

February 2005
Looking North

George Swarts moved to Auburn before 1850. The 1850 census listed him living with the Sebeo Hornbeck family on Jefferson Street. By 1857, he was living here on Van Anden Street.

Underwood Home, site of
Current site of Cayuga County Building
Genesee Street
Auburn, New

Significance: Home of Underground Railroad Supporter

The Underwoods were one of those families allied with William Henry Seward, as a law associate, professional, or Whig-Republican politician who became abolitionists and Underground Railroad supporters. Their offices and homes centered on Genesee Street. They included Seward (whose home was on South Street, just around the corner), George Underwood, Theordore Pomeroy, David Wright (192 Genesee Street), Abijah Fitch (real estate developer, 197 Genesee Street and later 216 Genesee Street), and William Hosmer, 29 Washington Street).

George Underwood was one of Seward's law associates. After 1857, the Underwood family hosted Emily and William Kiah-Williams, who escaped slavery in Maryland from Harriet Tubman's immediate neighborhood with the famous Dover Eight.[18]

[18] For details of this escape, see Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, and American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2004), 138-41.

Wall Street Methodist Church/African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, National Register
Wall Street, Auburn, New York
Built as Wall Street Methodist Church, 1886

Significance: Biracial church in the nineteenth century.

February 2005
Looking NW

The Wall Street Methodist Church was a biracial abolitionist church in the nineteenth century. Rev. William Hosmer, editor of the *Northern Independent*, filled the pulpit when needed. William Henry Stewart, Jr., Tubman's great-nephew, was married to Emma Moseby here about 1879. The current building was constructed in 1886. It is on the National Register. Further research in church records would be very useful to identify the abolitionist-African American connections of the early congregation.

Westminster Church
William Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Abolitionist Church

Looking west
September 2005

Description: Built of gray limestone with Medina sandstone trim, this church is an early example of Romanesque revival. The cornerstone was laid on August 12, 1869, and the church was dedicated in October 1870. The building cost about $40,000, and the organ cost $5000.

Significance: Organized as the Central Presbyterian Society in 1861, this church grew out of the Second Presbyterian Church of Auburn, when Rev. Henry Fowler, was the minister. Rev. Fowler, noted historian Elliott Storke, "an earnest and forcible advocate of the freedom of the slaves," who "in his pulpit ministrations gave frequent and full expression to his convictions."

> It was a time of intense excitement, when armed rebellion confronted the nation and when party lines were tightly drawn, producing wide division in churches as well as in secular organizations. With the anti-slavery views of the pastor the great majority of the

congregation participated, resulting in the secession of the colony that formed the Central Presbyterian Society.

Members of Central Presbyterian Church were closely associated with Harriet Tubman. Tubman was married in an earlier building of this church, while it was still on Genesee Street. On March 18, 1869, she married Nelson David, a Civil War veteran and a boarder in her home for three years, in a ceremony officiated by Rev. Fowler and attended by "friends. . . and a large number of the first families in the city." One of the founders of Central Presbyterian was Samuel M. Hopkins, Jr., brother of Sarah H. Bradford, who became Harriet Tubman's first biographer. David M. Osborne, who married Eliza Wright, daughter of abolitionists Martha and David Wright, was one of the first trustees. Trustees in the 1870s included abolitionists Theodore Pomeroy, who often hired Tubman, and William Henry Seward. [19]

[19] Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County*, 210-11; Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*: *Harriet Tubman, An American Hero* (New York: Ballantien Books, 2004), 252.

Site of Martha and David Wright house. Listed on Network to Freedom
192 Genesee Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Safe house and home of major Underground Railroad supporter

Marker erected on site of Martha and David Wright Home by
City of Auburn, October 2004
Sherry Penney and James Livingston, authors of *A Very Dangerous Woman*. James Livingston, descendant of Martha and David Wright
Timothy Lattimore, Mayor of Auburn
Erik Osborne, descendent of Martha and David Wright

Marker reads:
"Martha Coffin Wright with sister Lucretia Mott,
an organizer of the 1848 Women's Rights convention.
Underground Railroad stop, Wright home razed in 1880.
Noble mansion razed in 1975.
City of Auburn, NY, 2004

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Martha and David Wright House, before 1880
Courtesy, Cayuga Museum, Auburn, New York

The site of the home of Martha Coffin Pelham Wright and David Wright represents the small network of European American abolitionists and Underground Railroad supporters in Auburn who assisted not only Harriet Tubman and her family but also many other freedom seekers. Linked by ties of family, friendship, and business, this network included women as well as men. Many of these families (including the Wrights, Pomeroys, Underwoods, and Fitches) lived along Genesee Street. Others (including the Hosmers, Austins, Sewards, and L.D. Mansfield) lived nearby. It was this group who worked closely with local African Americans (such as Morgan "Luke" Freeman, Nicholas Bogart, Rev. Jermain Loguen from Syracuse, and Harriet Tubman) and their European American allies across central New York (such as James and Lydia Fuller in Skaneateles and Thomas and Mary Ann M'Clintock in Waterloo) to support the Underground Railroad.

Martha Coffin Wright (December 25, 1806-January 4, 1875) was born of Quaker parents, Thomas and Anna Coffin, in Boston, Massachusetts. The family moved to Philadelphia in 1809. After Thomas's death in the early 18-teens, Anna Coffin supported her eight children by keeping a boarding house and store. Her youngest daughter, Martha, always had a sense of humor and a love of worldly pleasures such as the theater. When she was eighteen years old, she married an army officer, Peter Pelham, many years her senior, and moved to Pensacola, Florida, where she had a daughter, Marianna, before Peter's early death. Although disowned for marrying out of Quaker meeting, she retained a sense of Quaker values all her life. [20]

In 1827, Martha Pelham moved with her mother and cousin to Aurora, New York, where they taught at Briercliff School, previously operated by British-born Quaker Susannah Mariott. There she met and married a young lawyer, David Wright. They moved to Auburn in 1839. David Wright worked as a law associate with William Henry Seward and Theodore Pomeroy. In 1846, Wright was one of the defending attorneys in the murder trial of William Freeman.

In Auburn, Martha Wright's closest friends were Frances Seward (William Henry Seward's wife) and Frances Seward's sister, Lazette Worden. Both sisters had attended the Quaker school in Aurora in the 18-teens, and they shared Martha Wright's Quaker values. Among these were the abolition of slavery, the abolition of capital punishment, and women's rights.

All her life, Martha Wright remained extremely close to her sister, Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister who lived in Philadelphia and who often visited her in Auburn for several weeks at a time. It was on one such visit in early July 1848 that the two attended a tea party at Jane Hunt's house in Waterloo, New York, where they helped write the call to the Seneca Falls woman's rights convention. Martha Wright was one of the signers of the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments. In the 1850s and 1860s, Martha Wright became a consistent officer at state and national woman's rights conventions.

The Wrights also used their home as a stop on the Underground Railroad. Her detailed description of one visit by a freedom seeker in early January 1843, challenges contemporary ideas of secret hiding places and also reveals the difference between Martha's more radical outlook and David's conservative views. On evening, an African American man presented a note to Martha Wright, recommending him to James C. Fuller (a Skaneateles Quaker) and others of the "spiritually minded." The Wrights gave him food, a place to sleep on the settee in the kitchen, and fifty cents for a ride to Skaneateles. In return, he filled the furnace with wood. Although daughter Eliza was "as afraid as could be of him," Tallman, their son, was curious. When he went down to the kitchen early the next morning, "to have some interesting conversation with him about the land of chains," he was "much disappointed" to find the fugitive already gone. Unfortunately, so was Tallman's hat.

As Martha described this incident in detail, she left him "to eat a comfortable supper," and then he went out for awhile.

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[20] Details of Wright's life come from Paul Messbarger, "Martha Wright," *Notable American Women*, ed. Edward T. James, Janet Wilson James, and Paul S. Boyer (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1971), 684-85, and Sherry H. Penney and James D. Livingston, *A Very Dangerous Woman: Martha Wright and Women's Rights* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004).

> Our slave returned about 9 lasst evening & sat alone in the kitchen & read till David came. He went down & talked with him—he said he was from Baltimore & had paid his master 300 dollars –he asked 800—being sold to go south he ran away to Pittsburgh. . . & was on his way to Massachusetts where his people lived. As I didn't fancy having him go up stairs he had D's old cloak, & slept by the kitchen stove on *me settee*—how little I imagined to what use it was to be applied. After getting him to put a stick in the furnace D. left him & fastened the door at the head of the kitchen stairs—he gave him 50 cents as he wanted to get a ride part way. Early this morning David saw him & got some bread & butter for him as he wished to be off before it was very light. So after putting in more wood & tying up a couple of shirts & bosoms that we gave him, he cleared. Tallman came down early to have some interesting conversation with him about the land of chains & was much disappointed to find that he had left—he had to go to the Post Office then, but could not find his tippet, which he knew he hung in the kitchen with his cap, and as David noticed it in the evening the inference was that early morning walks made warmer clothing desirable & the slave had taken Gerritt Smith's advise & *the tippet*—But we didn't say so to Tallman, David said it would give such a shock to his philanthropy & as to Eliza, she was as afraid as could be of him before, & hardly dared to go to bed & if she should know it she would hardly dare stay in the house if another came—David didn't relish it much & said if his master came for him he would not defend him—I suppose he would willingly have given him the tippet if he had asked. I told him we must consider that he had no one to teacher him better.[21]

In 1857, in a letter to her daughter, Ellen, Martha described another instance of aid to freedom seekers. Rev. Mr. Eastup was minister to the AME Zion Church in Auburn and a freedom seeker himself.

> Rev. Mr. Eastup called here a few weeks ago, to say that there were six fugitives at his house. Pa gave him what money he cd. Spare, and yesterday I sent to see whether they had got to Canada yet. Had quite a pleasant call. Mrs. E. was anxious to form a sort of fugitive aid or Anti-Slavery society among the colored people, to make up & repair garments for those that theyhave to clothe. I contributed *a mite* and she hopes to accomplish something this wk. I had quite a pile of coats & things that had been waiting to be judiciously disposed of, so I got Mr. E. to come for them, & while he was here got him to give me a history of his own escape, wh. Was very interesting—his wife is a genuine Native American, being of Indian extraction—was never in the South. He left a wife & 10 children there—his wife died three years after he left, & two of his children were sold to go to Georgia. He is quite a good looking man.[22]

Rev. Eastup had been minister at the AME Zion Church in Ithaca before coming to Auburn. Frederick Douglass, who met him there, described him as "a gentleman of decided talent, and one who does not 'glory because he has not rubbed his head against the college wall.'"[23] The 1857

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[21]Martha Wright to Lucretia Mott, January 11, 1843, quoted in Sherry H. Penney and James D. Livingston, *A Very Dangerous Woman: Martha Wright and Women's Rights* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 56; Judith Wellman, *The Road to Seneca Falls: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the First Woman's Rights Convention* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 118.

[22] Martha Wright to Ellen Wright Garrison, November 28, 1857, quoted in Sherry H. Penney and James D. Livingston, *A Very Dangerous Woman*, 58.

[23]Frederick Douglass, "Notes by the Way," *Frederick Douglass Paper*, June 20, 1854.

Auburn city directory reported that Rev. Eastup was then living at 5 Washington Street, the site of the AME Zion Church. The census of 1860 listed him as Richard Eastup, a Methodist minister, 59 years old, born in Virginia, living with his wife, Mariah Eastup, 55 years old, born in New York (also listed as Black). Also living with them was John Wesley, age 40, born in Maryland.

In 1860, Martha Wright was again involved in a documented Underground Railroad event, this time involving Harriet Tubman. It is possible that Martha Wright first became acquainted with Harriet Tubman through Wright's sister, Lucretia Mott, who may have known Tubman in Philadelphia.[24]

In Harriet Tubman's last trip to Dorchester County, Maryland, she intended to bring out her sister Rachel and Rachel's two children, Ben and Angerine. When she arrived in Maryland, however, she found that Rachel had died, and she could not rescue the children. She waited for them in a wood, in a "blinding snow storm and a raging wind," but they did not come. Instead, Tubman brought out Stephen and Maria Ennals, their three small children--Harriet (age 6), Amanda (4), and the baby (three months old)—"a poor woman escaping from Baltimore in a delicate state," and a man named John.[25]

Stephen Ennals, wrote William Still,

> had been a slave of John Kaiger, who would not allow him to live with his wife (if therewas such a thing as a slave's owning a wife.) She lived eight miles distant, hired her time, maintained herself, and took care of her children (until they became of service to their owner), and paid ten dollars a year for her hire. She was owned by Algier Pearcy. Both mother and father desired to deliver their children from his grasp. They had too much intelligence to bear the heavy burdens thus imposed without feeling the pressure a grievous one.[26]

As Kate Clifford Larson noted, the trip was exhausting. Slave catchers were everywhere on the first part of the journey. Harriet brought them first to the home of Thomas Garrett, a Quaker in Wilmington, Delaware, who often helped her. Garrett felt that she had "a special angel to guard her on her journey of mercy."

As Garrett wrote to William Still, who kept the main safe house in Philadelphia for the Vigilance Committee there:

> WILMINGTON, 12th mo., 1st, 1860.
>
> RESPECTED FRIEND:-WILLIAM STILL:-I write to let thee know that Harriet Tub- man is again in these parts. She arrived last evening from one of her trips of mercy to God's

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[24] Jean Humez, *Harriet Tubman: The Life and the Life Stories* (Madison, Wisconson: University of Wisconsin, 2003), 26.
[25] Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, An American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2004), 185; William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphis, 1872), 531.
[26] William Still, *The Underground Railroad*, 531.

> poor, bringing two men with her as far as New Castle. I agreed to pay a man last evening, to pilot them on their way to Chester county; the wife of one of the men, with two or three children, was left some thirty miles below, and I gave Harriet ten dollars, to hire a man with carriage, to take them to Chester county. She said a man had offered for that sum, to bring them on. I shall be very uneasy about them, till I hear they are safe. There is now much more risk on the road, till they arrive here, than there has been for several months past, as we find that some poor, worthless wretches are constantly on the look out on two roads, that they cannot well avoid more especially with carriage, yet, as it is Harriet who seems to have had a special angel to guard her on her journey of mercy, I have hope. Thy Friend, THOMAS GARRETT.

When they reached Philadelphia, Still reported that Harriet brought them "out of the prison-house of bondage," "through great tribulation."[27]

Their trials were not over, however. It took them almost four weeks to reach Auburn from Thomas Garrett's house. Harriet suffered frostbite, and they were all physically exhausted. Arriving at one home where she had previously received aid, Harriet Tubman rapped to give her usual signal, only to find that a white man now occupied the building. She and her party hurried to a small island in the middle of a swamp, wading through the water with the baby in a basket , drugged with paregoric to keep it quiet, and hiding in the damp grass. Kate Clifford Larson, following Sarah Bradford's account, as told to her by Tubman herself, told what happened nest:

> Eventually a Quaker man appeared, "slowly walking along the solid pathway on the edge of the swamp." Tubman and the others, thinking he was "talking to himself," finally realized he was giving them instructions to get to his nearby barn, where a horse and wagon filled with provisions awaited them. A seemingly miraculous answer to Tubman's prayer, Bradford later wrote, "never seemed to strike her as at all strange or mysterious; her prayer was the prayer of faith, and she expected an answer."[28]

Hiding in the woods by day, the refugees waited for Tubman to return with food. She would whistle or sing hymns to let them know she was there.

They finally reached Auburn in December. On December 30, 1860, Martha Wright wrote to her daughter Ellen that people "had been expending our sympathies, as well as congratulations, on seven newly arrived slaves that Harriet Tubman has just pioneered safely from the Southern part of Maryland." They had "walked all night, carrying the little ones, and spread the comfort on the frozen ground, in some dense thicket, where they all hid."[29]

Auburn was no longer a place of safety for many freedom seekers. In February, David Wright received a letter from Charles D.B. Mills in Syracuse, another abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter, warning him that "a slaveholder was there the day before enquiring as to the

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[27] Kate Clifford Larson, email October 19, 2004; William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 530-31, http://www.quinnipiac.edu/other/abl/etext/ugrr/ugrr.html.

[28] Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, tells the story of the Ennals family, 185-89; email October 19, 2004.

[29] Martha Wright to Ellen Wright Garrision, December 30, 1860, Garrison Family Papers, Smith College, quoted in Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 189, 187, and Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 45-46.

possibility of retaking slaves here [Auburn]. Mr. Mills sd. They cd. Learn nothing about Harriet & wished to know if she was here—He also sent a word of caution to fugitives here." David Wright "immediately called on several whom I knew could be trusted, on—men amongst others, who promised to warn Harriet and her *children*." Among those was William Hosmer, editor of the *Northern Independent*, who lived near the Wrights. Hosmer rode out to the Tubman home on the south side of town and read the letter to Tubman's parents who were staying at the farm. Tubman herself had already left for Canada.[30]

Charles Mills wrote to Martha Wright, telling her that Tubman was in Canada, and asking her to "see that the family did not suffer, a message came from her, thro' her favorite slave, desiring that we send them a bbl of flour [and] she [would] pay us on her return." [31]

After the war, Martha Wright and Harriet Tubman continued their freindship. Wright hired Tubman to help in her household, bought fresh vegetables and fruits from her garden, and in 1868 helped her organize a fund-raising bazaar. [32]

Martha Wright died suddenly in 1875, aged 68, but her daughters Eliza Wright Osborne and Ellen Wright Garrison continued the family's relationship with Harriet Tubman until Harriet's death in 1913. Eliza's husband, David Osborne, hired Harriet's brother John Stewart as a teamster and Harriet's nephew William Henry Stewart, Jr.[33]

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[30] Martha Coffin Wright to Lucretia Mott, n.d. [early February 1861]; David Wright to Martha Wright, February 9, 1861, Garrison Family Papers, Smith College. Quoted in Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 190.

[31] Martha Wright to Lucretia Mott, February 1861, Garrison Papers, Smith, quoted in Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 191.

[32] Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 79-80.

[33] Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 310-11, 323, 328.

William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 530-31.
http://www.quinnipiac.edu/other/abl/etext/ugrr/ugrr.html

ARRIVAL FROM DORCHESTER CO., 1860.

HARRIET TUBMAN'S LAST "TRIP" TO MARYLAND.

STEPHEN ENNETS and wife, MARIA, with three children, whose names were as follows: HARRIET, aged six years; AMANDA, four years, and a babe (in the arms of its mother), three months old.

The following letter from Thomas Garrett throws light upon this arrival: WILMINGTON, 12th mo., 1st, 1860.

RESPECTED FRIEND:-WILLIAM STILL:-I write to let thee know that Harriet Tub- man is again in these parts. She arrived last evening from one of her trips of mercy to God's poor, bringing two men with her as far as New Castle. I agreed to pay a man last evening, to pilot them on their way to Chester county; the wife of one of the men, with two or three children, was left some thirty miles below, and I gave Harriet ten dollars, to hire a man with carriage, to take them to Chester county. She said a man had offered for that sum, to bring them on. I shall be very uneasy about them, till I hear they are safe.

531

There is now much more risk on the road, till they arrive here, than there has been for several months past, as we find that some poor, worthless wretches are constantly on the look out on two roads, that they cannot well avoid more especially with carriage, yet, as it is Harriet who seems to have had a special angel to guard her on her journey of mercy, I have hope. Thy Friend, THOMAS GARRETT.

N. B. We hope all will be in Chester county to-morrow.

These slaves from Maryland, were the last that Harriet Tubman piloted out of the prison-house of bondage, and these "came through great tribulation."

STEPHEN, the husband, had been a slave of John Kaiger, who would not allow him to live with his wife (if there was such a thing as a slave's owning a wife.) She lived eight miles distant, hired her time, maintained herself, and took care of her children (until they became of service to their owner), and paid ten dollars a year for her hire. She was owned by Algier Pearcy. Both mother and father desired to deliver their children from his grasp. They had too much intelligence to bear the heavy burdens thus imposed without feeling the pressure a grievous one.

Harriet Tubman being well acquainted in their neighborhood, and knowing of their situation, and having confidence that they would prove true, as passengers on the Underground Rail Road, engaged to pilot them within reach of Wilmington, at least to Thomas Garrett's. Thus the father and mother, with their children and a young man named John, found aid and comfort on their way, with Harriet for their "Moses." A poor woman escaping from Baltimore in a delicate state,

cheered with clothing, food, and material aid, and sped on to Canada. Notes taken at that time were very brief; it was evidently deemed prudent in those days, not to keep as full reports as had been the wont of the secretary, prior to 1859. The capture of John Brown's papers and letters, with names and plans in full, admonished us that such papers and correspondence as had been preserved concerning the Underground Rail Road, might perchance be captured by a pro-slavery mob. For a year or more after the Harper's Ferry battle, as many will remember, the mob spirit of the times was very violent in all the principal northern cities, as well as southern ("to save the Union.") Even in Boston, Abolition meetings were fiercely assailed by the mob. During this period, the writer omitted some of the most important particulars in the escapes and narratives of fugitives. Books and papers were sent away for a long time, and during this time the records were kept simply on loose slips of paper.

Page # 140 Of This Report Is A Blank Page

Auburn: South Side

South Street

Tubman Home
Tubman House
William Henry Stewart, Sr., Home, site of
John Stewart Home, site of
Farmer House
Farmer Family Cemetery

Chapman (Cornell) Avenue

Thomas and Sarah Stoop House (Site?)
Swart House
Parker-Stewart House
Stewart-Lucas House, site of

Richardson (Union) Avenue

Elijah Stewart House
Elliott-Stewart House
Waire House
Gaskin House

Chapman (Cornell) Avenue-Garrow (Thornton) Street

Belt-Gaskin House
William Henry Stewart, Jr., House
Clarence (Dye) Stewart House
Griffen/White Houses
Mary and Charles Griffen House
John Purnell House

Fitch Street

Dale House
Cannon House, site of.
Cale House
Fort Hill Cemetery, entrance

Parker Street

John Ross Stewart and Eliza Stewart Home
AME Zion Church
AME Zion Parsonage
Copes-Johnson Home
Hornbeck-Ray Home
37 Parker St.
Dale-Waire House
Williams House
Carter House

Aspen Street

Gaskin House
Cooper House

Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged
National Historic Landmark
180-82 South Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: National Historic Landmark relating to Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Center of a community of Freedom Seekers in Auburn.

Gates to Harriet Tubman Site
180 South Street
Auburn, New York

0013
November 2005
Looking East

Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged is the official name of a thirty-two acre property owned by the AME Zion Church and listed as a National Historic Landmark. It includes Tubman's own brick house, a frame house called the Home for the Aged, and the foundations of a brick structure known as John Brown Hall.

The Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged is a National Historic Landmark and is listed on the Network to Freedom and the Where Women Made History National Register Travel Itinerary. It is owned by the AME Zion Church and is open to the public.

Harriet Tubman House, c. 1884
182 South Street
Auburn, New York

513
February 2, 2005
Looking NE

Harriet Tubman may have come to Auburn as early as 1857 or 1858, perhaps introduced through her connection with Lucretia Mott, a Philadelphia Quaker who spent weeks almost every year with her sister, Martha Wright, at Wright's home on Genesee Street in Auburn. In 1859, Harriet Tubman purchased a seven-acre farm on South Street on the town line between Auburn and Fleming, near the tollgate, from William Henry Seward, then U.S. Senator. As Beth Crawford has noted, the transaction was recorded in Seward's account book on May 25, 1859. Tubman bought the land for $1200, $25 down, with quarterly payments of $10 with interest. Seward had inherited the property from his father-in-law. Elijah Miller. Known as the Burton farm, it eventually included a house, barn, and several outbuildings, enough to sustain Tubman, her parents, and

other family members (although as Beth Crawford has noted, the 1859 Town of Fleming map does not show a house in this location).[1]

Seward's sale of this property to Tubman, as Kate Clifford Larson suggested, was a very unusual event. As a woman under New York State law, even a married woman, Tubman would legally have been allowed to own property. But as a black person and a fugitive from slavery, she had no legal rights at all. The Dred Scott decision of 1857 had declared that African Americans had "no rights" under the U.S. Constitution, and by the terms of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, Seward could have been prosecuted with a fine of $1000 and up to six months in jail term for assisting Harriet Tubman in any way.[2]

Instead, Seward sold her this land. In 1859, Tubman moved her parents, Ben and Rit Ross, and her brother, John Stewart, to Auburn from St. Catharine's, Ontario. With little money and no family to support them, they faced an uncertain future. Harriet Tubman went on a lecture tour to Boston, where she met with John Brown and others. She had become a figure of national importance among anti-slavery supporters, and they rallied to give Tubman what support they could. In the fall of that year, John wrote a letter to his sister, explaining their situation in Auburn [punctuation added]:

Sister Harriet Tubman

I am well and hope you are the same. Fathers health is very good for him. I received your welcome letter yesterday which relieved my uneasiness. We thought quite hard of you for not writing before. We would like to see you much, but if you can do better where you are you had perhaps better stay. Father wanted to go to Canada after his things on foot, but I would not consent as I thought it would be too much for him, and he consents to stay until he gets your advice on the subject as we three are along. I have a good deal of trouble with them as they are getting old and feeble. There was a man by the name of Young that promised father a stove and some things to go to keeping house, but has refused to do anything for them. Brother John has been with father ever since he left Troy and is doing the best he can. Catharine Stewart [Harriet's sister-in-law, then in St. Catharine's]has not come yet but wants to very bad. Send what things you want father to bring if you think best for him to go. I am going to send a letter to Wm. Henry [another of Harriet's brothers in St. Catharine's]. If you wish me to say any thing for You to him, let me know when you write. Seward has received nothing as Payment since the 4th of July that I know of—write me particularly what you want me to do as I want to hear from you veryt much. I would like to know what luck you have had since you have been gone. Have heard that you were doing well. Hope to find it so. Direct my letters to me Box 750 Auburn.

Truly Yours
John Stewart

[on reverse side]

[1] Beth Crawford, "Tubman Chronology, Primarily Relating to Deed Info for Auburn Sites, Prepared by Crawford & Stearns, In Progress, 9/03."
[2] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 163-65.

have you ever written to Canada since you have been gone, let me know (John Stewart to Harriet Tubman, November 1, 1859)[3]

Faced with a cold winter, John Stewart took his parents back to St. Catharine's. The family did not move back to Auburn until the spring of 1861. [4]

Harriet Tubman, c. 1860
Photo Courtesy of the Cayuga Museum, Auburn

By 1865, twelve people lived in Harriet Tubman's home, all freedom seekers except the youngest children: Harriet's parents, Ben and Rit Ross (aged 70 and 69) were living in the Tubman house, along with their daughter-in-law, Catharine Stewart (age 27), born in Maryland, who had escaped with Tubman and Tubman's three brothers on Christmas Eve, 1854; Catharine's two children, Elijah (age 9), born in Canada, and Hester (age 1-3/4), born in Cayuga County; Margaret Stewart, one of Ben and Rit's grandchildren (age 13), born in Maryland; Ann M. Elliott (age 22), born in Maryland, another grandchild; Thomas Elliott (age 25), a freedom seeker born in Maryland, one

[3] Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman: The Life and the Stories* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin, 2003), 282-83.
[4] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 192.

of the famous Dover Eight, and Ann's husband; Henry Mitchell (age 47), born in Maryland, a laborer and owner of land worth $300; Maria Mitchell (age 27), born in Maryland; Josephine Mitchell (age 8), probably Henry and Maria's daughter; and Thornton Newton (age 35), a freedom seeker born in Virginia. John Stewart, now married a second time to Milla, lived nearby. Notably, Harriet herself was not in Auburn. She was probably still working with the U.S. Army in the South.

By 1870, Harriet Tubman, now married to Charles [Nelson] Davis, both forty years old, lived in the house, along with Harriet's parents, Benjamin and Rittie Stewart, both eighty years old, and a twenty-two-year-old man named William Lane [?], born in Canada.

About 1883, fire destroyed the original house, and the current structure was erected about 1884, probably by Nelson Davis, Harriet Tubman's second husband.[5]

Tubman House, looking southeast
Photo by Jane Searing, Probably 1930s, Courtesy Hazard Library, Poplar Ridge

[5] Crawford, "Tubman Chronology."

Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, c. 1870
182 South Street
Auburn, New York

November 2004
Looking NW

Harriet Tubman purchased this building at auction in 1896 from the estate of her neighbor, John Farmer, who built it about 1870, probably as a tenant house for workers in his brickyard. This was part of twenty-five acres, which included John Brown Hall, a brick structure to the rear of the property. Although Tubman had very little money, she came through with the high bid of $1250. "There was all white folks but me there," she told her biographer, "and there I was like a blackberry in a pail of milk." As usual, she did not know how she would raise the money, but she merely said, "I'm going home to tell the Lord Jesus all about it," and through contributions, a new edition of her biography, and transfer of ownership of this land to the AME Zion Church in 1903, the Harriet Tubman Home formally opened in 1908. Tubman herself died in John Brown Hall on March 10, 1913, and was buried next to her brother, William Henry Stewart in Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn.

Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, looking northeast, probably 1930s
Photo by Jane Searing, Courtesy Hazard Library

John Brown Hall, with Tubman, c. 1913
Courtesy Harriet Tubman Home

Sources:

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William Henry Stewart, Sr., Site of Home
South Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Site of Home of William Henry Stewart, Sr., (freedom seeker and Harriet Tubman's brother)

William Henry Stewart, Sr., brother of Harriet Tubman.
From tintype, c. 1860s, Courtesy of Stewart Family Archives

Harriet Tubman had eight brothers and sisters. Two of her brothers, John Stewart and William Henry Stewart, went first to Canada in 1854-55 and later moved to Auburn, as did several nieces and nephews.

William Henry Stewart, Sr. was born in 1830 in Dorchester County, Maryland, as Henry Ross, younger brother of Araminta Ross (who would be known in her adult years as Harriet Tubman). He married Harriet Ann, born in 1832, also in Dorchester County, and they had ten children—two boys and eight girls—the two boys born in slavery and eight born in freedom in Canada.[6]

Henry Ross (William Henry Stewart) and his two brothers Ben Ross (James Stewart) and Robert Ross (John Stewart) were held in slavery by Eliza Brodess, whom Ben Ross called a "very devlish" mistress, and who had threatened to sell them more than once. In turn, they had earlier tried to run away, without success. In December 1854, their situation was desperate. Eliza Brodess advertised their sale at auction for the day after Christmas. Harriet Tubman, then in Pennsylvania, was "much troubled in spirit" about her brothers and felt that "some great evil was

[6]Kate Clifford Larson, "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books), after 295.

impending over their heads," as she later reported. She sent word to her brothers that they were to meet her at their father's house, in Caroline County forty miles north, on Christmas Eve.[7]

Rit Ross had expected them for Christmas dinner. She had killed a pig and prepared a large meal. Hiding in a corncrib all day that rainy Sunday, wrote Sarah Bradford, Tubman's nineteenth century biographer, "every few minutes, they would see the old woman come out, and, shading her eyes with her hand, take a long look down the road to see if her children were coming, and then they could almost hear her sigh as she turned into the house, disappointed." They dared not tell their mother where they were, for fear she could not keep the secret. Their father, however, visited two or three times that day, pushing food inside the door, hiding his face, so that he could truthfully say, when asked by slavecatchers, that he had not *seen* his children.[8]

Before they left that Sunday evening, they took "silent farewell" of their mother, wrote Bradford. "Through the little window of the cabin, they saw the old woman sitting by her fire with a pipe in her mouth, her head on her hand, rocking back and forth as she did when she was in trouble, and wondering what new evil had come to her children. With streaming eyes, they watched her for ten or fifteen minutes; but time was precious, and they must reach their next station before daybreak, and so they turned sadly away." Their father, however, "tied his handkerchief tight over his eyes, and two of his sons taking him by each arm, he accompanied them some miles upon their journey. They then bade him farewell, and left him standing blind-fold in the middle of the road. When he could no longer hear their footsteps, he took off the handkerchief, and turned back."[9]

Ben Ross's scheme, worked out with Harriet, worked. When slave catchers came to collect the brothers for sale on the day after Christmas, they were gone. Rit Ross could truthfully say, as Bradford reported it when told by Harriet Tubman, that "not one of 'em came this Christmas. She was looking for 'em most all day, and most broke her heart about it." "What does Old Ben say?" "Old Ben says that he hasn't seen one of his children this Christmas." "Well, if Old Ben says that, they haven't been round." And so the man-hunters went off disappointed."[10]

Harriet brought her brothers and their friends (nine in total) to Thomas Garrett's house in Wilmington, Delaware, where she had often stayed. Garrett gave her two dollars to buy new shoes and sent her to William Still, who kept the Vigilance Committee office in Philadelphia. As Kate Clifford Larson has noted, he had already helped six other freedom seekers in December 1854. William Still noted in his Journal C, reprinted in *The Underground Railroad* in 1872, that "Henry was only twenty-two, but had quite an insight into matters and things going on among slaves and slave-holders generally, in country life."[11] From Philadelphia, Harriet took her charges to Albany and then to St. Catharine's, Canada.

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[7] William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1872), 298; Henry Stewart, Interviewed 1863, Canada. John W. Blassingame, ed., *Slave Testimony* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 414-416. Kate Larson dated this interview as November 8, 1863, 368, note 114. Sarah Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 61-62. Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 110-119 contains a detailed description of this escape.
[8] Sarah Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 61-62.
[9] Sarah Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 61-62.
[10] Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 62-3.
[11] Still, *Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1872), 298.

Within a year or so after William Stewart, Sr.'s escape, Harriet returned to Maryland to bring out his wife (Harriet Ann), his son (William Henry Stewart, Jr.), and probably his younger brother, John Isaac, as well, who all joined William Stewart, Sr., in St. Catharine. Daughters Caroline and Mary were born in Canada, as were six other sisters.[12]

According to Kate Larson, William Henry Stewart, Sr., lived in St. Paul's Ward in St. Catharine's in 1856, at the same address listed for Harriet Tubman in 1858. At first, reported William Henry, "I made pretty good progress" in Canada, and then he and James Stewart rented a farm for $200 a year and "we got into some trouble there and left that." In 1861, William Henry Stewart, Sr., and Tubman served as part of the committee for a new Fugitive Aid Society, helping to distribute funds that Tubman raised to assist people newly arrived in Canada from slavery. That same year, he bought "six acres of land out in the country," in Grantham, Lincoln County, Ontario, outside of St. Catharines, where he lived until the late 1880s. Thomas Elliott, who moved to Auburn in the early 1860s, was one of their neighbors.[13]

Sometime before 1875, William Henry Stewart's oldest son, William Henry Stewart, Jr., moved to Auburn, New York, where, in 1879, he married Emma Moseby in the Wall Street Methodist Church.[14] Shortly afterwards, they built a house at 64 Garrow Street, on the corner of Chapman Avenue (then known as Cornell Street) and Garrow Street, locally referred to as "the last house on Cornell Street." This neighborhood had been developed in the 1860s, and many of the first homes had been sold by Abijah Fitch and his son-- European American abolitionists, landowners, and industrialists—to freedom seekers.

In the late 1880s, William Henry Stewart, Sr., moved from his home in Grantham, Ontario, to join his son, William Henry Stewart, Jr., who had moved to Auburn sometime before 1875. William Henry Stewart, Jr., had married Emma Moseby Stewart in 1879 and built a home at the northeast corner of Cornell (Chapman) Avenue and Garrow Street. About 1890, William Henry Stewart, Jr.'s younger brother, John Isaac, also moved from Canada to Auburn, perhaps to be near to John Isaac's daughter, Eva Katherine Helena Harriet, who had been raised by Harriet Tubman after the death in childbirth of John Isaac's Indian wife, Helena, in 1889. John Isaac died in 1893, leaving his four-year-old daughter an orphan. He was buried in Fort Hill cemetery, next to Harriet Tubman's second husband, Nelson Davis. When Harriet Tubman made her will on 18 November 1912, Katy Stewart, John Isaac's daughter and Harriet Tubman's grand-niece, was one of only three people to whom she left her estate.[15]

As shown on the 1904 atlas of Auburn, William Henry Stewart owned a home at 176 South Street, just north of Harriet Tubman's property. He also owned a vacant lot at what is now 15 Richardson (once 15 Union) Avenue, which is now occupied by a modern house and lot.

Stewart	**William H.**	**1887**	**15 Union**	**100**
Stewart	William H.	1888	15 Union-vacant lot	100

[12] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 118-19, 124.
[13] Henry Stewart interview, 1863, in John Blassingame, *Slave Testimony*, 416. Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 118, 155, 193, 349.
[14] Larson, 260.
[15] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 276.

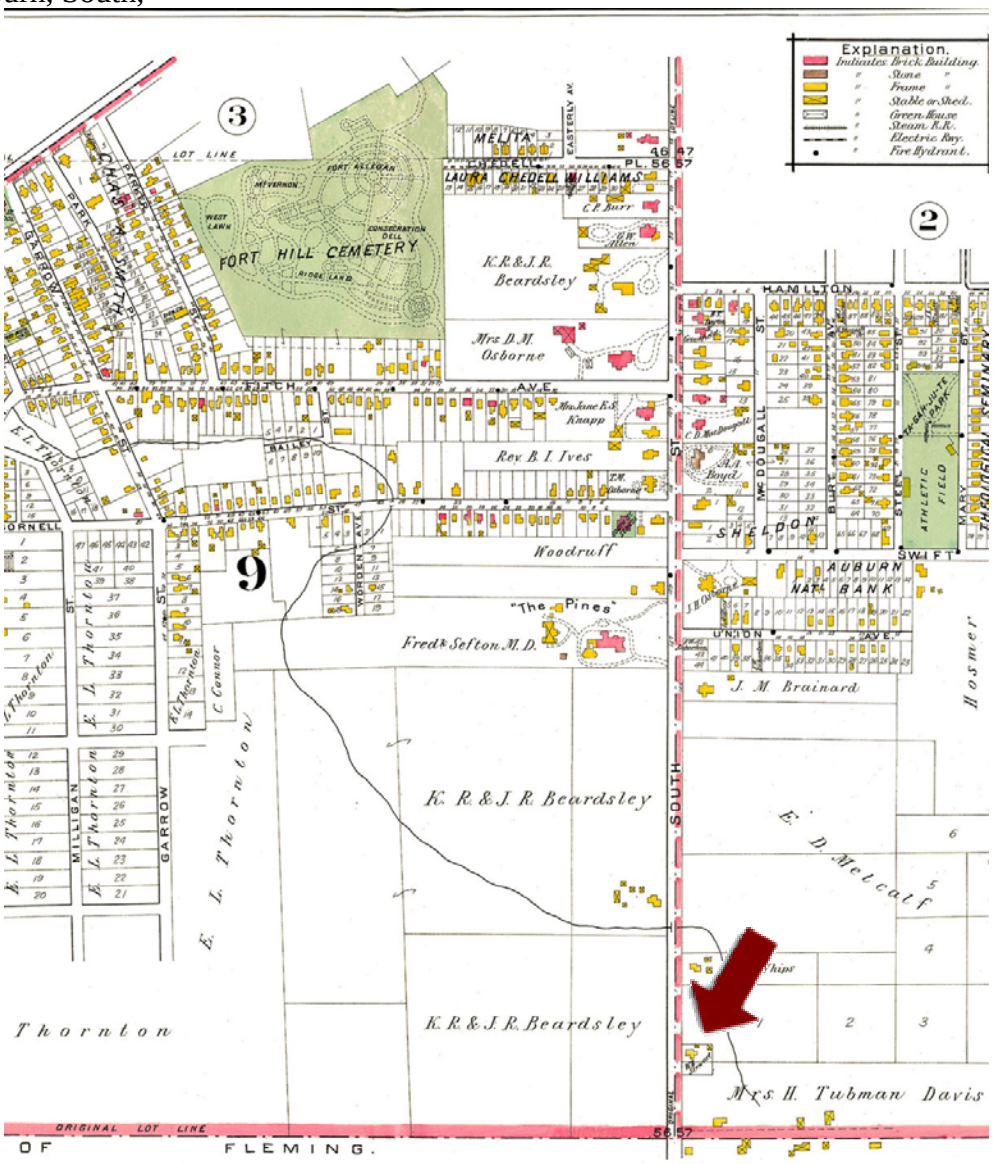
Stewart	William H.	1889	15 Union-vacant lot	100
Stewart	**William H.**	**1900**	**176 South & 15 Union**	**400/100**

Property research by Tanya Warren.

William Henry Stewart, Sr., in 1912 and was buried in the same plot where his sister, Harriet Tubman Davis, was buried in 1913.

Written with Judith Bryant and Kate Clifford Larson

Auburn, South,



1904 8 showing part of Wards 2-8&9 City of AUBURN N.Y. Scale 400 ft. to an inch

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Site of John and Milla Stewart's Home
First Methodist Church, 99 South Street
Northwest corner South Street and Fitch Avenue
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of Freedom Seeker, one of Harriet Tubman's Brothers

So powerful a figure was Harriet Tubman that she often overshadowed those around her. Both contemporaries and people in later generations often forgot that, when she settled in Auburn, she brought with her a whole group of family and friends. Many were people she had helped to escape from Maryland. Among them were two brothers, John Stewart and William Henry Stewart, and their wives and children.

John Stewart was born Robert Ross in Dorchester County, Maryland in 1816, the fourth child and first son of Benjamin Ross and Harriet Green Ross. The next child born to Ben and Rit Ross, in 1822, would be Araminta Ross, who became known as Harriet Tubman.[16]

In 1854, Robert Ross was 35 years old. He and wife Mary had two children, and Mary was pregnant with a third. Robert worked with two of his brothers, Benjamin Ross and Henry Ross, on the farm of Eliza Brodess, who was, said Ben, a "very devilish" mistress. Robert did the hard work of the farm, cutting wood, drawing water, raised under what he termed "very wicked" conditions. In December, 1854, all three brothers learned that their worst fear was to be realized: they were to be sold. Their owner, Eliza Brodess, advertised them for sale at auction the day after Christmas.

Harriet Tubman, "much troubled in spirit about her three brothers, feeling sure that some great evil was impending over their heads," as she later said, sent a coded letter to a free black man named Jacob Jackson, alerting her brothers that she was coming back to Maryland She arrived on Christmas Eve and sent word to her brothers to begin their trip at their father's cabin, forty miles away. Robert stayed behind long enough to help his wife Mary gave birth to a girl, their third child. As Harriet's biographer, Sarah Bradford, later told it:

> When they assembled, their brother John was missing; but when Harriet was ready, the word was "Forward!" and she "nebber waited for no one." Poor John was almost ready to start, when his wife was taken ill, and in an hour or two, another little inheritor of the blessings of slavery had come into the world. John must go off for a "Granny," and then he would not leave his wife in her present circumstances. But after the birth of the child, he began to think he must start; the North and Liberty, or the South and life-long Slavery--these were the alternatives, and this was his last chance. He tried again and again to steal out of the door, but a watchful eye was on him, and he was always arrested by the question, "Where you gwine John?" At length he told her he was going to try to see if he couldn't get hired out on Christmas to another man. His wife did not think that he was to be sold. He went out of the door, and stood by the corner of the house, near her bed, listening. At length, he heard her sobbing and crying, and not being able to endure it, he went back. "Oh! John," said his wife, "you's gwine to lebe me; but, wherebber you go, remember me an' de chillen." John went out and started at full speed for his father's cabin, forty miles

[16] Kate Clifford Larson, "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2004), after 295.

> away. At daybreak, he overtook the others in the "fodder house," near the cabin of their parents.[17]

Reaching the corncrib at daybreak, Robert joined Harriet; his brothers, Ben and Henry; Ben's fiancée Jane Kane; and two others, John Chase, and Peter Jackson.[18] They made their way North to William Still's Underground Railroad office in Philadelphia.

Many people leaving slavery took new names, and Harriet's brothers were no exception. William Still carefully recorded them. Benjamin Ross became James Stewart; Robert became John Stewart; and Henry became first Levin Stewart and then William Henry Stewart. Robert, noted Still was "of a chestnut color, and well made." He had hardly been treated as well "as a gentleman would treat a dumb brute. His feelings, therefore, on leaving his old master and home, were those of an individual who had been unjustly in prison for a dozen years and had at last regained his liberty."[19]

Robert left behind a wife, Mary Manokey Ross, and three small children, John Henry, Moses and Harriet. In 1856, their master, Dr. Anthony Thompson, perhaps in an effort to prevent more people from running away, manumitted them when they reached age thirty. Mary would officially be free in 1862. Thompson sent Mary and her children to his daughter's house in Talbot County, Maryland, perhaps to prevent her escape. There she fell in love with a free man of color, and, in 1857, Thompson's son-in-law purchased Mary and her three children. In 1864, he put John Henry and Moses Ross to work as indentured servants.[20]

From Philadelphia, Harriet took the whole group first to Albany, where Stephen Myers kept the main Underground Railroad station, and then to St. Catharines, Canada, where they joined others from their old Maryland neighborhood. With William Henry, John settled on Niagara Street in St. Catharines, around the corner from Harriet Tubman and his brother, William Henry Stewart, where he worked first as a laborer and then became a coachman, first for Dr. Grimm and by 1860 Dr. Mack.[21]

While in St. Catharine's, John Stewart was interviewed by Benjamin Drew. He reported to Drew about his life in slavery:

> The man that owned me, was not fit to own a dog. I had been wanting to get away for the last twenty years. I grieved over my condition, and groaned over it. A few months ago I succeeded in escaping. After I got among abolitionists, I was almost scared; they used me

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[17] Sarah Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman* (Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869), electronic edition, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2000, http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/bradford/bradford.html, 59-60.
[18] Sarah Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 57. For more details of this escape story, see, Sarah Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 61-62, Kate Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 110-119, and description of Stewart-Bryant house for this survey.
[19] William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1872), 298.
[20] Larson, 127.
[21] Kate Larson, 118; 340 note 60; 349, note 113.

> so well, I was afraid of a trick. I had been used so ill before, that I did not know what to make of it to be used so decently.[22]

In 1859, John Stewart moved to Auburn. He lived first with Harriet Tubman. In 1860, probably while he was still living at Tubman's home, he took part in a meeting of the Auburn Suffrage Club, . held at the "shaving saloon" of B.C. Freeman (probably that of Morgan Freeman, at what is now 113 Genesee Street)An article in a local Auburn newspaper on October 30, 1860, reported that

> the colored people of Auburn held a meeting last evening to consider the propriety of forming a Club to attend to the suffrage question at the polls. They desire to emjoy the elective francishe; and they know that they are dependent on white men to give it to them—They will attend at the several polls in the city on election day, and distribute tickets "for the amendment of the constitution."

William Johnson was elected President; Tillman Jackson, Vice President, B.C. Freeman, Secretary; and John T. Stuard (probably John Stewart), Secretary.[23]

In 1863-64, at the home of Henry and Maria Mitchell, he married a second time. His new wife was Millie Hollis, and they moved to a house of their own, identified in the 1865-6 city directory as located at South near Swift, in 1867-68 as at South near Hamilton, and in 1874-75 as at 101 South Street (now 99 South Street). The latter was at the northwest corner of South Street and Fitch Avenue, where David Munson Osborne and Eliza Wright Osborne (daughter of Martha Wright) also lived.[24]

The 1865 census listed John Stewart as a laborer, age 48, living with Milla, age 46, the only two people in the household. Through help from relative John Bowley, who had returned to live in Maryland. John Stewart managed to get his sons John Henry and Moses Ross rescued from servitude in Talbot County, Maryland, about 1867 or 1868.[25]

By 1870, John Henry and Moses had joined the family in Auburn. The 1870 census listed John Stewart's age as 53. In 1870, Millie was 53, keeping house; John Henry was 18, a laborer; and Moses was 15, a laborer. John Henry was working again as teamster, the occupation he had held in St. Catharine's. Harkness Bowley, his nephew, recalled that John Stewart "had a fine team of horses" but that he was crippled with rheumatism. He often could not work, and his sons or nephews would help him.[26]

In the 1870s, Stewart worked as a teamster for David Osborne, mayor of Auburn and son-in-law of Martha and David Wright. Martha Wright was sister of the famous Quaker minister, woman's rights advocate, and abolitionist Lucretia Mott. Both were long-time friends of Harriet Tubman. The family lived at the northwest corner of South Street and Fitch Avenue, the site of the David Osborne and Eliza Wright Osborne's home. Although the library of the Osborne home still

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[22] Beenjamin Drew, The Refugee: or the *The Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada* (Boston: J.P. Jewett, 1856), 40-41. Reprint Toronto: Prospero Books, 2000.
[23] No title for newspaper, October 30, 1860. Many thanks to Anthony Gero for finding this.
[24] Place of marriage and name of Millie Hollis identified by Kate Larson in email to Judith Wellman, February 2005.
[25] Larson, 237-38.
[26] Harkness Bowley to Earl Conrad, 24 August 1939, quoted to Jean Humez

stands, the rest of the buildings are now gone, replaced by the First Methodist Church. [27] In 1873, John Stewart and Harriet Tubman became involved in a swindle involving a large quantity of gold that was supposedly hidden in a nearby woods.[28]

John Stewart died in 1889, age 77. He was buried in the North Street Cemetery, Auburn.[29]

No house survives to mark John Stewart's presence in Auburn.

[27] Larson, 260.
[28] Larson, 255-59.
[29] Larson, 276.

John Farmer House, c. 1835
South Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Hired many African American freedom seekers, including possibly Rit Ross, Harriet Tubman's mother

February 2, 2005, Looking East

South Street, from the rear, Looking NW

Description: The John Farmer family lived on the East side of South Street, two doors south of Harriet Tubman Davis. This three-bay house with Greek Revival trim, just south of the Tubman House, is appropriately built of brick, since John Farmer owned a local brick yard, where he hired many African Americans, as did two Englishmen (Ross and Hedges) who also owned a brickyard in the area.

Significance: Local tradition (passed on by Walter Long, former director of the Cayuga Museum) suggests that Rit Ross, Harriet Tubman's mother, may have worked for John Farmer.

In 1864, John Farmer bought 25 acres of land from William H. Seward, directly north of Harriet Tubman's seven acres.[30] There he operated a brickyard and built, probably about 1870, the frame structure that Harriet Tubman bought at auction in 1896 and that ultimately became Tubman's Home for the Aged. That land also included the brick building that became John Brown Hall, which Farmer may have used as a tenant house and/or office for the brickyard.

Research by Beth Crawford and Sheila Tucker.

[30] William H. Seward to John W. Farmer, February 1, 1864, Deed Book 106, page 51, as noted in Beth Crawford, "Tubman Chronology, Primarily Relating to Deed Infor for Auburn Sites, Prepared by Crawford & Stearns, In Progress, 9/03."

Farmer Family Cemetery Gates
South Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Local oral tradition suggests this may be the burial place of Rit Ross, Harriet Tubman's mother

February 2, 2005
Looking South

Local tradition (passed on by Walter Long, former director of the Cayuga Museum) suggests that Rit Ross, Harriet Tubman's mother, may have worked for John Farmer, and that she is buried in the Farmer family cemetery, directly across South St. from the Farmer home.

The story about additional graves being located in the Farmer family cemetery may have been fueled by work on the cemetery in the 1960s, when Sheila Tucker, Fleming Town Historian and later Cayuga County Historian, received funding from a federal youth corps program to renovate the Farmer family cemetery. As Sheila Tucker reported in 2005:

> I believe that the whole story about Harriet's mother being buried in the Farmer Cemetery stems from my activity. During the late 60's I was able to get funding and assistance from the youth corp type group to restore Galpin Hill and Farmer Cemeteries. I also was able to get a monument man in Auburn to repair any of the stones that were

> repairable. I pulled up at the Farmer Cemetery with a truck filled with about eight stones from Galpin Hill and took one from Farmer to the monument man. Years later, a neighbor informed two DAR types who were listing the cemeteries in the county t hat a woman removed some of the stones—implying that there were more buried there. Of course, the two stones for Farmer were returned. We did probe both cemeteries looking for other bases. Bernie [Corcoran] put a note on his website that there had been additional burials at the Farmer cemetery because of the story of a woman removing the stones.[31]

Thanks to Sheila Tucker and Beth Crawford for research assistance.

[31] Email, April 22, 2005.

Thomas and Sarah Stoop House
Chapman Avenue
Auburn, New York 13021

Significance: Home of African Americans from Eastern New York

Thomas and Mary Stoop represent those African Americans, probably born into slavery themselves, who migrated to Auburn from eastern New York, not to escape slavery but to find a congenial neighborhood in which to live, work, and raise their children. They arrived in Auburn by 1854, for on July 22, 1854, the *Auburn Daily Advertiser* noted that Mr. Thomas Stoop had been appointed chair of a meeting held on July 10 to plan a celebration for August 1, 1854,

> a day on which 800,00 souls were set at liberty in the West Indies by the British Government; and in view of this, Auburn intends manfully to show to the world her warm attachment to so holy and noble a cause; and I speak the sentiments of the citizens generally, when I extend a most cordial invitation to the Empire State, to marshal her sons and daughters in innumerable busts throughout the length and breadth of her borders; and the appointed time crowd every avenue and thoroughfare that shall lead safely to the Queen City of the Empire State. Our brethren from the East and the West, from the North and from the South, will also expect to be heard from. Come one, come all.
>
> John H. Freeman, General Secretary

On August 1, 1854, the *Auburn Daily Advertiser* reported that "the colored people had made extensive calculations on a good time today in honor of the West Indian Emancipation, but just as their procession had got fairly under way, with banners and msuci their ardor was somewhat dampened by sudden showers. They left the streets and assembled at Stanford Hall. Addressed delivered by Frederick Douglass of Rochester, Mr. Loguen of Syracuse. Day ushered in by ringing of church bells and firing of cannon."[1]

The 1855 census listed the Stoops as a family of six. Thomas Stoop (age 52), laborer, born in Ulster County, lived with his wife, Sterah A. (age 29), born in Orange County, with their children John (age 5), Mary (age 4), Freeman (age 2), and Martha (age three months), all born in Cayuga County. The census taker left the column for "color" blank for Thomas and Sterah but noted "B" for "Black" for each of the children.

They were ambitious and quickly began to acquire property. They settled first in the older residential area on the north side of town. They bought a small piece of land on Division Street in May 1854, and by 1855, they had constructed a board house worth, according to the 1855 census, $100. The 1857 Auburn city directed listed Thomas Stoop at 64 Division Street, on the site of the house below.[2] In 1859-60, the Stoop family was living, according to the city directory, at 35 Washington Street.

In 1860, Thomas Stoop (now age 57), laborer, and Sarah Stoop, a domestic (age 32), had five children: John (10), Mary (9), Freeman (7), Martha (5), and Anna (3). Of this whole family, the census taker labeled only the youngest children, Martha and Anna, as Black. All the rest were left blank in the space for "color."

By 1865, the Stoops now listed their ages as 40 (Thomas) and 36 (Sarah). Thomas was a "team labor", and Mary (age 14) was a grandchild rather than a child. Of the older children, only Freeman (age 12) and Martha (10) still lived at home, but a new baby, Jemima (six months) had been born. The family now lived in a frame house worth $400. The census listed them in the Town of Fleming.

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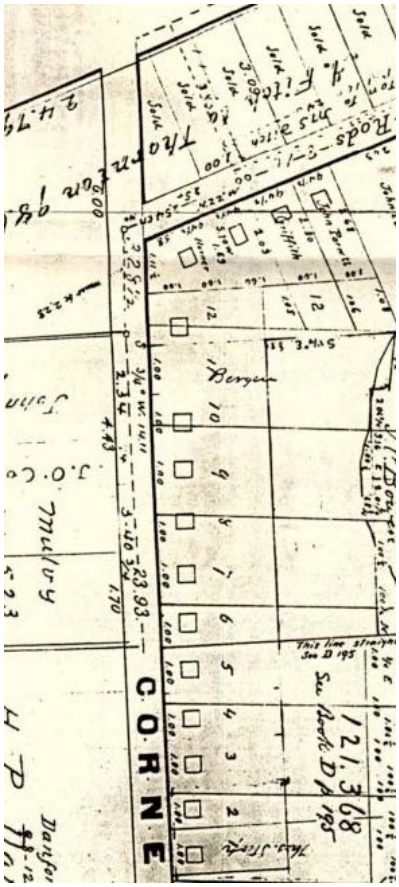
[1] Transcription by Sheila Tucker.
[2] See transcript of deed by Tanya Warren, attached.

In a deed recorded March 6, 1869, Thomas and Sarah Stoop bought a piece of land on the north side of Cornell Street (now Chapman Avenue) near South Street, between land owned by Noah Clark and Seth Watkins, both European Americans, with free access to a well on the west side of the property. This was land newly-opened for sale to working-class families, both white and black, by Abijah Fitch, abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter, near Harriet Tubman's property. Many freedom seekers bought land farther west on Cornell Street, at the corner of Garrow Street. Harriet Tubman's niece-in-law, Eliza Stewart Parker, and later another niece, Margaret Stewart Lucas, also purchased land on the south side of Cornell Street, very near the Stoop house, in this mixed-race neighborhood.



Clark, John S., "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y." A.C. Taber, Surveyor, September 1868. Cayuga County Clerk's Office.
Thomas Stoop [Stup]'s land is noted on Lot 1 at bottom of map.

In 1870, Thomas (age 67), listed his occupation in the census as laborer, and Sarah (age 42) listed hers as keeping house. They lived here with their children, John (20), a laborer, Mary (19), Anna (13), Jemima (6), at school, and Eliza (10 months). They were now listed again in Auburn.

In the 1880 census, Thomas and Sarah Stoop were no longer listed. Mary (perhaps formerly listed as Sarah) Stoop, now 51, was a washerwoman, head of a household living at what was then 53 Cornell Street with John, her son, age 27, working in a machine shop, Eva, age 24, a daughter; and Jemima, a daughter, age 16, at school.

Uncertain whether any current building is the same house owned by Thomas Stoop.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property	REAL-$	MISC.
Stoop	Thomas	Auburn	1869	Thornton Ave.	225	First entry-previous residences-Division St. and Fleming.
Stoop	Thomas	Auburn	1870	Cornell-residence	250	
Stoop	Thomas	Auburn	1871	Cornell-residence	200	
Stoop	Thomas	Auburn	1872			no entry
Stoop	Thomas	Auburn	1873	Cornell-residence	150	
Stoop	**John**	**Auburn**	**1874**	**Cornell-residence**	**350**	No more Thomas
Stoop	John	Auburn	1875	**22 Cornell-house**	350	last Stoop entry

Deed: Henry B. Fitch to Thomas Stoop
6 March 1869
City Deed Book 125, pp. 202-204
City of Auburn, NY
Cayuga County Records Retention
Abstract-TLW

Indenture made 6 March 1869 between Henry B. & Adelia Fitch of Auburn and Thomas Stoop of Auburn, for $700.00 do grant, etc. all that land in Auburn described as: Beginning at the SE corner of a lot sold to Noah P. Clark on the North side of Cornell St. and running thence northerly 2 chains, 50 links to the lands of Seth Watkins, thence easterly parallel with Cornell St, 1 chain and 1 link more or less, to the west line of lands of Thomas Shea, thence southerly along the land of said Shea 2 chains, 50 links to the North line of Cornell ST. thence westerly along the north line of said street 1 chain to place of beginning. Reserving the right to the owner or occupant of the land of Seth Watkins, a right of way along the east line of said lot, 12 ½ feet wide. Said Watkins to keep and maintain proper gates on each end of right of way and to keep same closed when not in use as against their own acts. Also the right to use & to have free access to the well which is upon the west line & jointly upon this & the lot next west adjoining. The repairs of said well are to be equally borne by both parties. Said Stoop is to build the fences upon the west line.
With all the appurtenances, etc.
Signed by the Fitch's

Also:
Deed: Sarah Ann Stoop and Thomas Stoop to Henry B. Fitch
6 March 1869
Page 203 of same Book

This indenture between (said parties) for and consideration of the sum of $200.00 have sold and by these presents doth grant…all that parcel of land, situate in Auburn on the South side of Perrine St. (formerly Ellen St.), near Division St, described as follows:
Being part of the original Lot #46 of the Town of Aurelius, now Auburn, commencing in the center of Perrine St. (formerly Ellen St), at the NE corner of a lot of land now or formerly owned by Benjamin Rice, running thence South along the East line of said Rice's land, 10 rods, thence east parallel with Perrine St. 4 rods, thence northerly parallel with the west line of said lot 10 rods to the center of Perrine St. thence

westerly along the center of Perrine St. 4 rods to place of beginning, containing 40 rods of land. A strip of 1 ½ rods across the North line of said lot being for the purpose of a street to be kept forever open for that purpose, it being a part and parcel of Perrine St. This deed is intended to convey that parcel of land, conveyed by Deed dated 13 April 1854 of Joshua Goodrich and wife to Sarah Ann Stoop, said deed being recorded 13 May 1854, Book 88 of Deeds, page 154. With all the Appurtenances, etc.
Signed by the hands of Sarah Stoop and Thomas Stoop.

Mortgage Deed Abstract
Thomas Stoop to Henry B. Fitch
6 March 1869
City of Auburn, Cayuga County, NY
Mortgage Book 73, page 325

This indenture made this 6th day of March 1869 between Thomas Stoop of the City of Auburn and Henry B. Fitch of the same place in consideration of the sum of $450 have sold, etc. all that tract of land situate in the City of Auburn bounded and described as follows: Beginning at the Southeast corner of a lot sold to Noah P. Clark on the North side of Cornell Street and running thence Northerly 2 chains, 50 links to lands of Seth Watkins; thence Easterly parallel with Cornell Street 1 chain, 1 link more or less to the West line of lands of Thomas Shea; thence Southerly along the land of said Shea 2 chains, 50 links to the North line of Cornell Street; Thence Westerly along the North line of Cornell St. 1 chain to place of beginning. Reserving the right to the owners or occupants of the land of Seth Watkins a right of way along the East line of said lot 12 ½ feet wide. Said Watkins to keep and maintain proper gates on each end of right a way and to keep same closed when not in use as against their own acts and also the right to use and to have free access to the well which is upon this and the next lot West adjoining. The repairs of said well to be equally born by both parties. This grant is intended as a security for the payment of $450 being part of the purchase money in payments of $100 annually together with interest semi-annually on all sum or sums unpaid according to the condition of a bond this day executed and delivered by the said Thomas Stoop to the party of the second part. (Payment details follow)

Signed by the hand of Thomas Stoop

Research and transcription by Tanya Warren

Swart House
12 Chapman (Cornell Street)
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seeker

In 1887-88, the Auburn city directory listed Sarah Swart, widow of George Swarts, living at 12 Cornell Street. Thornton Newton, a freedom seeker from Maryland. Worked at 12 Cornell and lived across the street at 20 Cornell Street.[3]

[3] Property research by Tanya Warren.

Parker-Stewart House
20 Chapman Avenue
Auburn, New York 13021

Significance: Home of freedom seekers and Harriet Tubman's great-nieces and nephew

518
February 2, 2005

This house, built in 1899, represents the continuing importance of community, both to Harriet Tubman and to the many freedom seekers who settled in Auburn, as their children and grandchildren found jobs, bought property, and raised their own families in Auburn. Clarence "Dye" Stewart, lived here at 20 Chapman Avenue from 1899-1904. Although he was not born in slavery himself, Dye Stewart was the grandson of Harriet Tubman's brother John Stewart, who escaped with Harriet Tubman from slavery in Dorchester County, Maryland, in December 1854.

John Stewart was one of only two of Tubman's siblings who moved with her to Auburn, and Dye Stewart remained close to Tubman until her death in 1913. He was at Harriet Tubman's bedside when she died.

After John Henry Stewart, son of Tubman's brother, John, died in 1880 or 1881, his widow, Eliza Stewart, married Alfred Parker. They moved to this house, where Eliza Stewart Parker apparently kept a boarding house for family and friends, many of whom were freedom seekers from Maryland. This house at 20 Chapman Avenue is associated with the descendants of John Stewart, Tubman's brother, including Tubman's grand nieces and nephew (Dora, Gertrude, and Clarence "Dye" Stewart), as well as with other freedom seekers who lived here as family members or boarders, including some of Tubman's old neighbors from Maryland, including Georgie Thompson, a freedom seeker and widow of Philip (whom city directories record as living here in 1885 and 1892-97), Albert Stewart (1888-89), Alfred L. Winslow (1887-88), and Thornton Newton, (1887-88).

Thornton Newton listed his birthplace in census records as Virginia. He had boarded with Tubman when he first arrived in Auburn in the early 1860s. By 1870, he had married a woman named, Priscilla, who listed her birthplace as Canada, and they were living in Owasco. In 1880, Priscilla and Thornton lived at 12 Cornell Street, down the street from this house. According to the 1887-88 city directory, Thornton Newton had moved to 20 Cornell Street, but he worked at 12 Cornell Street. When Harriet Tubman was trying to prove her identity, in order to get her Civil War pension, Thornton Newton was one of those who witnessed her documentation.[4]

Alfred L. Winslow was the son of Catherine Stewart (Jane Kane), who had escaped with Harriet Tubman and her three brothers on Christmas Eve, 1854. She had then married Tubman's oldest brother, Ben Ross. When he changed his name to James Stewart, she changed hers to Catharine Stewart. Their son, Elijah Stewart, lived at 29 Union Avenue (now Richardson Avenue). After James Stewart's death in St. Catharine's, Ontario, Catharine Stewart married Albert Winslow, and in 1887-88, their son, Alfred Winslow, lived in this house at 20 Cornell Street. (Alfred Winslow may actually be the same person listed in the 1880 census as Albert Winslow, eleven years old, a student, living at 29 Union Avenue, with his half-brother Elijah Stewart.) [5]

Alfred L. Winslow thus lived with his cousins—Gertrude, Dora, and Clarence—as well as his Aunt Eliza Stewart Parker. They all lived just down the street from their cousin Margaret Stewart Lucas, who lived at 30 Cornell Street.

Dye Stewart lived in this house at 20 Cornell Street from 1899-1904. For a time, Clarence "Dye" Stewart followed his father's occupation as a coachman. He married as his first wife, Lena, and for a time, they lived at 68 Garrow Street, still standing on the southeast corner of Garrow and Chapman Avenue. When Lena Stewart died, Dye Stewart moved in with his aunt and uncle, at 64 Garrow Street. When he married a second time, Pearl Reed, he moved to ? Parker Street, a house that is also still standing.[6]

Tax assessments suggest that this house was constructed in 1899, the same year that the Parker-Stewart family moved here.

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[4] 1865 and 1870 census; Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 278.
[5] Thanks to Kate Clifford Larson for sorting out this genealogy.
[6]Auburn City Directory, 1896-97, listed him as a coachman. Genealogical research by Judy Bryant.

Tax assessments for Parker-Stewart House
20 Cornell (Chapman) Avenue

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	REAL-$
Belt	Isaiah	Auburn	1885	18, 20 Cornell-vacant lots	200
Belt	Isaiah	Auburn	1885	24 Cornell-lot & cellar	100
Parker	**Alfred**	**Auburn**	**1899**	**20 Cornell-house & lot**	**900**
Parker	Alfred	Auburn	1900	20 Cornell-house & lot	900
Parker	Alfred	Auburn	1901	20 Cornell-house & lot	900
Parker	Alfred	Auburn	1902	20 Cornell-house & lot	900
Parker	Alfred	Auburn	1903	20 Cornell-house & lot	900
Parker	Alfred	Auburn	1904	20 Cornell-house & lot	900
Parker	Alfred	Auburn	1905	20 Cornell-house & lot	900
Parker	Alfred	Auburn	1906	20 Cornell-house & lot	900

Sources:

Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*
1870, 1880 census
1887-88, 1896-97, 1899, 1904 city directories
Judy Bryant oral tradition, genealogical research
Email from Kate Clifford Larson'

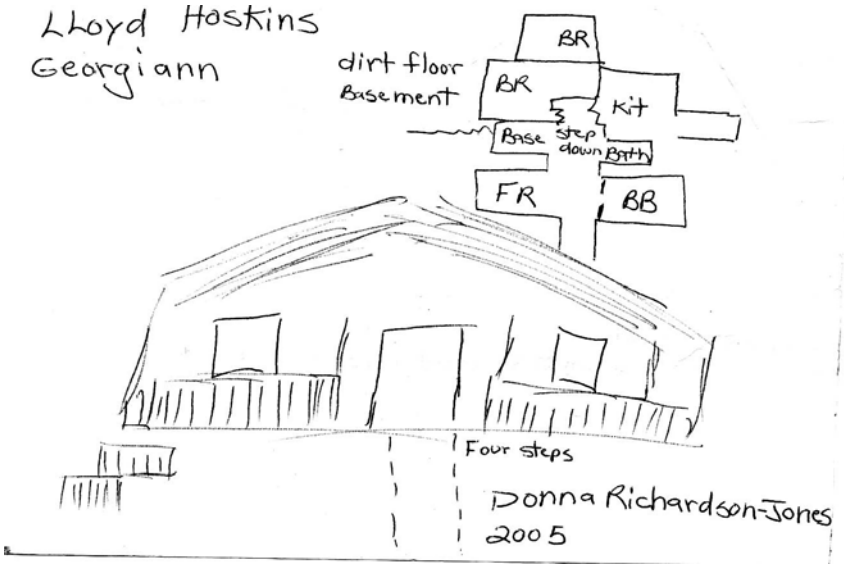
Property and genealogical research by Tanya Warren.

Site of Stewart-Lucas House
Now Oak Creek Town Homes (Historic 30 Cornell Street)
Auburn, New York 13021

Significance: Home of one of Harriet Tubman's nieces (perhaps her daughter)

At her core, Harriet Tubman was a caregiver. Her home was constantly full of people, some of them related to her and some not. She took care of anyone who needed help, especially the very old and the very young, including one adopted daughter, Gertie, who joined the household at birth in 1874; one great-niece, Eva Katherine Helena Harriet, whom everyone called Katy Stewart and who lived with Harriet from 1889, when her mother, Helena (Indian wife of her nephew, John Isaac Stewart) died in childbirth; and one great-nephew, Harkless Bowley. As far as we know, however, Harriet Tubman never had any children of her own. The one possible exception was Margaret Stewart Lucas, probably another niece of Harriet but possibly her daughter.

After Margaret Stewart married Henry Lucas, they lived in a house at 30 Cornell Street, now on the site of the Oak Creek Town Homes, for many years. This house was torn down in the early twenty-first century, but Donna Richardson-Jones, descendent of Margaret Stewart Lucas, made this sketch of it in June 2005.



Margaret Stewart was born in Maryland in October 1850.[7] She may have been the daughter of Harriet Tubman's brother, Benjamin Ross (James Stewart), and an unknown first wife. If so, she was probably the younger sister of Ann Marie Stewart Elliott, who married Thomas Elliott and lived at 31 Union Avenue in Auburn until her death sometime before 1880. This is supported by Margaret Stewart's daughter, Alice Lucas Brickler, who remembered that Maria Elliott "was m

[7] 1900 U.S. Census.

mother's elder sister and Mary Gaston [Gaskins] always called my mother Aunt Maggie (much to my father's disgust)."[8]

Alice Lucas Brickler, who was thirteen years old when Harriet Tubman died, recounted the story that Harriet Tubman had kidnapped her mother from Maryland, when Margaret was eight or nine years old. About all Margaret Stewart remembered of her childhood home was that she had a twin brother, they had never been slaves, and that the family had "a pair of slick chestnut horses and a shiny carriage in which they rode to church." When Harriet visited them, sometime before 1862, "she fell in love with the little girl who was my mother," and "when her visit was ended, she, secretly and without so much as a by-your-leave, took the little girl with her to her northern home."[9]

In the early 1860s, Harriet Tubman, about to begin her career as a scout in the U.S. Army, was in no position to take care of a little girl. She entrusted her to the care of Lazette Worden. Lazette Worden spent much time with her sister, Frances Seward (wife of William Henry Seward, Senator from New York State and soon-to-be Secretary of State under Abraham Lincoln). Frances Seward raised Margaret, Alice Brickler recounted, "not as a servant but as a guest within her home. She taught Mother to speak properly, to read, write, sew, do housework and act as a lady. Whenever Aunt Harriet came back, Mother was dressed and sent in the Seward carriage to visit her. Strange to say, Mother looked very much like Aunt Harriet and there was hardness about her character in the face of adversity that must have been hereditary."[10]

As a girl, Margaret Stewart lived with Harriet Tubman "when Aunt Harriet was at home," and she was proud "to the point of being snobbish." She used to tell a story about herself, which her daughter later recounted. "In appearance she was short and plump, light brown with long thick Negroid hair. There was a relative living at the home at this time who disliked Mother very much and whenever Aunt Harriet was out of hearing she used to call Mother a 'pumpkin-colored hussy.' Ha, ha," wrote Brickler.[11]

For many people, it seems entirely out-of-character for Harriet Tubman to have kidnapped Margaret Stewart from her parents. That incongruity, plus the striking physical likeness between Margaret and Harriet, has prompted speculation that Margaret Stewart may, in fact, have been Harriet Tubman's birth child. If so, noted Catharine Clinton, "taking Margaret would have been a recovery rather than an abduction. Several puzzle pieces might then fit into place, including Harriet's decision to return again and again to Maryland. . .There is of course no proof to substantiate this scenario, just a circumstantial timeline and some comments handed down in

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[8] Alice Lucas Brickler to Earl Conrad, 23 April 1940, Earl Conrad-Harriet Tubman Collection, Schomburg Center, New York Public Library, reprinted in Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman, The Life and the Stories* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 271.

[9] Alice Lucas Brickler to Earl Conrad, 14 August 1939, reprinted in Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 269.

[10] Kate Larson noted that Margaret Stewart went first to live with Lazaette Worden, based on a letter from Martha Wright, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 196; Alice Lucas Brickler to Earl Conrad, 14 August 1939, reprinted in Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 270.

[11] Alice Lucas Brickler to Earl Conrad, 23 April 1940, reprinted in Jean Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 271.

family lore." Yet, suggested Kate Larson, "such a scenario provides one of the few logical explanations, if not the only one, for Tubman's 'kidnapping' Margaret from her home."[12]

Whatever the circumstances of Margaret Stewart's birth, she grew into a successful and by all accounts happy adult. In 1872, she married Henry Lucas, twenty-two years old, born in Virginia, at the Central Presbyterian Church in Auburn, the same church that Harriet Tubman and her parents regularly attended and where Harriet Tubman and Nelson Davis were married. Henry Lucas listed his occupation as laborer in the Auburn city directory of 1878-79, and his address as Cornell n. South. By 1887-88, he was working at the City Club at 158 Genesee Street, probably as a caterer.

When the census taker came down Cornell Street on the seventh day of June, 1900, Henry and Maggie Lucas were both forty-nine years old. Henry worked as a steward. The city directory listed his workplace as the Auburn City Club. Maggie worked as a cook, perhaps at the same place. They had had seven children, but, according to the 1900 census, only three were living. Margaret D., born in 1882, and Alice H., born in October 1897, were the only children at home in June 1900, but the city directory of that year also listed Della M., a student at CGS [?] and Helen M., student, living at home, making four living children. Allen H. Lucas, perhaps a brother of Henry, was living around the corner at 58 Garrow Street.[13]

The Lucas family was living at 30 Cornell Street. Although many African Americans lived farther west on Cornell Street, the nearest neighbors of the Lucas family were first or second-generation English or Irish-Americans. They owned their home free of any mortgage.

The Lucas home was just a short walk from Harriet Tubman's home, and Alice Lucas Brickler often visited Tubman with her mother, bringing Tubman candy, which she loved. After 1910, Tubman could no longer walk, and Alice Lucas was surprised one day, having wandered off to pick some flowers, to hear a slithering sound in the grass and then to discover that "it was Aunt Harriet, flat on her stomach and with only the use of her arms and serpentine movements of her body, gliding smoothly along. Mother helped her back to her chair and they laughed. Aunt Harriet then told me that that was the way she had gone by many a sentinel during the war. Seeing the swaying grass, she was mistaken for an animal or in the dim flicker of the camp fire, she appeared as a small shadow."[14]

On June 14, 1914, Alice Lucas unveiled a bronze tablet, paid for by contributions from the people of Auburn, both black and white, to recognize Harriet Tubman's "unselfish devotion to the cause of humanity." Booker T. Washington gave the main speech, and the tablet was placed in the Cayuga County Courthouse, as a permanent reminder of one of Auburn's most remarkable--and certainly most famous—citizens.[15] By 1929, Margaret and Henry Lucas were living at 77 Fitch Street. Margaret Lucas died May 19, 1930.[16]

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[12] For further discussion of this, see Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 196-202; Catharine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom* (New York: Little, Brown, and Co., 2004), 117-123.
[13] *Auburn City Directory* (Auburn: Alonzo P. Lamey, 1900).
[14] Alice Lucas Brickler to Earl Conrad, 28 July 1939, reprinted in Kate Larson, 288.
[15] Kate Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 289-90.
[16] Gladys Stewart, [Manuscript Census of African Americans in the City of Auburn], 1929, in possession of Judy Bryant; Kate Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," after 295.

Elijah and Georgia Stewart House
29 Richardson Avenue (Union)
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of African Americans (including nephew of Harriet Tubman)

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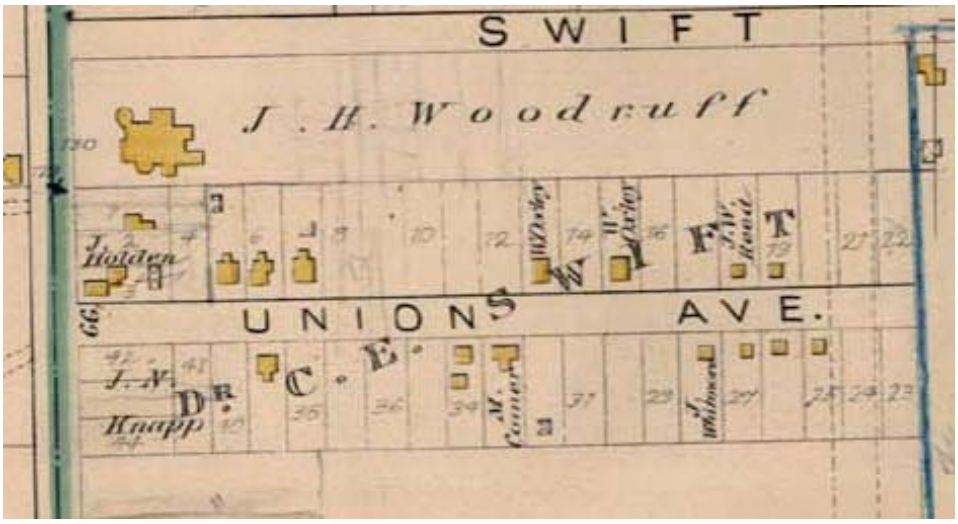
February 2, 2005

In lieu of children and grandchildren, Harriet Tubman gathered around her in Auburn her brothers, sister-in-law, niece, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews. This house, the one next door, at 31 Union Avenue (now Richardson), and possiblly also one that once stood on the now-vacant lot at 33 Richardson Avenue represent several members of Tubman's extended family.

Tubman's brother, Ben Ross (James Stewart) married Jane Kane (Catherine Stewart) and settled in St. Catherine's, Canada. After James Stewart's death in 1862, Catherine Stewart came to Auburn with her son, Elijah, about 1862, where her daughter, Hester, was born. She married Andrew Winslow in 1867 and they had a son, Albert, in 1868. After Andrew's death shortly thereafter, Catherine was listed in the 1870 census as a servant, living in the household of two African American women who lived next door to the Elliott family. Catherine died died before 1880.

By 1880, Catharine's son, Elijah, 24 years old and a laborer, rented a house at 29 Union Avenue from John W. Reed. Elijah Stewart lived with his wife, Georgia, born in Washington, D.C., who was listed in the census as mulatto, keeping house. They shared their home with their daughter, Edith, three months old; boarders James and Hannah Whitmore, both African Americans born in New York, aged 49 and 52; and Albert Winslow, Elijah's half-brother, still in school. Hester, their sister, had either died or moved out of Cayuga County. The Stewarts lived next door to Thomas Elliott and Ann Marie Stewart Elliott. Ann Marie Stewart was a niece of Harriet Tubman, perhaps a daughter of Ben Ross by an earlier marriage. In any case, the Stewarts shared kinship as well as neighborly ties with the Elliotts.

The Elijah and Georgia Stewart house was probably built sometime between 1871 and 1880, for a house in this location did not appear on the 1871 Richie map, but one did appear there by 1882. It was located on Lot 18, just west of the Elliot house, and was labeled "J.W. Rood." Assessment records show John W. Reed assessed for $150 for a "vacant lot and house" at numbers 29 and 35 Union Avenue from 1880 to 1883. Most likely the vacant lot was at 35 Union Avenue, since neither the 1871 nor the 1882 map shows a house on that site. In 1884, the assessment for 29 Union Avenue jumps to $300 for a "house and lot," but this may not be accurate, since in 1885 the assessed value for the same property fell to $150, while the vacant lot at 35 Union was worth $100. In 1887, the house and lot at 29 Union were valued at $200. By 1890, they were assessed at only $100, which remained steady until 1897, when the assessment rose to $300, a value it kept until 1912.[1]



City Atlas of Auburn, N.Y. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1882.

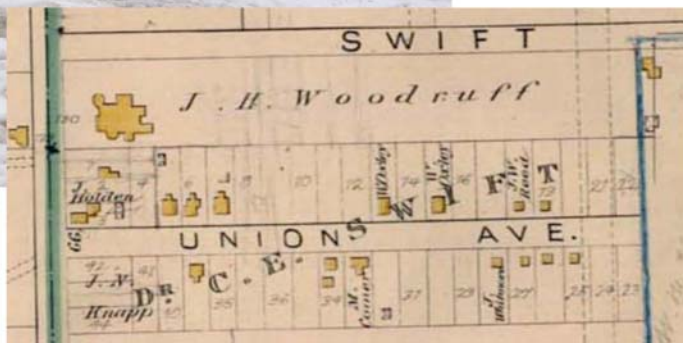
[1] P.A. Cunningham, *Map of Auburn, New York* (Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871); City Atlas of Auburn, N.Y. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1882. All property research by Tanya Warren.

Tax Assessments for 29 Richardson Avenue
Research by Tanya Warren

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	REAL-$	PERS-$
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1880	(29 & 35) Union-vacant lot & house	150	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1881	29/35 Union-vacant lot & house	150	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1882	29/35 Union-vacant lot & house	150	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1883	29/35 Union-vacant lot & house	150	
Reed	**John W.**	**Auburn**	**1884**	**29 Union-house & lot**	**300**	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1885	29 Union-house & lot	150	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1885	35 Union-vacant lot	100	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1886	35 Union-vacant lot	100	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1887	29 Union-house & lot	200	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1888	29 Union-house & lot	200	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1889	29 Union-house & lot	200	
Reed	J. W.	Auburn	1890	29 Union-house & lot	100	
Reed	J. W.	Auburn	1893	29 Union-house & lot	100	
Reed	J. W.	Auburn	1894	29 Union-house & lot	100	
Reed	J. W.	Auburn	1895	29 Union-house & lot	100	
Reed	J. W.	Auburn	1896	29 Union-house & lot	100	
Reed	**John W.**	**Auburn**	**1897**	**29 Union-house & lot**	**300**	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1898	29 Union-house & lot	300	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1899	29 Union-house & lot	300	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1900	29 Union-house & lot	300	
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1901	29 Union-house & lot	300	
Reed	**John W.**	**Auburn**	**1902-1912**	**25, 27-vacant lots & 29 Union-residence**	**100, 100 & 300**	

Thomas Elliott and Ann Marie Stewart Elliott
31 Union (Richardson)
Significance: Home of Freedom Seekers

498
2/2/2005



City Atlas of Auburn, N.Y., G.M. Hopkins, 1882.

Thomas Elliott and Ann Marie Stewart Elliott
31 Union (Richardson)
Significance: Home of Freedom Seekers

Thomas Elliott and Ann Marie Stewart Elliott, married in 1864, represent two important Underground Railroad families and stories. Ann Marie Stewart Elliott was likely a niece of Harriet Tubman, probably the daughter of one of her sisters who was sold away or the daughter of Tubman's brother, Ben Ross, Jr. According to Kate Clifford Larson, Tubman's biographer, Ann Marie Stewart was probably the same Anne Marie, age four, who was listed as free in the 1850 census of Caroline County, Maryland, in the household of Harriet Tubman's parents, Ben and Rit Ross. (Though listed as free, she may actually have been enslaved, which was a common error in that particular census). There is also a puzzling reference to her as the older sister of Margaret Stewart, the niece that Harriet Tubman allegedly kidnapped from the Eastern

Shore of Maryland before 1862. Margaret Stewart's daughter, Alice Brickler, wrote in 1940 that "Maria Elliott was my mother's elder sister."[2]

Ann Marie Stewart married Thomas Elliott about 1864. We know this because the 1865 New York State census listed her as Ann M. Elliot, age 22, living as a boarder with Harriet Tubman. Thomas Elliott, born in Maryland, age 25, was a laborer, also living as a boarder with Tubman. The marriage of Anne Marie Stewart and Thomas Elliott is recorded in the "Marriage Records" of the Central Presbyterian Church of Auburn, NY, February 1864.

Thomas Elliott was born into slavery about 1829 in Dorchester County, Maryland. William Still, head of the Vigilance Committee in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, recorded Elliott's story in detail, first in Still manuscript "Journal C" and then in his printed account, The Underground Railroad (Philadelphia, 1872). In March 1857, at the age of 28, Thomas Elliott decided to escape from the plantation of Pritchett Meredith in Bucktown, Dorchester County, Maryland. He fled with seven others—five men and two women – using instructions and Underground Railroad connections given to them by Harriet Tubman (in fact, the group sought shelter from Ben Ross, Tubman's father, in Caroline County, on their first night of flight). With a price of $3000 on their heads, they were betrayed into the hands of the sheriff of Dover, Delaware. They escaped by throwing hot coals into the sheriff's own apartment, jumping out of a twelve-foot high window and leaping over a wall. When the sheriff fired his gun at them, it misfired. Thomas Elliott and the others successfully made their way to Thomas Garrett's home in Wilmington, who safely sent them along to William Still's office in Philadelphia. This dramatic escape story earned them the nickname of the "Dover Eight."[3]

Elliott settled in St. Catharines, Ontario, joining a close community of other refugees from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, including Harriet Tubman's parents, Ben and Rit Ross, and her brothers John and William Henry Stewart. There, with Denard Hughes, another member of the Dover Eight, along with several other Dorchester County freedom seekers, Elliott joined forces with John Brown. Neither Elliott nor Hughes or the others decided to accompany Brown to Virginia, on Brown's raid of Harper's Ferry. It was a decision that ultimately saved their lives. As Kate Clifford Larson has suggested, "they had already come to Canada at great sacrifice and risk; perhaps they felt they had battled slavery enough. Their new lives in freedom were precious now and outweighed any visionary dream of Brown's.[4]

Elliott was recorded living with his brother, Abraham (who fled Maryland sometime after Thomas did) in St. Catharines in 1861, but by 1862, Thomas Elliott had moved to Auburn, New York, and was living in a building owned by William H. Seward at 32 South Street. After Elliott married Anne Marie Stewart in February 1864, they both boarded at Harriet Tubman's home at 180 South Street.

In 1868, the Auburn city tax assessments listed Thomas Elliott as owning a "house unfinished" on Union Avenue worth $100, on which he paid $2.02 worth of taxes. In 1869, the Auburn City Directory listed

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[2]Alice Brickler to Earl Conrad, 1940, reprinted in Jean M. Humez. *Harriet Tubman: The Life and the Life Stories* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 291; Kate Clifford Larson, "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2004), after 295. For more on Margaret Stewart, see Catherine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom* (New York: Little, Brown, 2004), 117-123; Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 196-202.

[3] William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 72-74; Kate Clifford Larson, *Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books, 138-41. See also Thomas Garrett's description of this escape in letters published in James A. McGowan, *Station Master on the Underground Railroad: The Life and Letters of Thomas Garrett* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005) pp. 178-181.

[4] Larson, *Harriet Tubman*, 155, 159-61.

Thomas Elliott as living at Union n. South St. (now Richardson Avenue), an address that he retained in the 1870 and 1879-80 directories. The Elliot family probably lived in one of the small houses that is part of the house currently on this property, because a small dwelling shows up on Lot #19 on the 1871 map of Auburn published by W.W. Richie. On June 1, 1872, Thomas Elliott bought the property on which this house now stands from Charles and Mary Cootes for $650.00. This price suggests that the lot was not vacant but included a building. This is the same property described in the 1993 deed from Katherine Mary Chapman, executor of Erna M. Strokarck, to Christopher Lupo: "north side of Richardson, formerly Union Avenue, in said city, known as Lot #19, on a certain map made by Dr. A.C. Taber, Surveyor for Charles Swift, filed 1863 Book 1, p. 48, lot being 61 feet 8 inches front and rear 176.6 inches depth."[5]

In 1870, the U.S. census listed Thomas Elliott as 35 years old, a laborer, born in Maryland. Anna Elliott was 24 years old, born in Maryland. They had two daughters, Marietta, age 5, and Martha, age 2, both born in New York State. Local tax assessments also reveal they had a family dog. The 1880 U.S. census listed the Elliotts still at 31 Union Avenue, but Ann Marie had died by this time, and Thomas, age 38, laborer, was now married to Helen, age 37, living with a daughter, Nellie (i.e. Martha), age 12, at school. A son, Anthony Elliott, born in 1871, had died before 1880.[6]

By 1880, the city directory listed Thomas Elliott at 31 Union Avenue, the same as the current 31 Richardson Avenue. Thomas Elliott was still listed in the city directory in 1882, but by 1884, the city directory listed C.A. and S. Smith at 31 Union Avenue. Perhaps the Elliott family had moved between 1882 and 1884, or perhaps Thomas Elliott had died. Beginning in 1882, Charles Smith and James Seymour were paying taxes on this property.

As it stood in 2005, this house was two smaller houses joined together. Subtle distinctions in the cornice of these two smaller sections revealed their different origins. Probably the original Elliott-Stewart was just one of these houses, with a second house moved to this lot sometime after construction of the original building. The 1904 Auburn map showed an outbuilding at the rear of 31 Union Avenue. Tax assessments for this property doubled (from $100 to $200) between 1911 and 1914 and rose again (from $200 to $700) between 1916 and 1919. Perhaps a small house from a neighboring lot was moved here during the 19-teens, or perhaps the outbuilding at the rear of this property was attached to the house during this period.

After an early life of slavery; a terrifying escape to freedom in St. Catherine's, Canada; and a close brush (for Thomas Elliott) with death at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, with John Brown; this family found relative safety and stability in Auburn, New York, surrounded by friends and family from their old neighborhood in Maryland, from 1868 to about 1882. This modest house represents not wealth but freedom, physical safety, home ownership, and community support for a family who risked their lives to achieve what many Americans took for granted.

Written by Judith Wellman and Kate Clifford Larson
Property research by Tanya Warren

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[5] Tax assessments, Auburn, Second Ward, 1868, City of Auburn Records Retention Office; P.A. Cunningham, Surveyor, *Map of the City of Auburn, Cayuga County, N.Y.* (Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871); City Deed Book 879, p. 196.

[6] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," after 295.

Catherine Stewart Winslow (a.k.a. Jane Ross)
Unknown where she lived after leaving Harriet Tubman's home
Auburn, New York

Tubman's brother, James Stewart (born Ben Ross), had escaped with Tubman and his fiancé, Catharine (born Jane Kane) and his two brothers, John Stewart and William Henry Stewart, on Christmas Eve, 1854. They settled first in St. Catharine's, Ontario, where James and Catharine Stewart had a son, Elijah, born about 1856. [1]

While in St. Catharine's, Catharine Stewart was interviewed by Benjamin Drew for his book, *The Narratives of Fugitives Slaves*.

> I am from the eastern shore of Maryland, [she recalled]. I never belonged but to one master; he was very bad indeed. I was never sent to school, nor allowed to go to church. They were afraid we would have more sense than they. I have a father there, three sisters, and a brother. My father is quite an old man, and he is used very badly. Many a time he has been kept at work a whole long summer day without sufficient food. A sister of mine has been punished by his taking away her clothes and locking them up, because she used to run when master whipped her. He kept her at work with only what she could pick up to tie on her for decency. He took away her child which had just begun to walk, and gave it to another woman,--but she went and got it afterward. He had a large farm eight miles from home. Four servants were kept at the house. My master could not manage to whip my sister when she as strong. He waited until she was confined, and the second week after her confinement he said, "Now I can handle you, now you are weak." She ran from him, however, and had to go through water, and was sick in consequence.
>
> I was beaten at one time over the head by my master, until the blood ran from my mouth and nose; then he tied me up in the garret, with my hands over my head,--then he brought me down and put me in a little cupboard, where I had to sit cramped up, part of the evening, all night, and until between four and five o'clock, next day, without any food. The cupboard was near a fire, and I thought I should suffocate.
>
> My brother was whipped on one occasion until his back was as raw as a piece of beef, and before it got well, master whipped him again. His back was an awful sight.
>
> We were all afraid of master: when I saw him coming, my heart would jump up into my mouth, as if I had seen a serpent.
>
> I have been wanting to come away for eight years back. I waited for Jim Seward [her husband, James Stewart] to get ready. Jim had promised to take me away and marry me. Our master would allow no marriages on the farm. When Jim had got ready, he let me know,--he brought to me two suits of clothes—men's clothes—which he had bought on purpose for me. I put on both suits to keep me warm. We eluded pursuit and reached Canada in safety.[2]

James Stewart died in Canada about 1862, and Catharine moved to Auburn by 1863, where their daughter, Hester, was born. According to the 1865 New York State census, Catherine was 37 years old and living with Harriet Tubman as a boarder in her home. About 1867, Catharine married Andrew Winslow, and they had a son, Albert, about 1868.

By 1870, Andrew Winslow had died, and Catharine was working as servant. She and her three children, by then aged 14, 7, and 2, lived in the home of Charlotte Parker, a 75-year-old African American woman born

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[1] For all information relating to Tubman genealogy, I am profoundly indebted to Kate Clifford Larson, the world's expert. See Kate Clifford Larson email to Judith Wellman, November 16, 2004. For more information on their escape, see William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1872), 298; Sarah Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, (Auburn, N.Y.: W.J. Moses, 1869), 61-62; Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2004), 110-119; this survey, descriptions for John Stewart and William Henry Stewart.

[2] Benjamin Drew, *The Narratives of Fugitives Slaves* (Boston: J.P. Jewett, 1856), 41-43. Reprint Toronto: Prospero Books, 2000.

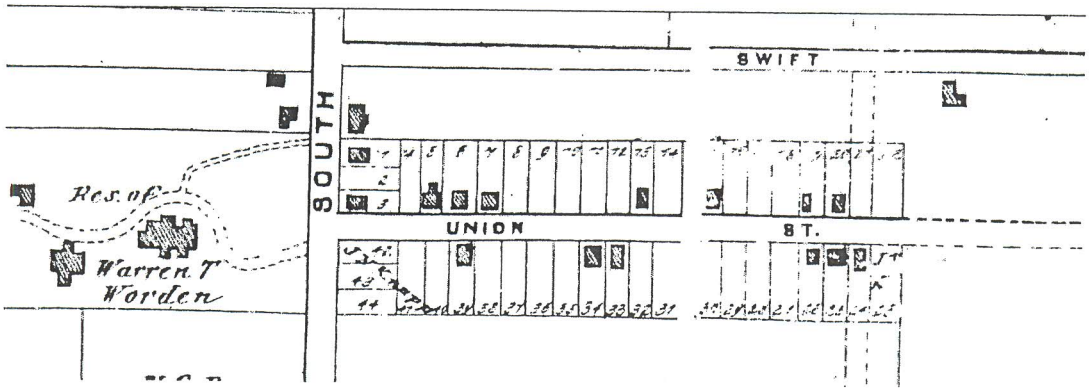
in Maryland, and Anna Woodbeck, a 44 year-old African American woman, born in New York State. The Parker-Woodbeck house was next door to that of Thomas and Anna Stewart Elliott, possibly just east of the Elliott house, on lot 20, as shown in the Richie map of Auburn, dated 1871. By the 1880, this house was no longer there. The lot was owned by Lorenzo Lombard and later sold to William Hosmer. According to tax records, the lot remained vacant at least until 1915. It was vacant in 2004. (It is also possible that information on the 1871 map was incorrect, and that there never was a house on lot 20.)

1865 New York State census

Winslow	Catherine	*	1870	Auburn	p. 11	35	f	b	88	91	Servant	MD
Winslow	Elijah		1870	Auburn	p. 11	14	m	b	88	91	School	Canada
Winslow	Albert		1870	Auburn	p. 11	2	m	b	88	91		NY
Winslow	Hester		1870	Auburn	p. 11	7	f	b	88	91		NY
Woodbeck	Anna		1870	Auburn	p. 11	44	f	b	88	91	Home	NY
Elliot	Thomas	*	1870	Auburn	p. 11	35	m	b	89	92	Laborer	MD
Elliot	Anna	*	1870	Auburn	p. 11	24	f	b	89	92	KH	MD
Elliot	Marietta		1870	Auburn	p. 11	5	f	b	89	92		NY
Elliot	Martha		1870	Auburn	p. 12	2	f	b	89	92		NY

Anna (Anne Marie Stewart) Elliott was Catharine Stewart Winslow's niece by marriage (and also a niece of Harriet Tubman). Catharine Stewart Winslow died by 1880.

Further research in city directories might help clarify the correct address for Charlotte Parker and Anna Woodbeck, and tax assessments before 1880 would help determine if they were indeed living at what is now 33 Richardson (Union) Avenfue and, if so, when their house disappeared.



W.W. Richie, 1871

John H. and Mary Waire House, c. 1890
35 Richardson (Union) Avenue
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of probable freedom seeker and leaders of African American community

February 2005
Looking NW

In the 1860s, John Waire, born about 1836 in Virginia, became part of the partnership of Hornbeck and Waire, successor to Morgan Freeman's barbershop. In Auburn, as elsewhere throughout the nation, barbers formed an elite group among African Americans. Before the Civil War, Morgan Freeman, born in slavery in 1803 to Kate and John Freeman, was the primary barber in Auburn. He died in 1863, and according to his obituary, he kept one of the main safe houses on the Underground Railroad for 29 years. Sometime before 1857, Freeman moved his shop from Cumpston Lane to the northeast corner of Genesee and State Street. Sebeo Hornbeck, born in New York State, probably in slavery, worked with him in that location, and John Waire became his partner in the 1860s.

John Waire quickly became part of the local and regional African American community. In 1870, he was appointed, along with Zadoc Bell and Nelson Davis (Harriet Tubman's husband), as trustee for the property of the short-lived AME Church of Auburn (known also as St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church). He became a hostler and barber in the firm of Hornbeck and Waire, which operated at 3 Genesee Street, 3 Market, and then at 115? Genesee Street, at the corner of State Street.

The 1867-68 Auburn city directory reported John H. Waire lived at 9 Grover Street. Later, the Waire family moved to the new section of Auburn opening on Union Avenue near Harriet Tubman's home. In the 1880s and 1890s, John H. and Mary Waire lived in several houses along Union Avenue (now Richardson Avenue), including 19, 28, and 35 Union Avenue. Judging from the evidence of the relatively rapid turnover of their houses, John Waire was not only a barber but also a real estate developer.

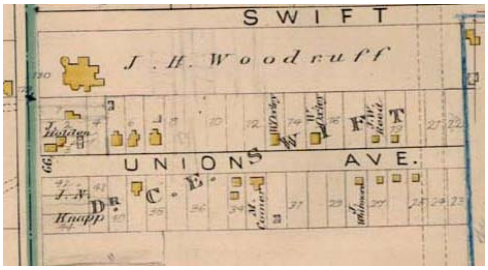
The Waire family did not appear in the 1870 census, but by 1880, they lived at 19 Union Avenue. According to the 1880 census, John H. Waire, age 34, was a barber, born in Virginia. His wife, Mary E.

[DuBoise] Waire, age 29, was born in New York, keeping house. They had 5 children—Alta H. (8), William H. (6), Anna M. (4), Harry (2)., and Bessie (1 month), all born in New York. In the 1887-88 city directory, John H. and Mary Waire lived at 28 Union Avenue. By 1891-1902, they and their children had moved into this house at 35 Union Avenue. No house appeared on this site on either P.A. Cunningham's 1871 map of Auburn or Hopkins' 1882 Auburn atlas. As late as 1885-86, this property was still listed in tax assessments as a vacant lot, owned by John Reed, worth $100, so the Waire family probably built this house to their own specifications sometime in the late 1880s or very early 1890s. It is frame, gable-end-to-the street house, typical of an urban neighborhood in the late nineteenth century. Waire family descendents still own it.[7]

19 Union Avenue
Site of Waire family home, 1880
Current structure probably dates c. 1880-1900

28 Union Avenue
Site of Waire family home, late 1880s.
Current house probably dates c. 1880-1900.

[7]P.A. Cunningham, *Map of Auburn, New York* (Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871); *City Atlas of Auburn, N.Y.* (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1882); Database compiled from Auburn City Directories and Image-Mate Real Property Records from Cayuga County Real Property Office by Tanya Warren. Online.



City Atlas of Auburn, N.Y. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1882.

Waire Family--1880 Census

Waire	John H.	m	34	Bl	Auburn	Union Ave.	19	118	11	2	Head	Barber
Waire	Mary E.	f	29	Bl	Auburn	Union Ave.	19	118	11	2	Wife	Keeping house
Waire	Alta H.	f	8	Bl	Auburn	Union Ave.	19	118	11	2	Daughter	At school
Waire	William H.	m	6	Bl	Auburn	Union Ave.	19	118	11	2	Son	At school
Waire	Anna M.	f	4	Bl	Auburn	Union Ave.	19	118	11	2	Daughter	At Home
Waire	Harry	m	2	Bl	Auburn	Union Ave.	19	118	11	2	Son	At Home
Waire	Bessie	f	1mo	Bl	Auburn	Union Ave.	19	118	11	2	Daughter	At Home

Waire Family Residences from Auburn City Directories and Cayuga County Image-Mate Database

Waire, Altie	no	1894-95	Lincoln- 6 bds	Gone-replaced by Wegman's
Waire, Altie	no	1895-96	South- 106	Gone
Waire, Altie	no	1891-92	Union Ave- 3	Most definitely the same house
Waire, Anna	no	1895-96	Fulton- 41-1/2	Gone
Waire, Bessie E.	no	1900-01	Union Ave.- 35	Most definitely same house-Imate suggests const. Date of 1890.
Waire, Bessie E.	no	1897-98	Swift- 40, student CGS	Gone-replaced by 1920's house
Waire, Grace L.	no	1900-01	Elizabeth- 7	Victorian, built about 1900-likely same house
Waire, Grace L.	no	1900-02	Union Ave-. 35 bds	Most definitely same house-Imate suggests const. Date of 1890.
Waire, Harrison D.	no	1895-97; 1901	Union Ave- 35 bds	Most definitely same house-Imate suggests const. Date of 1890.
Waire, Henry D.	no	1897-98	Union Ave.- 35 bds	Most definitely same house-Imate suggests const. Date of 1890.
Waire, John & Mary (DuBoise)	yes	1929	Union/Richardson-35	
Waire, John H.	yes	1867-1868	Grover- 9	Gone-replaced by late Victorian structure
Waire, John H. and Mary	yes	1879-80; 1880-81	Genesee- 3 h (work)	Gone
Waire, John H. and Mary	yes	1867-68	Grover- 9	Gone-replaced by late Victorian structure
Waire, John H. and Mary	yes	1887-88)	Market- 35 (work)	Gone
Waire, John H. and Mary	yes	1891-94	Market 57- (work)	Gone
Waire, John H. and Mary	yes	1879-80; 1880-81	Union Ave -19 n South h	Possible site of earlier home-present home of 1890 const.-Imate
Waire, John H. and Mary	yes	1887-88)	Union Ave 28 h	Possible site of earlier home-present home of 1890 const.-Imate

Waire, John H. and Mary	yes	1891-94	Union Ave 35 h	Most definitely same house-Imate suggests const. Date of 1890.
Waire, William	no	1893-96	Market 57	Gone
Waire, William	no	1893-96	Union Ave. 35 bds.	Most definitely same house-Imate suggests const. Date of 1890.

Tax Assessments—35 Union Avenue

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	REAL-$
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1885	35 Union-vacant lot	100
Reed	John W.	Auburn	1886	35 Union-vacant lot	100

Sources:

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Auburn, Two Hundred Years of History, 1793-1993 (Auburn: Auburn Bicentennial Committee, 1992), 39.
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Philip and Mary Gaskin House
34 Union Richardson (Union) Avenue
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seekers

497
February 2, 2005
Looking SW

This house represents the second generation of families of freedom seekers, as those who came in the 1850s and 1860s began to intermarry.

Thomas Elliott and Ann Marie Stewart (Harriet Tubman's niece), both freedom seekers from Maryland, bought a home at 31 Union (Richardson) Avenue. They raised two daughters. One of them, Mary Elliott, married Philip Gaskin, who had come in 1864 from Virginia as a young boy (8-10 years old), with his parents, Mary and Richard Gaskin. The Gaskins settled in Ledyard, where Mary and Richard bought a home on Dixon Road in 1869. When Mary Elliott and Philip Gaskin married, they built this home at 34 Union Avenue (now Richardson), across the street from her parents, in a newly-opened suburb on the south of the city.

The 1880 census did not list any Gaskins in Auburn, but the Auburn city directory for 1887-88 listed Philip Gaskin at 34 Union. In 1892, Mary and Philip Gaskin, both 38, were living here, along with Delia (age 49), Frankie (age 40), Naomi (age 43), Harriet M. (age 34), and Mary and Philip's two children, Harriet (age 14) and John (age 10). Philip Gaskin was a barber, perhaps working with the firm of his neighbor, John Waire, who lived across the street at 35 Union Avenue (Hornbeck and Waire). In 1894, Philip Gaskin was assessed for a residence at 34 Gaskin worth $100.

Further work in assessment records would indicate when the current house was built.

By 1929, Philip and Mary Gaskin were living at 77 Chapman Avenue with their son, Philip Gaskin, Jr., his wife, Myrtle Gaskin, and their children.

Mary Gaskin, 1913
With Harriet Tubman and friends, at Tubman Home
Courtesy of Tubman Home for the Aged

John Brown Hall, c. 1912
Harriet Tubman, in wheelchair, front row, center
Mary Gaskin, back row, standing, third from left
Photo Courtesy of Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged

Auburn, South, 1904

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Belt-Gaskin House
77 Chapman Avenue
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seekers

November 2004
Looking NE

The Belt-Gaskin house, continuously inhabited or owned by freedom seekers or their descendents since its construction about 1870, represents the continuity and importance of freedom seekers in Auburn from the 1860s to the present.

About 1805, Rachael Belt and Thomas Belt were born in Maryland, probably in slavery. Sometime before 1849, they came to New York State, where their son George was born about 1849. Perhaps as a result of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, they left New York State for Canada, where another son, Isaiah, was born about 1854.

Between 1865 and 1870, Thomas and Rachael Belt returned to the U.S. and settled on Cornell Street (now Chapman Avenue) in Auburn, New York, newly opened on the south side of the city, near Harriet Tubman's home, where many other freedom seekers were also buying homes. An

1868 manuscript map by John S. Clark, Auburn Surveyor, shows a series of small houses already built along the north side of Cornell Street on lands "conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms," including on the lot that the Belt family purchased in 1869 on the "East line of Cornell Street" [shown as lot 12 on the Clark map?] from Horace Fitch, son of Auburn abolitionist Abijah Fitch. The small houses indicated on this map were, however, perhaps meant to show what could be built there rather than already existed, for Horace Fitch seems to have owned only a "vacant lot" on Cornell Street, assessed in 1868 for $100. In 1869, Thomas Belt paid taxes on a residence valued at $200. In 1874, his property was valued at $450, $325 in 1875 and $300 in 1877.[1] It seems likely, therefore, that the house at 77 Cornell Street was built sometime between 1869 and 1874.

In 1870, Rachael Belt was, according to the census of that year, 65 years old. She was keeping house for her husband, Thomas Belt, also age 65, a porter in a store, and her two sons still at home, George, age 21, a teamster, and Isaiah, age 17, who attended school. Thomas's will, dated 1882, mentioned other children, too: Julia Belt Cannon (wife of Plymouth Cannon of Auburn), Charlotte Belt Washington (wife of John Washington of Auburn), Harriet Belt Williams (wife of George Williams of Canada) and Emeline Belt Thomas (widow of John Thomas of Canada).[2]

Other members of the Belt family living in Auburn may have been related to Thomas and Rachael, although probably not as their children. Zadoc, Joseph, and Howard Bell were all born in Washington, D.C. [3] Zadoc, age 25, was a machinist. He had married a woman, Uretha (Reda) Bell, age 23, born in Canada. Jane Bell, age 13, was in the county orphan asylum. Two other women, Mary Bell (age 40), born in Canada, and Jemima Bell (age 14), born in Canada, and working with Cornelia Langham, were living as the only African Americans in other households. Whether they were related to Thomas and Rachael Belt is unknown.

In 1870, Zadoc Bell was appointed, along with Nelson Davis (Harriet Tubman's husband) and others, to a committee to care for the AME church property (probably the short-lived St. Mark's AME Church). In 1880, Zadoc Bell and Uretha Bell were living at 17 Garrow Street, just around the corner from Thomas and Rachael Belt. Joseph and Howard Bell were both living on Genesee Street.

After Thomas Belt's death, Thomas and Rachael's son, George Belt, continued to live at 77 Cornell Street with his wife Mary E. The 1896-97 city directory listed George as a janitor and Mary as a cook and nurse.

In 1892, John Thomas, one of the first AME Zion ministers in Auburn and himself a freedom seeker from Maryland, was boarding at the Belt home at the time of his death.

In 1903, by the terms of George Belt's will, the house was given to the AME Zion Church, to be used by the Belt family until they no longer needed it. The 1920 listed the Belts as still living at this location.

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[1] Tax rolls, 1868-1875.
[2] 1870 U.S. Census and Thomas Bell will, 1882, City of Auburn Records Retention Center.
[3] Census records show that Zadoc, Joseph, and Howard Bell were all born in Washington, D.C. According to Auburn Bicentennial Committee, *Auburn: 200 Years of History, 1793-1993* (1992), 39,
Zadoc, Howard, and Howard's wife Julia (b. Canada) are buried in Lot 92 Home at Fort Hill Cemetery.

In 1927, Philip and Mary Gaskin purchased this house. Philip Gaskin had been born in Virginia about 1854. He was the son of Richard and Mary Gaskin, probably freedom seekers from Virginia, who had come to Ledyard, Cayuga County, about 1864. Richard and Mary Gaskin purchased a house in Ledyard in 1869. In 1886, they sold their Ledyard property. Mary Gaskin died in 1893 at 63 Hamilton Street, but from 1899-1903, Richard Gaskin owned a house 18 Aspen Street in Auburn. Their son Philip married Mary Elliott, daughter of Ann Marie Stewart Elliott (one of Harriet Tubman's nieces) and Thomas Elliott (a freedom seeker from Maryland and one of the famous Dover Eight). Mary Elliott Gaskin was one of only three people mentioned in Harriet Tubman's will. She inherited one-third of Tubman's estate at her death.[4]

Philip and Mary Elliott Gaskin moved first to 35 Union Street (now Richardson Avenue), near her parents' house. Then, in 1927, they purchased 77 Cornell Street. This was a double house, and Philip and Mary Gaskin lived on one side, and their son, Philip, Jr., lived on the other, with his wife, Myrtle and their children, Richard, Jennie, Lida, Mary, and Rose.

Jennie Gaskin married William Copes, and their daughter, Pauline Copes Johnson, still lived in Auburn in 2005.

Laberta Gaskin Greenlea, who later moved to Rochester, grew up in this house. She remembered that there was a fire in the house at one time, and they found some names on the walls of the back stairway. They wondered if "Aunt Harriet, when she came to visit my grandmother, was part of the Underground Railway."[5] Given the age of this house, it is quite possible, even likely, that Harriet Tubman did visit this house. Whose names these were on the walls of the back stairway and how they came to be written there will remain forever a mystery.

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[4] For information on Richard and Mary Gaskin, see section in this survey report under Gaskin/King House in Ledyard Gaskin House at 18 Aspen Street, Auburn. Harriet Tubman's will dated ? Cayuga County Probate Records

[5] Conversation with Laberta Gaskin Greenlea, January 12, 2005.

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Belt, Helene, April 6, 2005
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Greenlea, Laberta Gaskin, January 10, 2004.
Johnson, Pauline Copes, February 23, 2004; April 8, 2005.

Maps

1868 Clark, John S., "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y." A.C. Taber, Surveyor, September 1868. Cayuga County Clerk's Office, Auburn, New York.

1871 Cunningham, P.A. Cayuga Co., N.Y. Philadelphia: W.W. Richie, 1871. City Hall, Auburn, New York

1882 City Atlas of Auburn, N.Y. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1882. http://www.rootsweb.com/~nycayuga/maps/1882/index.html#1882

2005 Tax map, plotted from current tax information by Bernard Corcoran, Cayuga County Real Property Office, 2005. http://co.cayuga.ny.us/realproperty/77chapman.

Property and genealogical research by:
Tanya Warren

William Henry Stewart, Jr., Home, c. 1901
64 Garrow
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of William Henry Stewart, Jr., (freedom seeker and Harriet Tubman's nephew) and his wife, Emma Moseby Stewart

016
November 2004
Looking NE

022
November 2004
From Chapman Avenue, looking NW

Built in 1899 by Harriet Tubman's nephew, William Henry Stewart, Jr. (born in slavery in 1851), this house represents the community of family and friends, many of them freedom seekers from Maryland, that Tubman created around her in Auburn. With other houses along Chapman Avenue and Garrow, Fitch, and Parker Streets, this house suggests the culmination of the dream of all of those who left slavery, to find a community where they could settle in safety, with relative economic prosperity, religious freedom, and education for their children. Several of descendents of the original generation still live in this neighborhood, including Judith G. Bryant, great-great-granddaughter of William Henry Stewart, who still lived in this house in the early twenty-first century.

All of her life, Harriet Tubman worked for her family. In all of her trips to Maryland (as many as thirteen) almost of the approximately seventy people she brought out of slavery were family and friends from her old neighborhood. Although she had no children (with the possible exception of Margaret Stewart, born in Maryland in 1850, whom Tubman brought to Auburn before 1862), Harriet Tubman had eight brothers and sisters. Two of her brothers, John Stewart and William Henry Stewart, went first to Canada in 1854-55 and later moved to Auburn, as did several nieces and nephews.

Tax assessments suggest that this house was built by William Henry Stewart, Jr., son of Tubman's younger brother, in 1899. It replaced an earlier house on the same site constructed by William Henry Stewart, Jr., for his new wife, Emma Moseby, shortly after their marriage in 1879. It remains virtually intact from its original construction.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	REAL-$
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1882	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1883	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1884	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1885	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1886	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1887	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1888	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1889	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1890	64 Garrow-residence	250
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1891	64 Garrow-residence	250
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1892	64 Garrow-residence	250
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1893	64 Garrow-residence	250
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1894	64 Garrow-residence	250
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1895	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1896	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1897	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1898	64 Garrow-residence	200
Stewart	**William H.**	**Auburn**	**1899**	**64 Garrow-residence**	**800**
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1900	64 Garrow-residence	800
Stewart	William H.	Auburn	1901	64 Garrow-residence	800

William Henry Stewart, Jr.'s story began in Maryland, with his birth in Dorchester County in 1851. His father was William Henry Stewart, born 1830 as Henry Ross, younger brother of Araminta Ross (who would be known in her adult years as Harriet Tubman). His mother was Harriet Ann, born in 1832, also in Dorchester County. He was the oldest of ten children—two boys and eight girls—the two boys born in slavery and eight born in freedom in Canada.[6]

William Henry Stewart, Sr., escaped at Christmas 1854 with his two brothers and the help of their sister, Harriet Tubman. They went to St. Catherine's Canada, where William Henry Stewart, Jr., his mother, Harriet Ann, and possibly his younger brother, John Isaac Stewart, joined William Sr. a year or two later. Eight sisters were born in St. Catherine's over the next several years.[7]

Sometime before 1875, William Henry Stewart, Jr., left his parents and siblings in Canada and joined his aunt Harriet Tubman in Auburn. In 1879, he married Emma Moseby in the Wall Street Methodist Church.[8] Shortly afterwards, they built their house at 64 Garrow Street, on the corner of Chapman Avenue (then known as Cornell Street) and Garrow Street, locally referred to as "the last house on Cornell Street." This neighborhood had been developed in the 1860s, and many of

[6]Kate Clifford Larson, "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* (New York: Ballantine Books), after 295; email July 6, 2005.
[7] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 118-19, 124.
[8] Larson, 260.

the first homes had been sold by Abijah Fitch and his son-- European American abolitionists, landowners, and industrialists—to freedom seekers.

William Henry Stewart, Jr., and Emma Moseby Stewart had three children: Charles Edward (1880-1969), Alida Maud (1882-1947, who married Carroll H. Johnson), and Emma L. Stewart (1886-1888).[9]

In 1900, William Henry Stewart, Jr., was working at David Munson Osborne's factory, as was his son, Charles H. Stewart. Daughter Alida was still living at home. The family was doing well financially, and they reflected their economic prosperity by building a new house, the one still standing on this site in 2005, to take the place of their original one.[10]

William Henry Stewart, Jr., did not live to enjoy his new dwelling long. He died in 1906. Emma Moseby Stewart died in 1912. They were buried in Fort Hill Cemetery, beneath a gigantic Norway Spruce planted by their children. The tree has become a landmark to locate the grave of Harriet Tubman. William Henry Stewart, Sr., died in 1912 and was buried in the same plot where his sister, Harriet Tubman Davis, would be laid to rest in 1913. The grave is adjacent to and south of that of William Henry Stewart, Sr.'s, son and daughter-in-law. All are protected by the towering evergreen—perhaps the tallest of Fort Hill trees—in a lovely family plot.[11]

This house has always remained in the Stewart family. Charles Stewart never married and had no children. His sister, Alida Maud, married Carroll Johnson.

Judith G. Bryant recalled that "Uncle Charles (Grandma Alida's brother) was a skilled artisan, a woodworker who loved to tinker and loved to read, who crafted intricate games and puzzles for his baby niece (my mother) and, after his father's death in 1906, was primarily responsible for keeping the house and garage in tiptop shape. (It would be some years before he would own an automobile to keep in the garage to chauffeur his sister, her daughter and others to visit relatives in St. Catharines, Canada, and friends in New York City.) Throughout their lives, the property was a constant source of comfort and enormous pride for Alida and Charles who took good care of their family members (including Harriet Tubman), lavishly entertained friends, and realized how very fortunate they were. During their lifetimes, the property was always well maintained. Undoubtedly trained by his father, Charles was clearly up to the task."[12]

Description

Anchoring the corner of this historic neighborhood, the Stewart-Bryant house reflects the character of a turn-of-the century building, with colonial revival details (such as corner blocks on interior door molding). At the same time, it was clearly created to fit this unique spot. It has three gables, facing North (toward Fitch Avenue), South (toward Chapman Avenue), and West (toward Garrow Street), with 45 degree angles on each roofline. Its interior staircase begins at what was originally the front door, on the northeast corner of Garrow Street and Chapman Avenue. Original porch entrances still exist on the South and East. The house is in excellent condition. Virtually every feature of this house retains it original character, including its original interior molding

[9] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," after 295.
[10] *Auburn City Directory* (Auburn, New York: Alonzo P. Lamey, 1900).
[11] Larson, 276, 289, and "Ross-Stewart Family Tree," after 295.
[12] Judith G. Bryant email March 23, 2005.

(with original finish), and original exterior porch moldings. Exterior siding was installed in 1992 to reflect the original cove (or drop) siding (Dutchlap clapboards) on the main body of the house and scalloped shingles on the gables, which still exist underneath.

A 1-1/2 story garage was demolished in 1999. Family legend suggests that this was used as a playhouse for the children and that it may have been part of the earlier house on this site.

Written with Judith Bryant and Kate Clifford Larson

Clarence (Dye) and Lena Stewart House
66 Garrow Street
Auburn, New York 13021

Significance: Home of Harriet Tubman's grand-nephew, Clarence "Dye" Stewart, early twentieth century

November 2004
Looking South

Sometime after 1904, probably after his marriage to Lena, Clarence "Dye" Stewart (Harriet Tubman's great-nephew), son of John Henry Stewart (Harriet Tubman's nephew) moved from 20 Chapman Avenue to this house at 68 Garrow Street. He was living here at the time of Harriet Tubman's death, and he and another great nephew, Charles Stewart, were the only two family members with Tubman when she died. The others at her bedside were two clergymen (Rev. E.U.A. Brooks and Rev. Charles A. Smith, clergyman with the Massachusetts 54th Regiment during the Civil War), Frances Smith (Charles Smith's wife), Martha Rdgeway, Tubman's nurse, and Eliza E. Peterson, from the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Texas. Tubman's last words supposedly were: "I go away to prepare a place for you, that where I am you also may be."[13]

[13] Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 288-89.

Robert Griffen and Isaac and Helen White
60 and 62 Garrow Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Homes of freedom seekers

February 2005
Looking NE

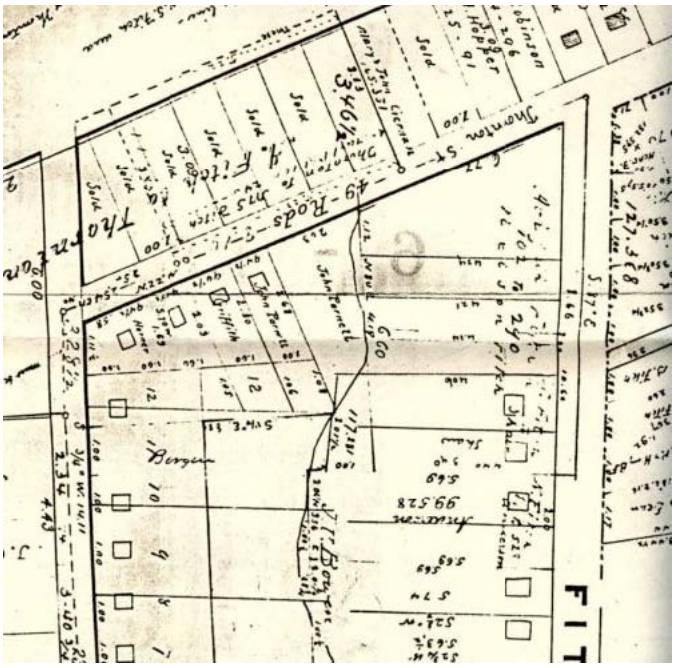
Description: Both houses, with gable ends to the street, are typical of urban working class forms of the mid-nineteenth century. The somewhat steeper gable of the Griffen house suggests that it may have been built later than the White house, in between what appear on the Clark map of Abijah Fitch's lands as the second and third houses from the corner of Cornell (now Chapman Avenue) and Garrow Streets.

Significance: These two houses are one of several, including four or five continguous dwellings on this corner of Garrow Street and Chapman Avenue (and one across the street at 66 Garrow Street), sold to African Americans who were freedom seekers or affiliated with freedom seekers in the years directly after the Civil War by Abijah Fitch, a European American abolitionist and Underground Railroad sympathizer.

According to the 1880 census, Isaac White and Helen White lived at 62 Garrow Street, the house on the right. Isaac White was 63, born in Alabama and a laborer. Helen was 65, born in New York State. They still lived there in 1887-88, according to the city directory.

In 1880, 60 Garrow Street, the house on the left, was inhabited by Robert B. Lee, age 49, born in Washington, D.C., and his wife, Henrietta Lee, age 48, born in New York of parents who had been born in Massachusetts. Both were laborers. By 1887, Robert H. Griffen lived at 60 Garrow Street. In 1860, Robert Griffen had been listed in the census living in Auburn as born in New York State, the ten-year-old son of Charles Griffen, a whitewasher born in Virginia, and Mary Griffen, born in Pennsylvania (who listed her birthplace in 1850 as Virginia, in 1870 as Maryland, and in 1880 as Virginia). About 1868, Charles and Mary Griffen had purchased the house just north of Robert's, at 58 Garrow Street.

A house that may have been the White house appeared on the 1868 manuscript map of lands sold by Abijah Fitch.



Clark, John S., "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y." A.C. Taber, Surveyor, September 1868. Cayuga County Clerk's Office, Auburn, New York.

60 Garrow Street

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	REAL-$	TOTAL-$	MISC.
Griffin	Jane	Auburn	1887	60 Garrow-residence	200	200	
Griffin	Jane	Auburn	1888	60 Garrow-residence	200	200	
Griffin	Jane	Auburn	1889	60 Garrow-residence	200	200	

Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1890	60 Garrow	200	200	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1891	60 Garrow	200	200	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1892	60 Garrow-residence	200	200	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1893	60 Garrow-residence & lot	200	200	
Griffin	**Robert H.**	**Auburn**	**1894**	**60 1/2 & 60 Garrow-house & lot**	**500**	**500**	**2-family house?**
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1895	60 1/2 & 60 Garrow-house & lot	500	500	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1896	60 1/2 & 60 Garrow-house & lot	500	500	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1897	60 1/2 & 60 Garrow-house & lot	500	500	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1898	60 1/2 (residence)& 60 Garrow	500	500	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1899	60 1/2 (residence)& 60 Garrow	500	500	
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1900	60 1/2 (residence)& 60 Garrow	500	500	

The 1904 City of Auburn atlas shows a second house on the lot at 60 Garrow Street, just north of the current structure. Probably the second house was built between 1893 and 1894, accounting for the rise in assessments from $200 to $500 and the addition of 60-1/2 Garrow Street. The second building no longer stands.

62 Garrow Street

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property	REAL-$	MISC.
White	Isaac	Auburn	1868	Thornton-lot	75	First entry
White	**Isaac**	**Auburn**	**1869**	**Thornton-residence**	**200**	
White	Isaac	Auburn	1870	Thornton-residence	200	
White	Isaac	Auburn	1871			no entry
White	Isaac	Auburn	1872			no entry
White	Isaac	Auburn	1873	Garrow-residence	200	entered as "Ira" White
White	Isaac	Auburn	1874	Garrow-residence	375	no entry
			1875			no "w's" available
White	Isaac	Auburn	1876	Garrow-residence	225	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1877	Garrow-residence	225	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1878	Garrow-residence	150	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1879			no entry
White	Isaac	Auburn	1880	62 Garrow-residence	150	1 dog

White	Isaac	Auburn	1881	62 Garrow-residence	200	
White	**Isaac**	**Auburn**	**1882**	**62 Garrow-res.**	**500**	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1883	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1884	62 Garrow-res.	500	1dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1885	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1886	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1887	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1888	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1889	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1890	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1891	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1892	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1893	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1894	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1895	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1896	62 Garrow-res.	500	1 dog
White	Isaac	Auburn	1897			no entry-see Rob't. Griffin records for 62 Garrow
Griffin	**Robert H.**	**Auburn**	**1897**	**62 Garrow-house & lot**	**500**	1 dog
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1898	62 Garrow-house & lot	500	1 dog
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1899	62 Garrow-house & lot	500	1 dog
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1900	62 Garrow-house & lot	500	1 dog
Griffin	Robert H.	Auburn	1901	62 Garrow-house & lot	500	1 dog

Charles and Mary Griffen House
58 Garrow Street
Auburn, New York 13021

Significance: Site of home of Freedom Seekers

February 2005
Looking SE

From the earliest years of post-Iroquois settlement, Auburn was the home African Americans, born in slavery in New York State, who formed the nucleus of a community of free people of color. They also created a strong network of support for freedom seekers from the South, who came to Auburn in large numbers, beginning in the 1830s. Most of these freedom seekers continued on northward to Canada, however. Before the late 1850s, few remained to make their homes in Auburn.

Two of those who stayed were Charles and Mary Griffin, who came to Auburn from Virginia sometime before 1850. The Griffin family did not get rich in Auburn, but they did create a stable family life, send their children to school, and earn enough to buy their own home on Garrow Street, where they lived for many decades.

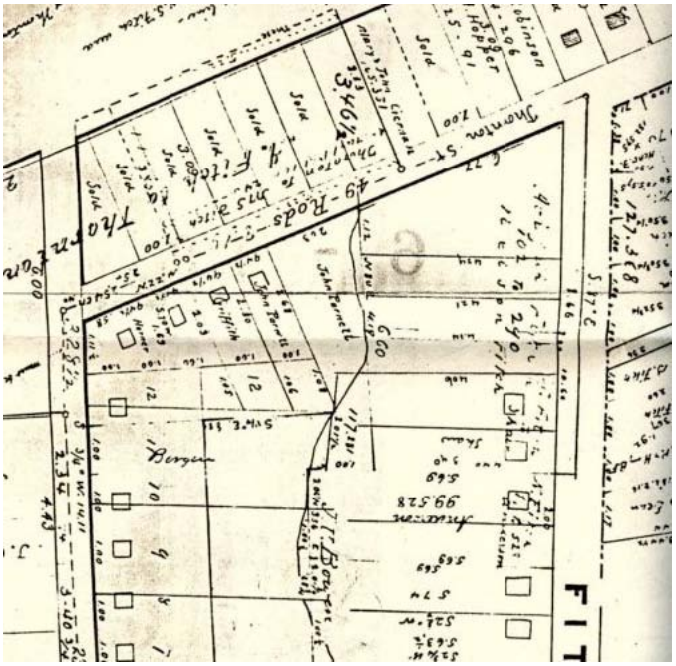
In 1850, Charles and Mary Griffin were both 28 years old, and both listed themselves as illiterate. Charles worked as a laborer. By 1860, Charles listed his occupation as a whitewasher, and he had acquired $100 worth of personal property. Mary now listed her birthplace as Pennsylvania. They had a daughter, Elvira, age 14, and a son, Robert, age 10, both born in New York State, and both in school. In 1870, the census continued to list Charles as a whitewasher, born in Virginia, but Mary now listed her birthplace as Maryland. Both children had left home. Mary still counted herself as illiterate, but Charles did not. Mary Jones, age 23, born in Pennsylvania, also lived in their household.

In the late 1850s, city directories had listed the Griffin address as 22 Seminary Street. In 1867, they were living on Owasco Street near the city limits. By 1869, however, they had purchased their own home in the new suburb developed by Abijah Fitch and his sons on the south side of the city, just west of Harriet Tubman's home. An 1868 manuscript map, "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y." shows a house on the east side of Thornton St. (now Garrow), the third one from the corner, labeled "Griffith," and this is probably the lot purchased by Charles and Mary Griffith.[14] The house was variously listed in the directories as "Thornton n. Cornell" (1869), "Garrow n. Fitch" (1870), or "Garrow n. Cornell" (1879-80). By 1887-88, Charles Griffin is listed at 58 Garrow Street.

At a time when many African Americans were creating independent communities in enclaves throughout the eastern states or in newly-opened frontier areas of the West, these freedom seekers were in effect creating a small community of their own. The Griffins and their neighbors would become anchors for a community of freedom seekers from Maryland and Virginia who purchased homes along Garrow, Cornell, Fitch, and Parker Streets in the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s. Overall, these African Americans shared this neighborhood for generations with people of English, Irish, German, and American-born descent, but there were high concentration of African Americans, especially those who had been born in the South in slavery, in particular small blocks.

Charles Griffen's name (as Griffths) was listed in an 1868 manuscript map of lands sold by Abijah Fitch, European American abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter, to white and black after the Civil War.

[14] A.C. Taber, Surveyor, "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y.," manuscript map in Cayuga County Clerk's Office.



Clark, John S., "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y." A.C. Taber, Surveyor, September 1868. Cayuga County Clerk's Office, Auburn, New York.

The deed and a mortgage dated July 22, 1870, were in Mary J. Griffin's name, a practice common to many freedom seekers. Perhaps they feared the potential loss of their lands if their status as former slaves was discovered, so they put the official deeds in their spouse's names.[15]

This particular corner, the northeast corner of Garrow and Cornell, was especially stable over a long period of time. John Purnell, most likely a freedom seeker from Maryland, purchased the house to just north of the Griffen house at the same time that Charles and Mary Griffen purchased this one. Charles and Mary's son, Robert, purchased the house just south of them, at 60 Garrow Street. Isaac and Helen White, from Alabama, owned 62 Garrow Street. In 1880, William Henry Stewart, Jr., grandnephew of Harriet Tubman, and his new wife, Emma Moseby Stewart, purchased the vacant lot on the corner and built a new house, which they replaced in 1901 with a brand new dwelling.[16] Thomas and Rachael Belt, freedom seekers from Maryland, bought the house at 77 Cornell Street, just around the corner, in 1868. In 1891, Mary J. Griffin sold 58 Garrow Street to Mary J. Jones.[17]

Charles continued to be a very active and vocal member of the African American community. In 1846, he was a trustee of the first school for African American children in Auburn, set up on

[15] Mortgage deed, Mary J. Griffin and Husband to Chrles P. Fitch, July 22, 1870, Mortgage book 77, page 396, City of Auburn, Cayuga County Clerk's Office.
[16] Judy Bryant, oral tradition.
[17] See Belt-Gaskin House. Mary J. Griffin to Mary J. Jones, June 18, 1891, City Deed Bok 23, page 228.

Washington Street in the building that shortly became the first AME Zion Church. The school disbanded in 1851, when African American children began to attend local public schools. In 1852, Charles Griffen donated $1.00 to the New York State Anti-Slavery Society through agent J.R. Johnson. Most significantly in 1882, C. Griffen published a book entitled *A Sketch of the Origin of the Colored Man* (Auburn: Auburnian Steam Printing House, 1882). The only C. Griffen in Auburn at the time was Charles Griffen, at 58 Garrow Street.[18]

Description

The house as it stands today is probably not the original. Assessment records suggest that the original house may have been torn down about 1913-1914. The assessment records are ambiguous, however. Mary Jones was assessed for both a house and lot and a vacant lot in 1913 and 1914. It is possible that the current structure is actually the original house on this lot and that the vacant lot was adjacent to this one.

Many thanks to Tanya Warren for all property research.

Mortgage Deed Abstract
Mary J. Griffin & husband to Charles P. Fitch
22 July 1870
City of Auburn, Cayuga County, NY
Mortgage Book 77, page 396

This indenture made this 22nd day of July in 1870 between Mary J. Griffin and her husband Charles Griffin of Auburn and Charles P. Fitch of the same place in consideration of $205.81 being for purchase money, do by these presents grant, etc., All that tract of land situate in the City of Auburn, NY, being part of the Garrow Farm bounded and described as follows: Beginning at the East line of Garrow St, (formerly Thornton St.), 3 chains, 42 links North of the intersection of the North line of Cornell St. with the East line of Garrow Street; thence North 70 degrees East on John Purnell's south line, 2 chains and 36 links; thence South 1 ¼ degrees East 1 chain; thence

[18]Henry Hall, *History of Auburn* (Auburn, New York: Denis Brothers & Company, 1869), reprint 1989, 256. Thanks to Mary Seymour for finding this. *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, July 16, 1852. Thanks to Shayle Kann for discovering the book by Charles Griffen.

South, 70 degrees West, 2 chains and 3 links to the East line of said Garrow St.; thence North on the line of said street 94 ½ links to the place of beginning. And to pay party of the 2nd part (Charles Fitch) for insuring the house on said lot. This grant is intended as a security for the payment of the sum of $205.81 with interest according to the condition of a bond this day executed and delivered by Mary and Charles Griffin to Charles Fitch. (Payment details follow).
Witness: D. O. Baker
Signed by the mark of Mary J. Griffin and the hand of Charles Griffin

Deed Abstract
Mary J. Griffin to Mary J. Jones
18 June 1891
City of Auburn, Cayuga County, NY
City Deed Book 23, page 228

This indenture made this 18th day of June in 1891 between Mary J. Griffin, of Auburn, NY..and Mary J. Jones, of the same place..in consideration of $1 and other considerations…hath sold, etc. all that tract…of land situate in the City of Auburn, (being part of the Garrow Farm), described as follows: Beginning at the East line of Garrow St, (formerly Thornton St.), 3 chains, 42 links North of the intersection of the North line of Cornell St. with the East line of Garrow Street; thence North 70 degrees East on John Purnell's south line, 2 chains and 36 links; thence South 1 ¼ degrees East 1 chain; thence South, 70 degrees West, 2 chains and 3 links to the East line of said Garrow St.; thence North on the line of said street 94 ½ links to the place of beginning. Reserving to the party of the first part (Mary J. Griffin) use of said premises during her natural life and of her husband. Together with all singular, etc…….

Witness: Harry R. Kidney
Signed by the mark of Mary J. Griffin.

Research and transcription by Tanya Warren

Mary and Charles Griffen House
58 Garrow Street--Assessments
Research by Tanya Warren

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	YEAR	Property/Lot #	REAL-$
Griffin	Mary	1880	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1881	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1882	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1883	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1884	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1885	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1886	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1887	58 Garrow-residence	200

Griffin	Mary	1888	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1889	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1890	58 Garrow-residence	200
Griffin	Mary	1891	58 Garrow-residence	200
Jones	Mary J.	1892	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1893	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1894	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1895	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1896	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1897	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1898	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1899	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1900	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1901	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1902	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1903	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1904	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1905	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1906	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1907	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1908	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1909	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1910	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary	1911	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1911	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary	1912	58 Garrow-vacant lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1912	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	Mary J.	1913	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	**Mary**	**1913**	**58 Garrow-vacant lot**	**200**
Jones	Mary J.	1914	58 Garrow-House & lot	200
Jones	**Mary**	**1914**	**58 Garrow-vacant lot**	**200**
Jones	**Mary**	**1915**	**58 Garrow**	
Osborne	**Jessica**	**1916**	**58 Garrow-house & lot**	**300**

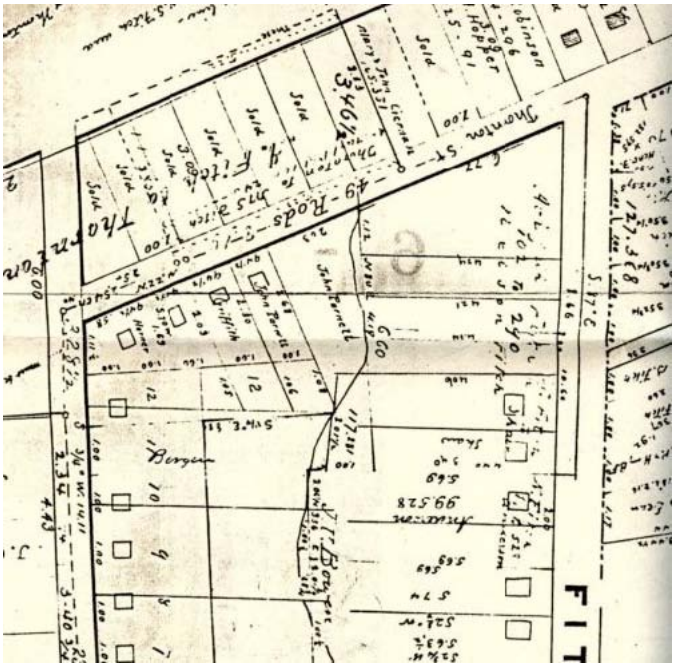
John and Mariah Purnell House
56 Garrow
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seekers

046
November 2004
Looking East

John Purnell, born in Maryland, appears to have been one of those many freedom seekers who migrated to Auburn after the Civil War and purchased land here on the south side of Auburn, near Harriet Tubman's home, from abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter Abijah Fitch. His name is listed in this spot on a manuscript map dated 1868 of lands acquired by Abijah Fitch from the former Garrow and Richardson farms.

The house itself, although now being fixed up with vinyl siding, new porches, and new windows, retains its original gable and wing form, typical of vernacular Greek Revival houses throughout upstate New York in the mid-nineteenth century. With the wing on the south side, this would be more typically a rural than an urban form, perhaps reflecting this relatively large lot. Assessments show that Purnell owned a vacant lot on the corner of Garrow and Fitch, this house (his residence, assessed at $600), another small house and lot just to the south of this one (assessed at $200), and two vacant lots just south of that, in a damp swale that inhibited construction of other houses there until 2004.



Clark, John S., "Plot of the Lands as Conveyed by Abijah Fitch on Garrow and Richardson Farms, Auburn, N.Y." A.C. Taber, Surveyor, September 1868. Cayuga County Clerk's Office, Auburn, New York.

The 1870 census listed John Purnell as a laborer, born in Maryland, age 32, living with his wife, Maria, born in Pennsylvania (of parents born in Virginia, according to the 1880 census) age 28, keeping house. They had three sons, Charles (age 4), John (age 3), and Albert (8 months). That year, John Purnell was appointed to a committee with Zadoc Bell and Nelson Davis (Harriet Tubman's husband) to care for the AME Church, probably the short-lived St. Mark's AME, which met for a time in the Auburn City Hall.[19]

By 1880, Charles was no longer in the household, but John, Jr., now 13, and Albert, now 10, still lived at home and were attending school. John, still a laborer, was now 44, and Mariah was 39.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	REAL-$	TOTAL-$
Purnell	John	Auburn	1886	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900

[19] *Auburn, 200 years of History, 1793-1993* (Auburn: Auburn Bicentennial Committee, 1992), 39.

Purnell	John	Auburn	1887	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1888	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1889	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1890	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1891	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1892	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900

Purnell	John	Auburn	1893	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1894	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1895-1906	50 Garrow-vacant lot. 52 Garrow-residence. 54 Garrow-house & lot. 56 Garrow-2 vacant lots.	100, 600, 200, 200 respectively	900
Purnell	John	Auburn	1880	56 Garrow-residence	200	200
Purnell	John	Auburn	1881	56 Garrow-residence	300	300
Purnell	John	Auburn	1882	58 (may have meant 56?)Garrow-residence (?-see Griffin) and 56 Garrow (may have meant 54?)-house & lot	600-residence, 200-house & lot	800
Purnell	John	Auburn	1885	58 (may have meant 56?)Garrow-residence (?-see Griffin) and 56 Garrow (may have meant 54?)-house & lot	600-residence, 200-house & lot	800

Purnell	John	Auburn	1883-1884	58 (may have meant 56?)Garrow-residence (?-see Griffin) and 56 Garrow (may have meant 54?)-house & lot	600-residence, 200-house & lot	800

Mortgage Deed Abstract
John Purnell to Trustees of the Auburn Theological Seminary
2 October 1876
City of Auburn, Cayuga County, NY
Mortgage Book 94, page 84

This indenture made this 2nd day of October 1876, between John Purnell and Mariah Jane Purnell his wife of the City of Auburn and the Trustees of the Auburn Theological Seminary of the same place, for the sum of $420, being for the remainder of the purchase money, have sold, etc., all that tract of land situate in the City of Auburn being part of the Garrow Farm bounded and described as follows: Beginning at the East line of Garrow Street (formerly Thornton St.) (illegible) from the intersection of the North line of Cornell Street with the East line of the (ill.) thence North 70 degrees East 3 chains, 32 links to land now owned by Henry B. Fitch; thence Northerly on said Fitch's West line to land of David Shaw; thence Westerly 31 links to corner said Shaw land thence North to land of the late J. (ill) Parsons thence Westerly on Parson's South line and a continuation of the same line to the East line of said Garrow Street; Thence South along East line of said Street to place of beginning on which stands a dwelling house. Excepting and reserving therefrom a piece of land from the Northwest corner of the above-described lot (previously conveyed by said Fitch to or for George Andrews) being about 37 feet front on Garrow Street about 17 feet on the rear and about 74 feet deep. The first above-described lot is about 200 feet fronting on Garrow Street. This grant is intended as a security for the payment of the sum of $420 with interest to wit. Payable as follows: $25 semi-annually from the date hereof until the whole is paid with the interest, according to the condition of a bond this day executed and delivered by the said John Purnell to the Trustees of the Auburn Theological Seminary, (payment details). (John Purnell) shall and will keep the buildings erected and to have upon the lands above conveyed insured against loss and damage by fire in an amount approved by the party of the 2nd part (more insurance details).

Signed by the mark of John Purnell and the hand of Mariah Jane Purnell

Research and transcription by Tanya Warren

Diggs House
105 Fitch Avenue
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seekers

February 2005
Looking North

Many members of the Diggs family came to Auburn from Maryland, as suggested in the 1870 census. Daniel Diggs was listed as living here in the 1887-88 Auburn city directory.

Diggs House-Apostolic Church
101 Fitch Avenue
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seekers and current site of African American community church

February 2005
Looking NW

Many members of the Diggs family came to Auburn from Maryland, as suggested in the 1870 census. John T. Diggs was listed as living here in the 1887-88 city directory.

Roosevelt Memorial Church
Site of Plymouth Rock Cannon and Alice Cannon's House
79 Fitch Avenue
Auburn, New York

Significance: Site of home of freedom seekers and current site of major African American community institution

February 2005
Looking ENE

Freedom seekers Plymouth and Julia Cannon were freedom seekers who ran away from Nat Horsey in Delaware. Sons William and John and daughter Alice were all born in Canada before the Cannon family moved to Auburn in the late 1860s, where they appeared in the 1870, 1875, and 1880 census records. Their story was told in William Still, *The Underground Railroad*, 463-67.

Thanks to Kate Larson for this information.

Fort Hill Cemetery
Auburn, New York

Significance: Graves of Harriet Tubman, Seward family, Logan (the Seneca orator) and many others related to Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life.

Opened in 1851, Fort Hill cemetery contains the graves of many of Auburn's citizens, famous and ordinary alike, including those involved in abolitionism and the Underground Railroad. Among the best-known graves are those of Harriet Tubman and her brother William Henry Stewart, Sr.; William Henry Seward and Frances Seward; the Bogart family, and Abijah Fitch.

Harriet Tubman was laid to rest in 1913 at Fort Hill Cemetery with military honors in a section of the cemetery designed with curving roads and paths winding through hilly terrain. The Empire State Women's Federation erected a monument at her gravesite within a year of her death and in 1937, replaced it with the current three-foot granite marker. It is an important site for the annual Harriet Tubman pilgrimage to Auburn as well as for others who visit the Auburn sites which convey her legacy. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places

John Henry Ross Stewart and Eliza Stewart House
51 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seekers and of Harriet Tubman's nephew, John Henry Ross Stewart

February 2005, Looking NW

About to be sold, three of Harriet Tubman's brothers escaped with her help on Christmas Eve, 1854. One of them, John Stewart, born Robert Ross, lived first with Harriet Tubman and then on South Street, where the First Methodist Church now stands. John Stewart had been forced to leave his first wife, Mary Manokey Ross, and two toddler sons, John Henry Ross, born in 1851, and Moses Ross, born in 1853. Mary Manokey Ross was in childbed with their third child, Harriet, when he escaped. Although ostensibly freed by the Civil War, these sons found themselves placed as indentured servants in Talbot County, Maryland, on the farm of Thomas Haddaway. (Maryland slaveholders indentured formerly enslaved children after Maryland's Emancipation Act in Nov. 1864.) Their uncle John Bowley managed to rescue them about 1868 and bring them to Auburn. By 1870, John, age 53 and a teamster; Millie, age 53, keeping house; John Henry, age 18 and a laborer; and Moses, age 15 and a laborer, all born in Maryland, were living together in one household in Auburn. Millie Hollis Stewart was also from Dorchester County. Whether she was born free or enslaved is not known, nor do we know whether she had known John Stewart before their escape to Canada. They married in Auburn in 1863 or 1864.

In the early 1870s, John Henry Stewart married Eliza Smith, born in Canada about 1854, and they had three children, Dora, born about 1875; Gertrude, born about 1878; and Clarence, whom everyone called Dye, born about 1879. In 1880, John Henry Ross Stewart worked as a "grinder in a shop," and Eliza kept house here at 35 Parker Street (now 51 Parker). Very

shortly, John Henry Stewart would be dead, of "congestion of the lungs." Perhaps this was pneumonia or tuberculosis. Eliza would move with her three children to Union Avenue, to live with her cousin-in-law, Elijah Stewart, and his family, until she married Alfred Parker. The family then moved to 20 Chapman Avenue, and Parker became a loving father to her children and an important figure in the Auburn African American community into the 20th century. In 1887-88, James and John Warren, Maryland-born, probably freedom seekers, lived here.[1]

[1]Grateful acknowledgements to Kate Clifford Larson, for her careful work on Stewart genealogy, 237-38, and for her email, July 5, 2005. Research assistance by Tanya Warren, Pauline Johnson, and Judith Bryant.

Thompson Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, 1891
National Historic Landmark
49 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Harriet Tubman's Church

Description: Built as a simple frame church with s small belfry and a hooded doorway, this building retains many original features, both inside and outside, including interior stenciling. It is a National Historic Landmark and is currently under restoration by Crawford and Stearns, Architects and Preservation Planners, with funding from Save America's Treasures.

Significance: Incorporated in 1838, the first AME Zion Church in Auburn was built on Washington Street, just north of Genesee. After the Civil War, Auburn's African American population expanded considerably, as freedom seekers who had settled in Canada, especially St. Catherine's, followed Harriet Tubman to Auburn and purchased property on the south side of the city along Chapman Avenue, Garrow Street, Fitch Avenue, Union (Richardson) Avenue, and Parker Street. Following the population, the AME Zion Church built a new structure here at 49 Parker Street. This church was dedicated in 1891, named after Henry Thompson, first local AME Zion bishop and himself a freedom seeker.

AME Zion Parsonage, post-1904
47 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Looking southwest
July 2005

Copes Johnson House
45 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of African American community leaders and descendents of freedom seekers

February 2005
Looking NW

Pauline Copes Johnson, who has lived in this house since her marriage, is a descendent of Ann Marie Stewart Elliott, niece of Harriet Tubman and wife of Thomas Elliott, one of the Dover Eight, who lived at 31 Richardson (Union) Avenue, through their daughter Mary Elliot Gaskin. She is also a descendent of William Copes, probably another freedom seekers, who is first listed in Auburn in the 1865 census as born in Virginia, living in a house worth $500. In the 1867-68

city directory, he lived on South Street, near Hamilton. Mrs. Johnson has been an important source of information for this survey of historic sites.

Hornbeck-Ray House
41-43 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of African American community leaders

February 2005
Looking West

Important members of the Hornbeck and Ray families lived here from the late nineteenth century into the early twenty-first century. More research is needed to document both the house and the families.

37 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of African American Community Members

Further research is needed to document this house.

Dale-Waire House
35 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seeker and son of freedom seeker

February 2005
Looking NW

In 1887-88, James and Elizabeth Dale lived at this site. James Dale was one of the sons of George Dale, freedom seeker. George's obituary noted that he rescued both his sons—James and Jacob—from slavery. It is not known how long the Dales lived here or when this house was built. This site was later occupied by the Waire family, descendents of John Waire, born in Virginia and probably a freedom seeker, who lived at 35 Union (Richardson) Avenue.

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Perry Williams, Melinda/Elizabeth Williams House
31 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seeker

Looking southwest
July 2005

Perry Williams, whose obituary noted that he was a fugitive from slavery, came to Auburn by the 1860s. City directories noted that he lived in several different places, including the American Hotel (1867-68, at 141 Genesee, now gone), a house at Fitch near Genesee (1869) when he worked at 107 Genesee (gone, replaced by Cayuga Bank), a house at Fitch near Garrow (1879-80), 63 Fitch Avenue according to the 1880 census, and a house at 41 Garrow in 1887-88 (probably still standing). By 1900 and until his death in 1925, he was living here at 31 Parker Street. The 1880 census listed Perry Williams and wife, with twos sons and father-in-law Henry Mitchell, age 69, b. Virginia. Worked as janitor at a bank. He had a second wife Elizabeth in 1910. Perry Williams' obituary, dated July 27, 1925, read:

> Former Slave, Beloved City Character-Dead. Lived at 31 Parker St. Died age 85. Born in slavery and lived the life of a slave in Virginia and the Carolinas, joined the Union Army, was a doorkeeper at military balls, etc. at the State Armory. Known as "Uncle Perry".[2]

[2] Perry Williams obituary found by Sheila Edmunds. Property and genealogical research by Tanya Warren.

Carter House
22 Parker Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of African American Community Leaders

Looking northeast
July 2005

Members of the Carter family, influential African American community leaders, lived in this house into the twenty-first century. More research should be done to document this house and this family.

Page # 228 Of The Report Is A Blank Page

Richard Gaskin House, c. 1899
18 Aspen Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of Freedom Seekers

Richard Gaskin was born in Virginia and came to Ledyard about 1864, with his wife Mary and their four children. He became a Quaker and owned property on Dixon Road in Ledyard from 1869 until the late 1880s. He was listed in the Auburn assessment rolls as owning a house here on Aspen Street worth $600 from 1899 to 1903, until he moved to Sherwood, New York, to live with his daughter Rose Gaskin Phillips, before his death. His son, Philip Gaskin, married Mary Elliott, daughter of Thomas Elliott and Ann Marie Stewart. They lived for many years at 34 Union (Richardson) Avenue before moving to the Belt-Gaskin house at 77 Chapman Avenue in 1927.

Cooper House
22 Aspen Street
Auburn, New York

Significance: Home of freedom seekers, b. Canada and Delaware

February 2005
Looking South

The Cooper family represents a very common pattern in Auburn, of freedom seekers who migrated first to Canada and then, during or after the Civil War, settled in Auburn, where they purchased a home on the south side of the city on streets that were newly-opened for development.

Charles and Anna Cooper and their children came to Auburn sometime between 1865 and 1870, when they were first listed in the census. Charles Cooper, age 30, listed his occupation as a farm laborer and his birthplace as Delaware. Anna Cooper, age 27, listed her occupation as keeping house and her birthplace as Delaware. Their children, Alexander, age 8 and Arenta, age 4, were born in Canada. Laura, age five months, was born in New York). By 1880, they were living at 143 South Division Street. They listed their names as Henry and Anna, laborer and washerwoman, ages 45 and 47, both born in Delaware, with children Alexander (age 17, born Canada), Araminta (14, born Canada), and Laura (10, born New York State).

Cayuga County: North

Aurelius
Shorter House

Cato
Hickock Home, Meridian
Ingham House, Meridian

Conquest
Jarrod House

Mentz
Duvall House and Tenant House, Port Byron
Port Byron Hotel

Sennett
Sennett Federated Church and Parsonage

Sterling
Kirk House, Sterling Center
Sterling Center Churches

Weedsport
Bell House

Charles and Sally Shorter House
Cayuga Village

Significance: Home of African American community leaders, manumitted from slavery

Shorter House
Looking NE, May 2005

Description: The Shorter House, in the small village of Cayuga in the town of Aurelius in Cayuga County, New York, stands in a hollow along what is known as the Great Genesee Road. Located on the eastern side of this small, lakeside village, it is a rare surviving example of a "shanty", built by freed African-Americans. The mere fact of its survival lends great importance to its place in the history of the settlement of freed African Americans in Cayuga County in the first half of the 19th century.

It is from Charles Shorter's (Sr.) written will (Cayuga County Records Retention, Box 27 and Book D, p. 36 of Wills) that we are able to trace the origins of the inconspicuous shanty still standing at 255 Genesee Street in Cayuga Village. This lot of 1.80 acres was included in his will with detailed instructions concerning the construction of a house on its site. The first part of the will states: "To my beloved wife Sally Shorter, (I give) lots 93 and 94 in the village." This would be the lot just west of the present shanty and the marital home of Charles and Sally Shorter. (see map 1859, lot marked "Mrs. Shorter"). In 1882, this property was sold to Horace Wiley by their grandson Charles Shorter. (Reservation Deed Book Q, p. 393.) In the second part of the will, he declares, " I give to my only child, Charles Shorter, Jr., the use of lots 95 and 96 in the village of Cayuga together with a house to be built thereon measuring 18 feet by 14 feet, being built by myself or my executors for son Charles' use during his natural life…If the house is unbuilt at my decease, executor is to build said house within six months of my decease at a cost not to exceed $1200.00. In no case may my executor furnish him with the money." Despite what illness or fear of mortality may have caused Charles to write his will in 1837 at about age 67, he did live on an additional 13 years and it may be surmised that in this time span, father Charles would have indeed had the time to build this house for his son. It is not known what year the shanty on lot 95 was built, but it can be estimated between 1837 (date of will) and 1859 (when an additional house belonging to Sally Shorter appears on the lot in the 1859 map of Cayuga County) and was lived in by Charles Shorter, Jr. and possibly his mother.

The house as it stands today is sided with brown-shingles. It is not known which of the sections is the oldest. It may be that the west wing, approximately 18 feet wide by 14 feet deep (the same measurements

suggested in Charles Shorter, Sr.'s will for the house to be built for his son) is the house built for Charles Shorter, Jr..

It may also be that the west wing was originally built by Charles and Sally Shorter on the lot just west of the current lot and moved to its current location after Sally Shorter's death. A difference is the slope of the back and front roofline suggests some modifications of this wing. A small addition extended the original structure in back (north) by 6 feet.

The two-story section was most likely built *in situ*. Its relatively steep gable suggests a post-Civil War construction date. It may have been built in two sections. In which case, the original measurements were 18 feet by 14 feet, again the same measurements requested by Charles, Sr., in his will. A basement extends under the two-story section. Foundation stones and sills in the two-story section were made of re-used materials and were generally of poor quality. The stones used for the foundation were of wildly differing sizes and composition and put together loosely with a thin mortar. The sills were of mismatched sizes and in some cases made of previously used beams showing evidence of primitive hand-hewn treatment and with notches and grooves from a previous use. A few were merely thin tree trunks with bark still clinging to them.

Significance: Charles Shorter, owner and possible builder of this shanty, first appears in the census records of Cayuga village in 1820. This entry records a man over 45, a boy under 14 and a woman over 45. From the 1850 census of Cayuga, we know that Charles was born in Maryland and was married to Sally, a freed African American born in the West Indies. Charles Shorter wrote a will in 1837 and in it he mentions that he has only one child, a son named Charles, Jr. While no entry exists for this family in 1830, Charles, Sr., his wife and son appear again in 1840 in Cayuga Village. Interestingly, another Charles Shorter with a young family, all African Americans, is found in 1840, living in Seneca Falls, just over the Cayuga Bridge in Seneca County. What relationship he might have to the Cayuga Shorter family is not known.

Charles Shorter bought four lots of land in the village of Cayuga, namely, lots 93, 94, 95 & 96 between 1820 and 1827. His first purchase, that of lot 96, was purchased from Judge Thomas Mumford in 1820. (Reservation Deed Book F, p. 329) Thomas Mumford was a lawyer from Aurora and came into Cayuga Village in 1795[1]. Mumford, and other prominent lawyers such as Judge Elijah Miller, father-in-law of William Henry Seward and Judge Joseph Annin, had all settled in Cayuga Village due to the new (1799) county seat being situated in Cayuga Village. This honor was short-lived as the county seat was switched to Aurora in 1804 and then finally to Auburn in 1809. In 1820, Cayuga Village was adjusting to its fate as a former county seat but making news as the village that gave birth to one of the longest bridges in the western world. This wooden bridge was known as the Cayuga Bridge and linked Cayuga County with the new county of Seneca across the north end of Cayuga Lake. This bridge was also important as being a part of the great Genesee or Seneca Turnpike that carried thousands of people from the northeastern states of the nation into the great western frontier. It was here in this small but strategically located village that Charles and Sally Shorter came to live and raise their family.

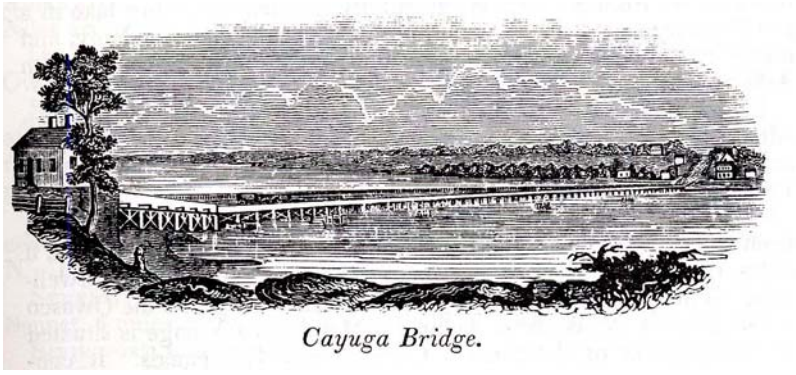
Charles Shorter and his wife, Sally did not themselves leave any written record as to their parentage, state of origin or even status as a free or enslaved African Americans before their arrival in Cayuga. In the Florence P. McIntosh book History of Cayuga Village, the author claims that Charles Shorter married Sally, a former West Indian slave, in New York City and that they both then moved to Cayuga to set up housekeeping. According to this source, Sally Shorter was sent to New York by her mistress and was then freed upon arrival. Federal and State Census entries from 1850 to 1870 consistently list Sally's birthplace as the West Indies. Charles Shorter listed his birthplace as Maryland in the 1850 census. An African American born in 1770 in Maryland was highly likely to have been born in slavery. His birth year, and that of Sally's, can be calculated to have been about 1770, both claiming to be 80 years old in 1850. In later

[1] HISTORY OF CAYUGA VILLAGE May 1927 By: Florence Pharis McINTOSH Copyright 1927. pp. 23-24

censuses, Sally's birth year appears to be closer to 1780-1785. Charles Shorter wrote a will in 1837 and died on May 5, 1851 in Cayuga Village. His wife Sally and only child Charles, Jr. continued to live in the village, with Sally dying in January 1874.[2] Evidently Sally Shorter was a well beloved person in the village of Cayuga. She merited a separate write-up in McIntosh's History of Cayuga Village, a portion of which is quoted here:

> They (Charles and Sally) had one son, Charles, who took care of his mother after his father died. Mother and son lived in a shanty, which stood on the street in front of what is now Mrs. Horace Wiley's house in "Pious Hollow". She used to make cakes and candies for the ladies of the village when they had parties. The children of the village were always eager to visit "Aunty Shorter" because she would supply them with cookies and doll clothes; but first demanding politeness from the child.[3]

This house stands as a testament to the African Americans who came into Cayuga County between 1820 and 1870 and, with their freedom won, chose to remain in the area and become productive citizens. Charles Shorter bought his land from the village's most prominent citizens of the time and took steps to ensure that his legacy was left to his wife and son after his decease. The Shorter house's location on the Genesee Turnpike (a known Underground Railroad route) leads one to speculate as to what roles Charles and Sally may have played in harboring and assisting freedom seekers that surely passed by the Shorter's humble shanty on their way to freedom in Canada. In addition to living on the major East/West highway in New York, they were also just up the road from an active port of the Erie Canal system. This in conjunction with the presence of Cayuga Lake boat traffic from points south from Pennsylvania ending at Cayuga Village port and the fact that at least two prominent Cayuga County Abolitionists and Underground Railroad agents, Matthias Hutchinson owned a warehouse in the village lending further credence to the idea that the Shorter's presence may have been a welcome rest for fellow freedom seekers in a foreign land.[4]



John W. Barber and Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of the State of New York*
(New York: S. Tuttle, 1842)

That this shanty has survived the test of time is miraculous considering that the increasing numbers of European Americans coming into Cayuga County throughout the 19th century had a tendency to demolish the great majority of these first homes of poor African Americans in favor of larger structures. The house's location in the small, forgotten village of Cayuga is what probably saved it from this fate and remains today as one of the most exciting finds of the present survey of African American sites in Cayuga County.

Tanya Warren

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[2] HISTORY OF CAYUGA VILLAGE May 1927 By: Florence Pharis McINTOSH Copyright 1927 p. 86

[3] HISTORY OF CAYUGA VILLAGE May 1927 By: Florence Pharis McINTOSH Copyright 1927 p. 86

[4] 1859 Cayuga County map? (1853?)

Hickok Home
Bonta Bridge Roak
Meridian, New York

Significance: Home of Underground Railroad Activist

Looking west
September 2004

Description: This simple gable-end-to-the-street three-bay house sits on a street of nineteenth century houses, in a neighborhood that is intact except for the replacement of a furniture store that burned next door, on the southwest corner of Route 370, with a 1920s bungalow.

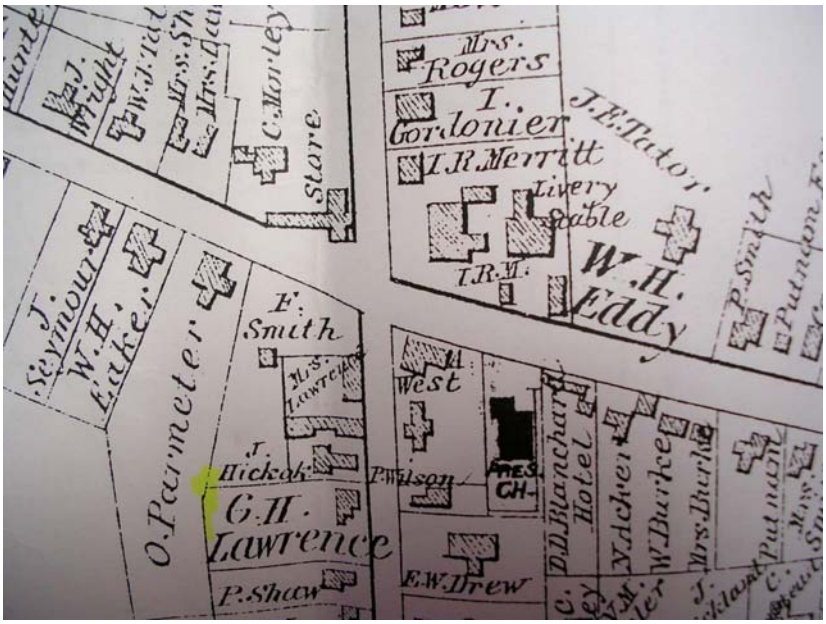
Significance: James Hickock was one of W.S. Ingham's clerks until he went into partnership with Ingham in 1836. After he left his partnership with Ingham, he formed a partnership with his brother, C.B. Hickok, as J. & C.B. Hockok. Together, they opened a general store, which they

maintained until 1848, when James Hickock bought out his brother's interests. In 1865, he changed his business to that of undertaker and dealer in furniture, books, and drugs.[5]

Both Ingham and Hickock were involved in the rescue of George Washington from Auburn Prison in 1854. For more details, see the description of Auburn prison.

This house suggests that those who aided freedom seekers were very often people of modest wealth. Certainly, they were not all wealthy, as W. Smith Ingham was before he lost his money in the late 1850s.

While it appears from the 1853 map that this house belonged to James Hickock, a deed search should be done to check this.



Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1853
The J. Hickok home is on the left side of the street,
just above the G.H. Lawrence home, south of the main east-wide highway
(now Route 370) The Ingham home is labeled "C. Morley, second from
the intersection, just west of the "store" on the northwest corner of the main
intersection.

[5] Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County*. Research by Sheila Tucker; Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County*. Research by Sheila Tucker; Betty H. Murphy, *History of Meridian: A Bicenteenial Product*, rev. by Marion Dudley, 3rd edition, 1996. Online.

William S. Ingham House
Route 370
Meridian, New York
Town of Cato

Significance: Home of Underground Railroad supporter

November 2004
Looking north

Description: Local sources suggest that his twenty-room Greek Revival house, with a full pediment and four Ionic columns on the central section, flanked by two main wings and two lower wings, was constructed about 1835. In the 1920s, the home was used as a hospital by Herbert Gifford, a physician. It was later used briefly as an inn. The two-story privy is still intact.[6]

Significance: William Smith Ingham, primary investor in the village of Meridian, represented the biracial cross-class network of people who created the Underground Railroad network in Cayuga County. He was part of the group that rescued George Washington in 1854 and successfully sent

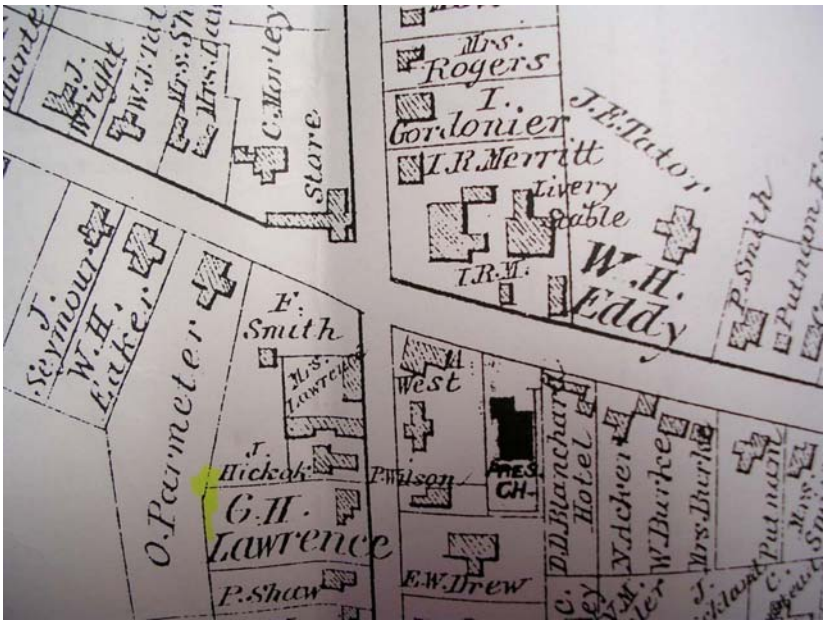
[6] Dave Tobin, Cayuga Neighbors, *Post-Standard*, February ?, 2005.

him to Canada, when Washington's owner tried to recapture him under the terms of the Fugitive Slave Act.

William Smith Ingham opened a store in Meridian in 1831, succeeding his father, William Ingham, who had come to Meridian in 1815. William Smith Ingham built a sawmill and hotel, in addition to his merchant operations, and under his patronage, the village expanded rapidly. Ingham went into business with James Hickok (1836-41) and D.E. Haven (1839-45), David Emerick, his son-in-law (1845-52), and Chester Morley (1852-57). Ingham's business failed in the depression of 1857, and he left the village., leaving several of his children to board with other families in the area. He went to Hannibal, Missouri.

James Hickok was one of W.S. Ingham's clerks until he went into partnership with him in 1836. After he left his partnership with Ingham, he formed a partnership with his brother, C.B. Hickok, as J. & C.B. Hickok. Together, they opened a general store, which they maintained until 1848, when James Hickok bought out his brother's interests. In 1865, he changed his business to that of undertaker and dealer in furniture, books, and drugs.[7]

Both Ingham and Hickok were involved in the rescue of George Washington from Auburn Prison in 1854. For more details, see the description of Auburn prison.[8]



Map of Meridian
Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1853
The Ingham house is listed on this map as belonging to C. Morley, just behind the store on the northwest corner of the main crossroads.

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[7] Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County.* Research by Sheila Tucker; Betty H. Murphy, *History of Meridian: A Bicenteenial Product*, rev. by Marion Dudley, 3rd edition, 1996. Online.
[8] Dave Tobin, "They braved arrest to shuttle slaves," *Post-Standard*, February 9, 2005.

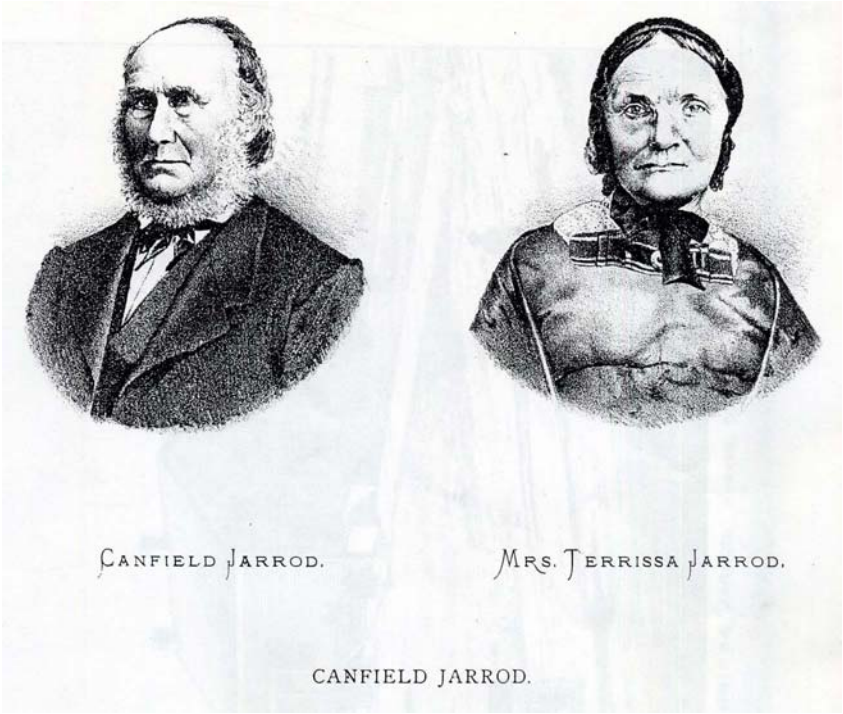
Canfield and Terrisa Jarrod House
Conquest, New York

Significance: Home of Underground Railroad Activists

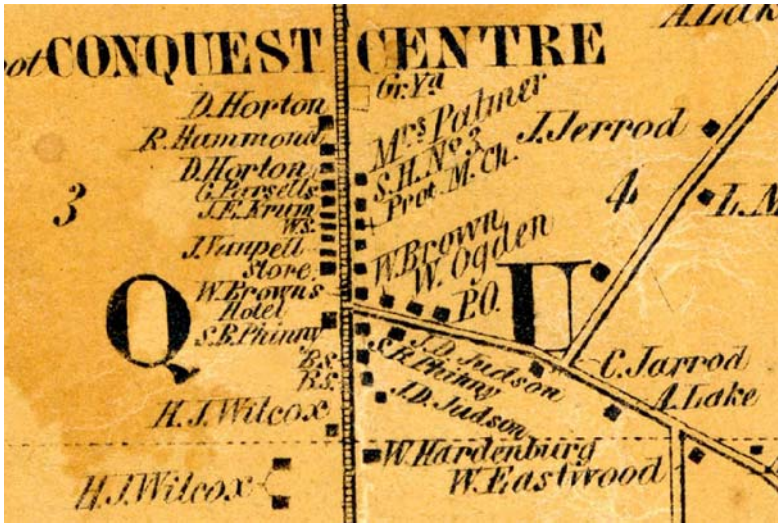
Photo by Tanya Warren
August 2005

Description: The Jarrods had several houses. They originally lived near Wolcott and Sterling, in the north part of the county, before they married in 1823 and moved to a house on Lot 4 in the Town of Conquest. This house was frame, post-and-beam, with twelve-inch thick beams, gable-end-to-the-street., four-over-four windows, and small frieze windows under the eaves.. By 1859, they were living at 1 Pulsifer Street, in Auburn. By 1863-64 until at least 1880, they lived at North Street near the tollgate, 277 North Street (now 275 North Street). The house on North Street in Auburn was pictured in Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County*. It is now the site of the Spano Drive-through car wash. [9]

[9]Many thanks to Sheila Tucker for first finding the reference to the Jarrods and their Underground Railroad work Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County, 1789-1879.* Many thanks to Joni Lincoln for finding the Jarrod house in Conquest and contacting the former owners and to Tanya Warren for her research in city directories; maps, and Imate database [online Cayuga County real property database].



Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County (1879)*, 198a.



Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1853
C. Jarrod house is just under the large "U."

Significance: Canfield Jarrod (1801-1867) and Terrissa Jarrod (1800-?) represent those abolitionists who worked in a variety of reform movements, including caring for orphans, keeping a station on the Underground Railroad, and working with Onondaga women. As Wesleyan Methodists, they based their work for equality on their religious commitment.

The main evidence we have about the Underground Railroad activity of Canfield and Terrissa

Jarrod appeared in the Canfield Jarrod biography in Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County, 1789-1879*, p. 198a. Born November 21, 1801 in Dutchess County, New York, Canfield Jarrod moved first to Salisbury, Connecticut, and then after 1820 to Wolcott, then in the north part of Cayuga County. He was primarily a farmer but also a wool buyer and an insurance agent. Terrissa Skeel was born in Rensselaer County on February 22, 1800, and moved to Sterling, Cayuga County in 1817. She married Canfield Jarrod in 1823, and, although they had no birth children, they raised five orphans, "whom they reared, educated and assisted to business employments." In 1846, the both became Wesleyan Methodists. "Politically, Mr. Jarrod was a firm Republican," noted their biography,

> using his influence for the liberation of the slaves, and his house was one of the stations on the "underground Railroad," where many a sable traveler, bound for Canada, found refuge, sympathy, rest and refreshment. Their sympathy for the unfortunate and care for their wants are proverbial, and Mrs. Jarrod now entertains and befriends the Onondaga women, who are selling Indian trinkets in this vicinity.[10]

The Jarrods apparently moved frequently. ("His attachment to a particular spot was not very strong, and he frequently changed his residence," noted their biography in the *History of Cayuga County*.) In 1853, however, they lived in this house in the Town of Conquest, New York.

Research by Sheila Tucker, Joni Lincoln, and Tanya Warren.

[10] Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga Countty, 1789-1879*, 198a.

William O. Duvall House
"Haiti"
Port Byron, New York
Town of Mentz

Significance: Home of William O. Duvall, the "Island Chieftain," Abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter

Duvall house and barn
November 2004
Looking NW

Duvall tenant house
November 2004
Looking South

"Hayti" on 1859 Cayuga County map
showing Duvall house and tenant house

Seneca River near Duvall's House—"Hayti"
Looking South
November 2004

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
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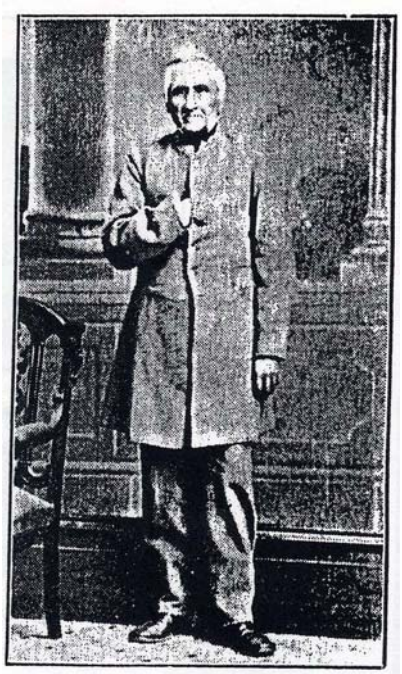
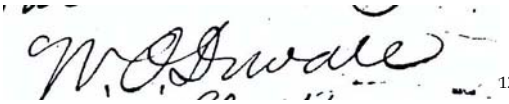
2004-05



ORVALL DUVAL
A staunch Abolitionist

E.H. Kerns, *History of Port Byron and Mentz, From Indian Tribes to Nineteen Twenty-two* (Weedsport, New York, 1922), 5.[11]



[12]

Description: Located on what was a marshy point, usually described as an island, in the Seneca River, across from Howland's Island, "stocked with the choicest fruits, the near woods with an abundance of game, the surrounding rivers abounded with fowl and with fish," stands a large farmhouse, barn, and tenant house built by William Orvall Duvall, Jr., probably sometime in the late 1830s. It is accessible today across a bridge, built when the area was cut off from the mainland by the construction of the Erie Barge Canal in the 19-teens. The access road passes small summer cottages built in the twentieth century. At the very end of the road stands the farmhouse, with a barn on the north side and a tenant house, on the left (south) side. These apparently are the originals, with some additions to the houses.

Significance: From the 1830s to the end of his life, William Orvall Duvall (born Mentz, Cayuga County, 1807-died Detroit, Michigan, August 8, 1882) was an outspoken, daring, warm-hearted, generous, brilliant, rough-hewn, courageous, and committed abolitionist; lecturer and organizer for the Western New York Anti-Slavery Society in 1840; friend of William Henry Seward, Slocum Howland, James C. Jackson, and Gerrit Smith; and an enthusiastic supporter of the Underground Railroad. His home on an island in the Seneca River in the Town of Mentz, near Port Byron, was so well-known as a haven for African Americans that neighbors dubbed it "Hayti," a name that it retains today.

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[11] Thanks to Mike Riley and Penny Helzer for finding this.

[12] W.O. Duvall's signature on "New York Inhabts of Port Byron. Petition of William O. Duvall & Others. Receive petitions or dissolve the Union." National Archives and Records Administration, HR 27A-H1.7.

William O. Duvall's parents, William Duvall (1765-1847) and Naomi Duvall (1762-1839), arrived in the Town of Mentz from New Jersey in 1796. William Duvall was a surveyor. They settled first on Lot 2, then in Port Byron, and finally on an island in the Seneca River in the late 1830s. They had three children (Israel, John Baldwin, and William O. Duvall, Jr.) before Naomi Duvall's death on October 7, 1839. William O. Duvall, Sr., died February 22, 1847. He left his land to his grandchildren, but they had to mortgage it, and the land was sold in 1867. Both William O. Duvall, Sr., and Naomi Duvall are buried in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, as are Israel Smith Duvall and John Baldwin Duvall.[13]

William O. Duvall, Jr., married a woman name Eliza Cobb, born in New York State about 1811. They had four children: Henry C., a farmer, born about 1837; Catherine E., born about 1839, who became a schoolteacher; William O. Duvall, 3rd, born about 1842, who served in the Civil War (Battery A, 3rd Regiment, L Artillery) but then died of an accidental gunshot wound in 1866; and Laura T. Duvall, born about 1843.[14]

William O. Duvall, Jr., settled on a marshy point near Duvall's island, building a large farmhouse, barn, and tenant house, all of which still stand. Sometime between October 1848 and July 1849, Duvall began to call his farm "Hayti" or "Haiti," a name it still retains.[15]An antislavery lecturer (possibly Frederick Douglass) visited Port Byron in 1853 and learned why. Mr. Duvall was, he wrote,

> a practical Anti-Slavery man, a thorough worker in the vineyard. This gentleman resides on an island, about four miles from the village of Port Byron. . . . He saw fit on one occasion, to hire a considerable number of colored men to work on his farm. This aroused the jealousy and excited the envy of the white laborers who had formerly worked for him. They could do nothing that would hurt Mr. Duvall, he being so far above them in the estimation of all honorable men. So they took revenge out of the island, by calling it Haiti. But Mr. Duvall thought this a capital idea. And now, when he writes his letters, they are dated Haiti, this being the name given to the island.[16]

W.O. Duvall allied himself strongly with the Whig Party in the 1830s, and by 1838, he began a correspondence with Governor William Henry Seward based on political and economic interests that continued for several years. In 1838, working with Archibald Green, a like-minded abolitionist Whig in Port Byron (and brother of Cassandra Green Hamblin, who organized abolitionist women in Port Byron), Duvall tried to secure Port Byron votes for Seward as governor. [17]

By the summer of 1839, Duvall felt confident enough of Seward's friendship to give him frank political advice. Writing from Farmington, Ontario County (a major center of Quaker abolitionism), Duvall urged Seward to come out publicly as an abolitionist candidate.

> July 11, 1839

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[13] Joseph Hadger (son-in-law to William O. Duvall, Jr.,), to Bennetts, Book 118, page 192, 194; Mt. Pleasant Cemetery list. Thanks to Penney Helzer, Mike Riley, and Tanya Warren for this information.
[14] 1860 U.S. Census. Thanks to Mike Riley for details about the Duvall family, email August 15, 2005.
[15] W.O. Duvall to William Henry Seward, October 18, 1848, noted that the letter was written in Port Byron. W.O. Duvall to William Henry Seward, July 9, 1849, noted that it was written from Hayti, although he did not use Hayti consistently after this time. Seward Papers, University of Rochester.
[16] Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County, 1789-1879*, reprint 1980 (Interlaken, New York: Heart of the the Lakes Publishing, 1980), 335, called this Campbell's Island, but this may be an error. Campbell's Island was south of Howland's Island. It is no longer there, removed during construction of the Erie Barge Canal in the 19-teens. Email from Michael Riley, October 31, 2004. [Frederick Douglass?], *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, December 23, 1853.
[17] Duvall to William Henry Seward, November 2, 1838, urged Seward to send Whigs to watch the polls, to prevent illegal votes. Seward Papers, University of Rochester.

Gov. Seward,

Wilt thou permit one who has long been thy friend to address thee a few lines, by way of friendship. My old friend, I have traveled "through & through the counties of Tompkins, Yates, Steuben & Ontario, and I can assure you that I have taken the utmost pains to make myself acquainted with public sentiments, in those sections, especially in the Whig party, & I declare to you, that unless the next Whig candidate for Gov. takes the promise as did Luther Bradish last year he is defeated. Very many of your best friends have come out decidedly upon the subject and I do not think they can be moved from their position. Oh, how I do hope that Wm. H. Seward will see his true position. And now, why should you not come out boldly in favor of human rights—in other words—an abolitionist? Their principles are your principles—and were Washington, Franklin, Jay's & Jefferson's and why in the name of Heaven should you be ashamed openly to avow them?—Why my friend West of Albany, there's not a Whig that would leave you in consequence of your avowal and you would secure from the Van Buren party more—vastly more than you could lose in the cities of N York & Albany. Before God I assert that, in the counties through which I have traveled, there's not one single Whig that would forsake you, in my opinion and I know of many of the other party who would vote for you with the greatest pleasure were you an abolitionist.

I do hope you will range yourself upon the side of humanity, for God knows, and my esteemed friend, you, know, that the principles of abolitionism are correct, and that sooner or later they must prevail, and my prayer to our Father in heave is that the time may speedily come when our beloved Seward & Webster will be found in the front ranks of the open friends of liberty and equality. Excuse the families mode I have made in addressing you—you know me—and I know that it is impossible for me to be smooth. You know the old maxim that "a whistle can't be made out of a &c"—

. . . .

I don't want to see this black hearted Loco Foco party ever again get the ascendancy, but unless my friend Seward "remembers those in bonds as bound with them"--they will assuredly arise."

Yours in the great cause of liberty & equality

W.O. Duvall[18]

With friends such as these giving him advice such as this in central New York, Seward's political policies at the state and national level comes into clearer focus.

Duvall spent the spring of 1840 traversing central New York, giving speeches and organizing societies for the Western New York Anti-Slavery Society. When he came to his own town of Port Byron, he reported that the meeting was "small, owing to the almost impassable state of the roads. In this vicinity there is but very little sympathy felt, or interest manifested for the suffering bondman. "*To take care of myself*," is the standing motto of this people, and I regret to add, the *women*, whose sympathies one would suppose would naturally gush out for their *sisters in chains*, appear nearly as callous as their sensibility benumbed husbands and brothers. How little of the true dignity of human nature is manifested by this "gentler sex" of the present day! May God's spirit of eternal truth divorce from their hearts those mists of ignorance, selfishness, prejudice and servility, and make them to feel with that ornament to her sex—Margaret Chandler—whose soul was too large to be confined *solely* to her own family—

"Shall we behold—unheeding

[18] W.O. Duvall to William Henry Seward, July 11, 1839, Seward Papers, University of Rochester.

Life's holiest feelings crushed!
When woman's heart is bleeding,
Shall woman's voice be hushed!"

Notwithstanding the meeting at this place was small, yet I rejoice that we met there. A venerable deacon in the pro-slavery Pres. Church in the place, came out boldly and manfully for the first time in favor of immediate emancipation.—Never shall I forget the solemnity of his appearance and language when he said: "I have long been a member of the professed church of Christ, and I hope ever to be but that church, o state, or party which stands in the way of abolition, is wrong, and must go down, and no church or party thus situated shall receive my support." Amen, amen.[19]

In November 1840, Duvall again presumed to give Seward advice. This time, to undercut Liberty Party voters, Duvall urged Seward to repeal the "9 months law," allowing slave owners to bring slaves into the state legally and to keep them here for nine months, and to change New York State Constitution's to give equal suffrage to African Americans. "Now, Seward," he wrote, "if your next Message you come out boldly and recommend these two measures, the "third party" is a dead dog." [20]

Duvall did his part to help Seward's political chances. He spent November and December 1840 in the western New York with seven other lecturers, speaking for the Whig Party and against third party politics. Interestingly, a flyer announcing their lectures, "**NO THIRD PARTY!!!,"** invited all "Friends of the slave" to come to the rallies, including "the old and the young—the grave and the gay—men, women, and children—ALL who claim to be *human*, come up to the rescue of suffering humanity!"[21]

Duvall's correspondence with Seward resumed in 1848, with references to loans and a mortgage, the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in Washington, D.C., and the capture of William Chaplin for his attempted rescue of people enslaved in Washington, D.C. (Duvall asked Seward to visit Chaplin and "remember me to one who occupies one of the holier rooms in my heart.")[22]

At the same time that he was working to promote Seward's political career within the Whig party, W.O. Duvall also signed at least two antislavery petitions sent to Congress. One, drafted by himself, was sent in opposition to congressional refusal to admit petitions referring to slavery. Since the right of petition was guaranteed in the Bill of Rights, its abrogation effectually meant a dissolution of the Union, argued Duval and more than 100 other men in Port Byron:

To the Hon. The House of Rep. of the U.S.

The undersigned, citizens of Port Byron, Cayuga County and State of New York, regarding the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States as the fundamental law of the land—the former as specifying, the latter as guarranteeing [sic] our rights—we beg leave to solemnly call your attention to the following notorious facts. Previous to, during and succeeding the Am. Rev. to petition our national legislature was regarded as among our most sacred rights. Among the grievous charges preferred against the mother country in our celebrated "Bill of Rights" was this. "Our petitions have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne." It is matter of history, that this right, "our sacred, now trampled upon"—was always venerated by our Washington's—Adam's Jay's—Hamilton's—Henry's==Pinckney's==Franklin's—Rush's—and their associates who pledged their "lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor" in the establishment of this

[19] W.O. Duvall, Seneca Falls, March 12, 1840, published in *Friend of Man*, April 1, 1840.
[20] W.O. Duvall to William Henry Seward, November 9, 1840, Seward Papers, University of Rochester.
[21] Flyer enclosed with Duvall to Seward, November 9, 1840. Other lecturers included J.C. Hathaway, W.C. Rogers, Lorenzo Hathaway, Ezek Wilbur, Gideon Ramsdell, P.D. Hathaway, and Pliny Sexton.
[22] W.O. Duvall to William Henry Seward, October 18, 1848; July 9, 1849; February 3, 1850; August 17, 1850; September 18, 1851; October 24, 1851; October 5, 1851; February 14, 1852.

> government. The Constitution formed by these men secures the exercise of this right, and the Congress of the nationa has always, and still does recognize the right in all cases—save the abolition of slavery. For this end Congress denies the right, and thus annuls the Dec. of In. and sets the Constitution at defiance! In view of these indisputed facts, we would respectfully and most solemnly ask of your Hon. Body: What remains of this boasted Union? . . . .The undersigned are not many of them what are technically called abolitionists—yet they would seriously enquire how long 3,000,000 of imbruted [?] slaves and 16,000,000 of white freemen are to be deprived of their rights by 250,000 slave breeders? How long are the people's servants to assume the prerogatives of being the People's masters, and by "spurning their petitions from the foot of the throne" destroy the last vestige of the "Liberty & Union" which it was fondly hoped the blood of our common ancestors had cemented? We ask these questions in sorrow, not in anger. We feel deeply for the interests of this nation, and we will make any sacrifice for the permanency of free institutions. We may be wrong, but it appears to us that our southern people love slavery more than they do the Constitution and the Dec. of Independence and are ready to sacrifice the latter for the sake of the former. If so, we can assure you, that we sympathize with no such sentiment. We will sacrifice the Union to nothing but Liberty. When the question comes, Union or Liberty (and we think there is a prospect of that time speedily arriving,) we will be found on the side of the former [latter]; nor shall the terrible name "abolition" deter us from espousing the antislavery cause knowing as we do that their principles are those upon which this Union was based, and that the perpetuity of the government depends upon their being all [?] carried out in practice. We therefore [ask?] that the petitions of the northern people on the subject of slavery be respectfully received and referred, or that this Union be immediately dissolved in theory, as it long has been in Practice. And, as in duty bound, we will ever pray.[23]

Duvall mailed this February 16, probably 1843, to Honorable Christopher Morgan, who represented Cayuga County in Congress. The House received it, and immediately laid it on the table, as it did all antislavery petitions, according to what abolitionists called a gag law that Congress had passed beginning in 1836.

Duvall signed another petition, sent from Mentz on October 20, 1849, signed by hundreds of men. This one was a lengthy printed petitions against slavery in the District of Columbia. Like all the others, it was immediately tabled.[24]

Sometime during the 1840s (or perhaps earlier), Duvall began active work on the Underground Railroad. He was linked to the network of Quaker activists that included Slocum Howland in Sherwood, New York; John Mann in Friendsville, Pennsylvania; Dr. Bartholomew Fussell and his niece Graceanna Lewis in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Thomas Garrett in Wilmington, Delaware. Although probably not a Quaker himself, since he ardently promoted political participation and advocated violent resistance, if necessary, to slave-catchers, he adopted some forms of Quaker culture, including use of "thee" in some of his letters.

Duvall's obituary noted that he was part of the group that rescued William "Jerry" Henry in October 1851.[25] The first direct evidence that we have of Duvall's Underground Railroad involvement comes from a reply to a letter form Slocum Howland in October 1851, just after the rescue of Jerry Henry. Howland had apparently written asking if Duvall could hide and, if necessary, defend a family of freedom seekers. Herman and Hannah Phillips and their four children, freedom seekers from Maryland, were living in Sherwood, New York, fearful of recapture under the Fugitive Slave Act. After having once gone to Canada,

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[23]"New York Inhabts of Port Byron. Petition of William O. Duvall & Others. Receive petitions or dissolve the Union." National Archives and Records Administration, HR 27A-H1.7.
[24] National Archives and Records Administration, Senate 31A. January 16, 1850. Tabled.
[25] "A Cayuga County Pioneer and Reformer Gone to His Rest," *Detroit Post and Tribune*, n.d., Cayuga Museum. Found by Mike Riley.

they were considering flight a second time. Duvall's letter revealed his willingness to stop at nothing to protect people from slavery:

> October 16, 1851
> Respected Friend Howland:
> Morning of the 14th, just received and hasten to answer it. It strikes me I would not go to Canada. The winter will soon be upon us. And doubly there are more there now that can maintain themselves with any degree of comfort. If he were to come to my place I would protect him to the last drop of blood in my veins, and I think that our location is such that it would be hard to get him. My own opinion is that he and his family will be safe here and I will give him employment.
> If he is a fugitive slave, of course, he is not without a good, loaded revolver and ? constantly in his pocket. If he has not these weapons let him sell his coat and get them forthwith, and then in case of an arrest let him defend himself like a man who loves freedom better than life even though the blood flows to the horse bits.
> Friend Slocum, you know my location and its facilities for escape if necessary, and the pretty healthy sentiment here about on the subject if you and him think it a good plan, fetch him out and I will do the best I can.
> Every and Truly Yours,
> W. O. Duvall[26]

Duvall continued his antislavery activism in other ways, too. In the 1850s, he began to send regular contributions of both money and writings to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*.[27] Although in 1839, Duvall had called himself a nonresistant, by 1851, he began to advocate violent resistance to slavery. In the fall of 1851, when a slave owner was killed while trying to capture a man who was hiding at William Parker's house in Christiana, Pennsylvania, Duvall rejoiced, wishing that other "miscreant Maryland hell-hounds" could also have been killed. "WHOEVER DIES FOR LIBERTY, LIVES FOREVER," Duvall asserted. [28]

> HAYTI, Sept. 28, 1851.
>
> FRIEND DOUGLASS: - I admire your leader in the last number of your paper, on the Christiana affair.
>
> "Cato, thou reasonest well!"
>
> I'll venture the prediction, that the conduct of those truly noble colored people at Parker's will go further in compelling respect for their race, than anything that has occurred in their history, since the settlement of this country. Oh! that the whole posse attending Gorsuch, Ingraham, with his officers and marines, and those miscreant Maryland hell-hounds that prowled about that hitherto peaceful district, armed with rifles, could have shared the same fate! Then would justice have been vindicated in the house of her friends. But, glorious men! Well have you shown "the wealth of your pasture." You have reared for yourselves an enduring monument in the heart of every true lover of liberty, and should this bastard republic succeed in its foul attempt in fastening upon your worthy conduct the crime of treason, heed it not, knowing full well that WHOEVER DIES FOR LIBERTY, LIVES FOREVER.

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[26] W.O. Duvall to Slocum Howland, October 16, 1851, Howland Papers, Cornell University. Thanks to James Driscoll, Director, Queens Historical Society, for finding this, and to Joseph McCaffery for suggesting its connection to the Herman and Hannah Phillips family.
[27] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, December 4, 1851; January 21, 1853; February 10, 1854, recorded monetary contributions.
[28] W.O. Duvall to Gerrit Smith, Farmington, December 9, 1839, Smith Papers, Syracuse University; W.O. Duvall, Hayti, September 28, 1851, printed in *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, October 2, 1851.

> Yours for the right,
> W.O. Duvall

A few months later, Duvall continued his tirade.

> I see it stated in the papers that the lives of those kidnappers were saved by Hannaway and his white companions. I trust this is not true - but if true, the white men deserve to be convicted of Treason. Had the worthless carcasses of all those hell-hounds been left dead upon the field, it would have cost neither individuals nor the State one farthing more. Slavery has done her best, and I deeply regret that Liberty has deprived her of but one man.
>
> W.O. Duvall
> HAYTI, Jan. 25, 1852[29]

With other abolitionists, Duvall despised the American Colonization Society. Organized in 1817, the ACS was designed to free people from slavery and send them to the colony of Liberia, on the west coast of Africa. Few free people of color wanted to leave the United States, where they had been born and raised, however, to go to a country which was completely strange to them, and the American Colonization Society found few friends among either African Americans or their allies. Certainly, W.O. Duvall was no supporter. When Washington Hunt, newly-elected Governor of New York State, came out in support of the ACS, Duvall, writing from his farm in Hayti, Port Byron, urged that "the whole litter of these be blasted and accursed!":

> This, then, is the order of the day. By persecution from the haggard, traitorous Webster, and all his pampered political menials, these suffering people are to be driven to the pestilential shores of Africa, or the ports of Canada, there to starvingly meditate upon the beauties of christianity as exemplified in the stealing and enslaving their ancestors by the very fathers of the villains now waging this exterminating war. May the whole litter of these be blasted and accursed![30]

In 1853, Duvall continued his attack.

> The infernal scheme, with all its black-hearted politicians, and white-livered, sauanyed [?] priests, should be blown to the devil. - Allow this lying, hypocritical nation to succeed in expatriating those kind, docile, suffering, forbearing, and forgiving colored people from the land of their birth, where, many of them, and their fathers before them, shed their hearts' blood in defence of the freedom which we boast of and enjoy - and nothing short of orthodox hell should be our doom. Nor can I conceive how any mind, with any true conception of the dignity of manhood, could consent to anything less.
> Yours for truth, W.O. Duvall [31]

By 1856, the Whig Party had broken up, and former Whigs, along with many former Liberty Party men and some antislavery Democrats, had coalesced into the new Republican Party. Some radical abolitionists, a remnant of the old Liberty League, found the Republican Party too compromising on abolitionism, however. This group included Gerrit Smith, James C. Jackson, Lewis Tappan, William Goddell, Beriah Green, and Frederick Douglass. They met in the National Abolition Convention at Syracuse, New York, in the spring1856. W.O. Duvall took an active part in this convention, speaking and serving on the finance

[29]W.O. Duvall, January 25, 1852, printed in *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, February 12, 1852.
[30] W.O. Duvall, January 25, 1852, printed in *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, February 12, 1852.
[31] W.O. Duvall to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, April 8, 1853.

committee. In May, W.O. Duvall wrote to the *National Era*, urging voters in New York State to support temperance and abolitionism and vote for Gerrit Smith:[32]

> PORT BYRON, CAYUGA, CO., N.Y.,
> May 10, 1856.
>
> To the Editor of the National Era:
>
> I am pained at the prospect of the Republic party. Should the leaders thereof take up some new, untried man as its standard-bearer at the coming election, nothing can or should save it from overwhelming defeat. We must have those who live Anti-Slavery, whether they talk in Congress and Conventions or not.
> Owing to weak and wicked leaders ignoring the Temperance cause last fall, the Republican ticket was lost, and this State was given to the Goths. Thousands of old and tried men, disgusted with the utter want of backbone, quietly staid at home, and allowed the matter to go by default, preferring the chance of bold, bare-faced iniquity overleaping itself, than half-way, milk-and-water reformation.
> The year before, when the Whig party wheeled into line, by adopting fully Anti-Slavery and Temperance, the whole ticket was carried triumphantly, and that most excellent man, Myron Holley Clark was elected Governor, notwithstanding tens of thousands of Temperance men were seduced into the support of one Daniel Ullman, of Hindoo memory. The same result, with increased majorities, awaited the Republican ticket last year, and was only defeated by the weakness or wickedness of its leaders.
> I think I perceive symptoms of a similar fate in this great National party now being engineered into existence at Washington. If our wise men there suppose that the swindling policy of the old parties- that of taking some man against whom nothing can be said, for the simple reason that of whom nothing is known- can succeed, they will pardon a very humble individual for assuring them of their great mistake. The person who receives the suffrages of the good men of this State must be one well known and read for men. No man can carry this State upon the strength of Republican party principles, for they are considered not only as small potatoes, but exceedingly few in the hill. The leaders of the party do not want the people to know it, but, as true as you live, my dear sir, a large proportion of the voters of this State is thoroughly indoctrinated with the constitutional construction of that purely good man and wise statesman, Gerrit Smith, who, for any high office, could receive more votes to-day than any man in the States of New York.
> There is a clear majority of voters in this State determined that Anti-Slavery and Temperance shall go hand in hand; and if our leading politicians can be prevailed upon to be honest enough to select good and strong men with these principles, the State is triumphantly ours- otherwise not, most emphatically. And, if nothing more than on the score of economy, this should be done. What a world of trouble it would save them in this little matter of enlightening the country with the causes of their defeat, carefully keeping out of view, in the mean time, the true and only cause thereof, to wit, their own folly. Yours sincerely,
>
> W.O. Duvall[33]

By 1860. W.O. Duvall was 52 years old, a farmer with land worth $4200 and personal property worth $1000. His wife, Eliza, was 51, keeping house. Their four children were still at home. Catherine E. was 21, a school teacher; Henry C. was 23, a farmer; William O., Jr. was 19, a farmer; and Laura T. was 17. Their family, however, would soon break apart. When the Civil War broke out, Duvall's son, W.O. Duvall 3rd,

[32] *National Era*, June 26, 1856.
[33] *National Era*, May 22, 1856.

joined Battery A, 3rd Regiment, L Artillery but died of an accidental gunshot wound on September 26, 1866. [34]

Unable to keep his farm because of severe rheumatism, Duvall spent his later years in poverty, partly on Brentwood, Long Island, and then in Detroit, Michigan, with his daughter.

Duvall carried on a lengthy correspondence with Gerrit Smith, beginning in 1839. This grew more extensive in Duvall's later years and continued to reflect his radicalism on issues of equality for free blacks and women. It ended only with Smith's death. His last letter to Smith reflected his continued brilliance of mind, his humor, and his continued concern for the world, writing a poem on his rheumatism, asking what Smith thought of the Susan B. Anthony trial, chiding Smith for not being radical enough on woman suffrage.[35]

Duvall died August 8, 1882, in Detroit and was buried in Woodmere Cemetery. His obituary noted that

> Mr. Duvall was a tall, well-proportioned, athletic, stalwart man, brave and fearless, and endowed with rare intellectual powers. He was an extensive reader and had a most retentive memory, and could always use to great advantage his varied store of knowledge. He possessed indomitable will power and was a force not easily resisted. He was one of the Jerry fugitive slave rescuers in Syracuse in 1852. He was just the man for such an emergency, and the "underground railway" had few more brave, daring or safer engineers. He lived for many years on a beautiful island farm north of Auburn, near Port Byron, NY and was intimately acquainted with Wm. H. Seward, and well associated with all the prominent anti-slavery workers of the day. His farm was stocked with the choicest fruits, the near woods with an abundance of game, the surrounding rivers abounded with fowl and with fish.
>
> He was a man of remarkable, social and convivial qualities and large hearted and generous to a fault, and his pretty "Island Home" known far and near as "Hayti", was the resort of the worn and weary reformers from all parts of the country. Here they always found a most cordial and hearty welcome and a most generous hospitality, a restful, refreshing and joyous retreat. Those who knew him can never forget William O. Duvall.
>
> Peace to his slumbering ashes.[36]

Thanks to Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian; Michael Riley, Historian, Town of Mentz; Penney Helzer, Historian, Port Byron; James Driscoll, Director, Queens Historical Society; and Tanya Warren, Project Researcher, for research assistance.

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[34] At his death in 1847, W.O. Duvall, Sr., had willed his farm to his grandchildren, and W.O. Duvall 3rd's will included massive amounts of farm equipment. Thanks to Mike Riley and Tanya Warren for information about W.O. Duvall 3rd.
[35] W.O. Duvall to Gerrit Smith, June 19, 1873, Smith Papers, Syracuse University.
[36] "A Cayuga County Pioneer and Reformer Gone to His Rest," *Detroit Post and Tribune*, n.d., Cayuga Museum. Found by Mike Riley.

A Cayuga County Pioneer and Reformer Gone to His Rest.[37]

From the *Detroit Post and Tribune*, n.d.

William O. Duvall, Esq., formerly and for many years a resident of Cayuga County, NY, and extensively known through the western and eastern part of the Empire State as one of the earliest, most prominent and earnest supporters of the temperance and anti-slavery reforms, died on the morning of August 8, 1882, at St. Luke's Hospital in Detroit, after many years of intense suffering from acute rheumatism. His remains were deposited for the present in a retired and lovely spot in the beautiful Woodmere Cemetery, near a charming little lake, a short distance out of this city.

Mr. Duvall was born in the town of Mentz, Cayuga County, near Auburn, NY, in the year 1807, and was 75 at the time of his death. He leaves a son and two daughters, Mrs. Joseph Hadger of this city being one of the latter, his wife died some years ago. Mr. Duvall was a tall, well-proportioned, athletic, stalwart man, brave and fearless, and endowed with rare intellectual powers. He was an extensive reader and had a most retentive memory, and could always use to great advantage his varied store of knowledge. He possessed indomitable will power and was a force not easily resisted. He was one of the Jerry fugitive slave rescuers in Syracuse in 1852. He was just the man for such an emergency, and the "underground railway" had few more brave, daring or safer engineers. He lived for many years on a beautiful island farm north of Auburn, near Port Byron, NY and was intimately acquainted with Wm. H. Seward, and well associated with all the prominent anti-slavery workers of the day. His farm was stocked with the choicest fruits, the near woods with an abundance of game, the surrounding rivers abounded with fowl and with fish.

He was a man of remarkable, social and convivial qualities and large hearted and generous to a fault, and his pretty "Island Home" known far and near as "Hayti", was the resort of the worn and weary reformers from all parts of the country. Here they always found a most cordial and hearty welcome and a most generous hospitality, a restful, refreshing and joyous retreat. Those who knew him can never forget William O. Duvall. Peace to his slumbering ashes.

The following is a fitting and beautiful tribute to the heroic chieftain and his beautiful and hospitable "Island Home" by E. H. Coggins:

Chieftain of the lone green isle-
Still upon my heart is wrought
Orville's name and Orville's smile,
Though perchance he knew it not.
Still before my vision gleams
Those wild and solitary streams:
Seneca's elm shaded foam,
Fair Owasco's diamond tide,
That around thy distant home
In their peaceful beauty glide
Where the water lilies blow,
Some of gold and some of snow
The fringe of sheltering green below;
When our paddle crushed the gems
Fragrance floated from their stems
And the startled wild duck flew
Swiftly from our stranger view.
Lovely children, do ye seek
For "Indian darts" along the shore?
And do ye ever think or speak

[37] Cayuga County Museum. Thanks to Mike Riley for finding this.

Of him who strolled with you the island o'er,
But who may never know such hours
Again among your woodland flowers!
"When shall we three meet again?"
Who floated in the old canoe,
Singing Liberty songs amain,
Until our gaily chanted strain
Died along the lighted blue.
Boding thoughts forewarn me never;
But though far from you I wander
Grateful, sincerely, ever,
On your kindness I will ponder.
Island Chieftain, ever blest,
Be the spot where thou dost rest
The Lording on his breast may wear
The regal star, for gold may win it;
On thine 'tis true no stars appear,
But nobleness abides within it;
And for thee, and such as thee,
"Nature's true nobility",
Shall the glorious title be.

Detroit, August 11, 1882

Port Byron Hotel
Port Byron, New York
Town of Mentz

Significance: African American workplace, Owned by abolitionist and Underground Railroad sympathizer

November 2004
Looking North

Description: Standing at the center of the village of Port Byron, at the intersection of five main roads, this hotel is a brick, square Greek Revival building, with a wide frieze all around, small frieze windows on the size, a double portico with four Doric columns across the front, and a small cupola. A frame addition with Gothic details, including board and batten siding, extends to the rear (north).

Significance: The Port Byron Hotel, once called the National Hotel, represents the many public places in Cayuga County where African American men and women, many of them freedom seekers, worked on a daily basis, as an integral part of the life of the whole community. Port Byron was one of Cayuga County's abolitionist hotspots. Of the many sites once identified with

abolitionism in this village, only this inn, along with W.O. Duvall's home on the Seneca River, has so far been identified as a standing site.

As early as October 20 1849, Richard Dyer indicated his antislavery sympathies when "R. Dyer" signed a petition to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, arguing that the Constitution was an antislavery document.[38]

In 1855, for $500, Richard Dyer bought this brick inn from Phebe Lamkin, widow of Harry Lamkin.[39] In June of that year, the census taker recorded two African Americans living with Richard Dyer, "hotelkeeper." John Stewart was listed as mulatto, thirty years old, a servant, born in Maryland, who had been living in the town of Mentz for four years. Mary Stewart, presumably his wife, was twenty-three years old, born and raised in in Cayuga County. Four years later, John B. Stewart still lived at the hotel, but without his wife. This time, he listed his occupation as a waiter, his birthplace as New York, and his age as thirty-five. A second African American, William Powell, also lived at the hotel, born in New York, working as a porter, also age thirty-five. In 1865, John Stewart listed himself as a barber, age 35, born in Virginia, living with his wife Jane Ann, age 37, born in Cayuga County. Now John Stewart was the owner of land, and the family lived in a separate household, outside the hotel. The fact that John Stewart identified his birthplace in several different census records as Maryland, New York, and Virginia suggests strongly that he may have been a freedom seeker himself who arrived in New York State just after passage of the Fugitive Slave Act. The fact that Richard Dyer hired John Stewart, quite likely knowing of his status, marks Richard Dyer as an abolitionist sympathizer and as a co-conspirator against the Fugitive Slave Law. [40]

By 1870, Peter Jenkins, age 53, born in New York, was listed as living in the "Port Byron Hotel." Whether this was Richard Dyer's hotel or another one, owned by J.R. Howard, a subscriber to the abolitionist newspaper, the *Liberator*, we do not know.[41]

A 1916 deed from Belle J. Scott to Elizabeth T. Orlando for an adjoining lot referred to "R. Dyer's Inn (brick part) and also to A.M. Green's. Archibald Green and his sister, Cassandra Green Hamblin (or Hamlin), along with Green's business partner, Nathan Marble, were at the core of a very active abolitionist network centered in Port Byron, which also included B. B. Clapp and W. O. Duvall. This hotel may have been part of that network.

In 1840, William O. Duvall, who lived on a marshy point in the Seneca River near the village of Port Byron, reported that "a venerable deacon in the pro-slavery Presbyterian Ch. in the place, came out boldly & manfully for the first time in favor of immediate emancipation." Frederick Douglas spoke in the Port Byron Methodist Church (no longer standing). In 1848, 1850, and 1855, Cassandra Green Hamlin organized Port Byron women to work with women in Rochester on antislavery fairs. They gave "a box of useful and fancy goods" to this meeting. In 1849,

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[38] National Archives and Records Administration. Sen 31A-J7.81.

[39] Deed Book 90, page 78, March 30, 1855.

[40] Census records, 1855, 1860, 1865, 1870, online through Cayuga County Historian's Office and Cayuga County GenWebsite.

[41] Howard's status as a subscriber to the *Liberator* was identified through the *Liberator* subscription list, Boston Public Library, and by Michael Riley, Town Historian of Mentz, and his careful detective work in reading the very difficult handwriting on this list.

Cassandra Hamlin also worked on a committee with women from Farmington, Ontario County, to raise funds to educate young people recently escaped from slavery, among them the Edmondson sisters, whose rescue from slavery after being captured on the *Pearl* in 1848 energized abolitionists all over upstate New York. Cassandra Hamlin later married J. C. Hathaway of Farmington. Her brother, Archibald Green, worked with William Henry Seward on antislavery politics in the Whig Party.[42]

[42] *Friend of* Man, April 1, 1840; Frederick *Douglass' Paper*, October 26, 1849; July 29 1853, December 23, 1853; *North Star,* January 14, 1848, September 1, 1848; March 15, 1850; January 19, 1855. Several letters from Green to Seward, Seward Papers, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester. Thanks to Charles Lenhart for information about the Green-Hamlin family genealogy. The Greens were original from Sennett and may have been affiliated with what is now the Sennett Federated Church.

Sennett Federated Church and Parsonage
Weedsport-Sennett Road
Sennett, New York

Significance: Site of major Underground Railroad stop

Looking North
March 25, 2005
Paul Malo, Photographer

Looking NE
Paul Malo, Photographer
March 25, 2005

Description: Now occupied by the Sennett Federated Church (created in 1929 by the combined memberships of the Congregational and Baptist churches in Sennett), this church building was constructed in 1848 for the Congregational Church of Sennett for $3269.00 by Edward Munson and James M. Servis, with help from Baptist Dr. C.C. Curtiss, Jr. The original contract now hangs on the wall of the library in the church. The building probably incorporates part of the 1820 church building, perhaps as part of the library itself. According to the church minutes, the parsonage next door was built in 1818 or shortly thereafter as a frame structure, 16 feet x 24 feet. This original building was perhaps included in the west wing of the current gable-and-wing Greek Revival structure. In the twentieth century, a second story was added to the wing. Both church and parsonage retain their original locations and their original function. Both retain their integrity of design, setting, feeling, and association.

In 1799, the Sennett Baptist Church was organized as the Third Baptist Church of Aurelius, and two years later, the Cayuga Baptist Association organized in the barn of Sennett Baptist Ebenezer Healy, whose son later became an active abolitionist and possible Underground Railroad activist.

In 1805, the First Congregational Church of Brutus was organized, which became the Congregational Church of Sennett after Brutus and Sennett became separate townships.[43]

On Tuesday, March 11, 1817, the Congregational Society voted that Ira Hopkins, E.B. Fellows, and Moses Robinson be a committee "For the purpose of Circulating a subscription paper for the purpose of Raising Money to Purchase a Parsonage for the use and Benefit of Sd. Society." On October 1, 1818, they voted "that we build a House for Said Society on the Persanage of Sd. Society 24 by 16 feet and to be fraimed House."[44]

No mention was made of a meeting house itself until 1821, when the society first noted they "convened at the Meeting House in Said Society on the 13th of November at 1 O clock P.M. 1821" and voted that Zalman Hanford be given "keeping of the Key to the Meeting House."

The Society made no further mention of physical buildings until January 24, 1828, when they resolved "that any of the Members of this Society shall have a right to build horse sheds on the South and West line of the Society ground near the Meeting house" and "that the sheds now building by Luther Bassett and Elias Cady Shall be prised at ten Dollars each and if any person bids higher than the Sum, the overplus shall be deposited in the Societies fund for the benefit of the Society." At their annual meeting on January 9, 1833, they made another reference to the horse sheds when they resolved "that any member of the Society shall be privileged to build sheds on the boundaries of the Societies lot provided they do not place them in a situation to interfere in any way with the use of those which are now built." No record of the location of these horse sheds now exists.

In 1848, under the pastorate of Rev. Charles Anderson, the congregation decided to build a new church. On April 8, 1848, two men representing the church—Jacob Sheldon, Clerk, and Dr. C.C. Cady, 2d—signed a contract with Edward Munson and James M. Servis, builders. Munson and Servis agreed to "make erect build and finish in a good substantial & workmanlike manner on the meeting house lot of the said party, of the first part, a meeting house & Lecture room, agreeable to the draft plan & explanation, hereunto annexed, of good & substantial materials . . . The meeting house to be finished by the 1st day of February next and said Lecture room to be finished by the 1st day of October next . . . $3269.00 in four equal installments. . . with the understanding that so much of said old meeting house may be used in the new one as will answer the specifications." [45]

While Munson and Servis's "draft plan and explanation" did not survive, we can guess that they turned to one of the most popular contemporary architects' and builders' guides for their Greek Revival design. Asher Benjamin's *The Architect, or Practical House Carpenter*, first appeared in 1830 (one of many guides published by Benjaimin, beginning in 1797) but was subsequently

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[43] Elliot G. Storke, *History of Cayuga County, New York* (Syracuse: D. Mason, 1879), 345-46.

[44] Congregational Church of Sennett, "A Record of the Proceedings of the First Congregational Society of Brutus,"
Beginning September 3, 1805, http://www.rootsweb.com/~nycayuga/church/1stcongress_proceedings.htm. The following
quotations also come from this source.

[45] Contract. Library, Sennett Federated Church.

published in 1844 by L. Coffin, Boston, and again in 1850 by Benjamin B. Mussey, Boston. Munson and Servis would probably have been using the L. Coffin edition of 1844. Plate IV and Plate VI both give detailed drawings for columns and architrave in the Doric order.[46]

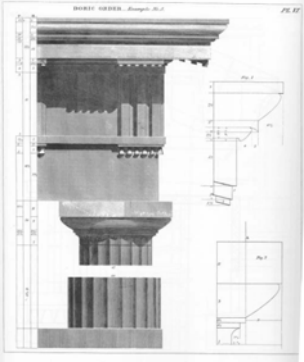


Plate VI. Asher Benjamin, *The Architect, or Practical House Carpenter* (Boston: L. Coffin, 1844), reprint (Boston: Dover, 1988).

It is possible that the builders incorporated part of the 1820 church into the "lecture room" and that this is now the church library, whose walls are more than a foot thick, suggesting the possibility that this section of the building is post-and-beam construction covered by wall board.

When the congregation dedicated their new church building in January 1849, they must have been very pleased. It was a frame building, built on a stone foundation, but it was no simple wooden box. It was a true work of art. Edward Munson and James M. Servis created an especially fine local example of high-style Greek Revival architecture. Two fluted Doric columns highlighted the portico, flanked by two pilasters on each side, with a simplified architrave that framed a recessed doorway. Columns and pilasters led people to look toward upward, where the steeple pointed toward heaven. Rather than emphasizing the slope of the roof, as many builders would do with a pedimented roofline, these contractors used a parapet to form a base for the tower.

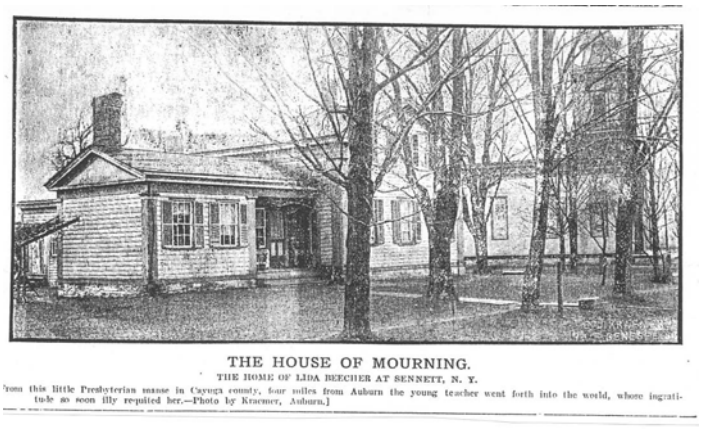
Sennett Federated Church
Façade, looking North,
November 2004

[46] Reprinted (Boston: Dover, 1988). Asher Benjamin's first published architectural work was *The Country Builder's Assistant* (1797), which was also the first original architectural book published in the U.S. He followed this with *The American Builder's Companion* (1806), *The Rudiments of Architecture* (1814), *The Practical House Carpenter* (1830), *The Practice of Architecture* (1933), *The Builder's Guide* (1839)), and *The Elements of Architecture* (1843). These were published in several editions, making forty-four in all. William Morgan, introduction to reprint of Dover edition of *American Builder's Companion* (Boston: Dover, 1988), vi-vii.

Marcellus Presbyterian Church façade. http://www.rcpp.presbychurch.org/pyp/ny/ny073.jpg

Stained glass windows were added in the twentieth century, including one in the foyer to honor Rev. Charles Anderson. The fellowship hall was expanded in 1948-49. Vinyl siding was added over the original clapboards in the 1990s. At some point, the shutters were removed. Otherwise, the church retains its original form, location, and primary features.[47]

The parsonage next door, built about 1818 as a small 16 x 24 foot building, was enlarged in the mid-nineteenth century into a typical Greek Revival gable-and-wing building, perhaps incorporating the original smaller house as the west wing.



THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.
THE HOME OF LIDA BEECHER AT SENNETT, N. Y.
[From this little Presbyterian manse in Cayuga county, four miles from Auburn the young teacher went forth into the world, whose ingratitude so soon illy repaid her.—Photo by Kraemer, Auburn.]

Newspaper article, n.d.

Significance: Before the Civil War, both Congregationalists and Baptists in Sennett were committed abolitionists, passing antislavery resolutions and supporting Underground Railroad

[47] *Sennett Sesquicentennial*, September 11th, 1949. Thanks to Sheila Tucker for finding this.

activities. Rev. Charles Anderson, pastor of the Congregational Church, and his wife, Elizabeth Anderson, hosted freedom seekers in the parsonage next door to this church. Through records kept by William Still and the Vigilance Committee in Philadelphia, we have detailed documentation for four freedom seekers who lived in Sennett, including Harriet Eglin, who wrote three letters from her home in the parsonage. Through other sources, we have names of ten more African Americans in Sennett who were most likely freedom seekers and eight European American families who may have been Underground Railroad activists. The work of these congregations illustrates the importance of religious values in sustaining abolitionist action and the commitment of this whole community, supported by the interdenominational work of these two churches, to Underground Railroad activity.

Abolitionist and Underground Railroad action in Sennett churches took place in the context of national debate that split apart several denominations. In Sennett, both Baptists and Congregationalists initiated formal debates about abolitionism in the early1840s. In 1842, the Baptist Church of Sennett "at our regular Church Meeting in April last," "voted that we adopt the following resolutions respecting Slavery, and that we send them to the Baptist register & Christian Reflector for publication":

> Whereas we beleive the system of slavery to be a sin of the most agrivated character and believing that sufficient light and truth has in the providence of God been presented to the concience of evry intelligent mind of the enormity of this crime, and knowing as we do that this sin is practiced by a portion of the professed Church of Christ we do as a distinct portion of this great compact, solemnly and we trust prayerfully deem it our duty to pass the following resolution
>
> Resolved that we have no fellowship for the System of Slavery nor for any engaged in the traffick in any way, or any attemting to justify the practice of this enormous crime. [spelling in original][48]

In 1844, the Congregationalists, too, passed an antislavery resolution. They had first considered this issue in 1840, when Deacon Stone accused the minister and the congregation of worshipping "the goddess of sectarianism and slavery." The church threw out Deacon Stone and deferred the debate. Then came a new preacher. Charles Anderson was born in Schenectady, New York, on August 8, 1812, son of a Presbyterian minister from Scotland. He graduated from Union College in 1840 and then went to Auburn Theological Seminary. He arrived in Sennett in 1842 as a student. The congregation liked him so well that when he graduated the following year, they called him to be their regular pastor. He was ordained on November 14, 1843, and he remained until 1864.[49]

It is probably no accident that just over two months later, on January 31, 1844, the church adopted its first antislavery resolution:

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[48] Microfilm of manuscript Baptist Church Records, October 22, 184[2], Cayuga County Historian's Office.

[49] Church records, as transcribed by Sheila Tucker; Obituary for Rev. Charles Anderson, *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, January 4, 1900; "Graduates and Students Auburn Theological Seminary," *General Biographical Catalogue of Auburn Theological Seminary, 1818*-1918 (Auburn: Auburn Seminary Press, 1918), 85

Whereas, we the members of the first Congregational Church in Sennett, believing the system of slavery to be a great sin against God and man--& that all men are in duty bound to lift their voice against it, but especially the church of Jesus Christ, that the blood of the slave or slaveholder, may not be found in their skirts at the day of Judgment—and as it is the practice of many churches in our land to hold & thus perpetuate the system of Slavery—

Therefore resolved—1st That we will not in any way support slavery, nor will we invite any individual that is a slaveholder or an advocate of the system to preach in our pulpit—

2nd That we will not receive into our communion a slave holder—or an apologist for slavery—nor will we invite one to sit with us at the table of the Lord.

3rd That we heartily disapprove the course of those ministers or laymen who attempt to prove slavery right by the bible.

4th That in our opinion it is the duty of the church to testify against this heaven-daring iniquity, & by every means in her power to wash her hands clean from the pollution & guilt of slavery.

5th That these proceedings be published in the Northern Advocate—New York Evangelist, & New York Observer.[50]

The moderator for this session? None other than Rev. Charles Anderson, the new pastor.

Passage of the Fugitive Slave Law did nothing to deter people in Sennett from working on the Underground Railroad. On November 27, 1851, Rev. Anderson, pastor of the Congregational Church, preached a Thanksgiving Day sermon in the Baptist Church, using Psalms 32:12 as a text: "Blessed is the national whose God is the Lord." He concluded with "a few reflections." Among them was an explicit reference to the Fugitive Slave Law:

> As members of the nation, we cannot fail to see how desirable it is that we, in common with all the nations of the world, choose the Lord for our God. Then, my dear hearers, would we be a blessed nation . . . . Our rulers would not then be as, alas, too many of them now are, among the vilest of earth's inhabitants: then would oppression, with its untold enormities, be unknown; the cry of the poor slave would be unheard: the panting fugitive fleeing for liberty, would not from day to day be witnessed in our streets, followed by the bloodhounds of a pro-slavery government eager to devour or carry them back into the hell of slavery from which they had escaped; then would not our Senators and Representatives conspire together to frame mischief by a law, which future ages will hold up to unutterable execration and eternal abhorrence. A law sanctioned by the President of these United States, and his Cabinet. A law sustained by many of the so-called ministers of Christ, and by multitudes professing his name. A law which tramples under its unhallowed feet, God's law, containing the principles of eternal rectitude and justice. A law which overrides and crushes the poor and the needy in the dust, and seeks to obliterate forever, the moral image of Jehovah.

But it was not enough to condemn this law. Rev. Anderson asked each person to consider "*the vast importance of doing what we can, individually and collectively, to hasten that day when the nation shall choose the Lord to be its God.* [italics in original.] Every being in God's universe is not only possessed of influence, but is actually exerting it, and it is a matter of no small moment to each of us, how we exert our influence. God has given to each member of this republic, the power of doing something towards hastening on the time when our land shall be what it ought to

[50]Microfilm of manuscript Congregational Church Records, January 31, 1844, Cayuga County Historian's Office.

be." He concluded "That it is a time when we are loudly called upon to be up and doing is certain; and the question for each to settle is, am I ready, willing, and determined to do what I can to put this nation in such a condition as that the Lord can and will bless us. . . .Then rest assured, our land will be Immanuel's land, a mountain of holiness, and a dwelling-place for God. Then will the voice of Jehovah, be heard, saying to us, Rejoice and be glad, oh land, for the Lord will do great things; then shall we be that happy people, that blessed nation, whose God is the Lord."[51]

In the context of slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law, some of his hearers may well have used Rev. Anderson's words to strengthen their resolve to work on the Underground Railroad. It seems clear from his actions that Rev. Anderson himself did so. At some time during this period, he became not only an abolitionist but also an active worker on the Underground Railroad. According to his obituary, "so great an interest did he take in the Southern slave that his home in Sennett, while he was a pastor of a congregation there was made one of the underground stations for runaway bondsmen and much of his time was occupied in caring for the fugitives." On September 9, 1844, Reverend Anderson had married Elizabeth L. Clary of Throopsville Much of Elizabeth Anderson's time, as well, must have been spent in this work.[52]

John Mason Healy, noted in one local history as "a consistent and firm friend of the freedom of the slaves," may also have been involved in the Underground Railroad in Sennett. He was "a liberal contributor to the church," probably the Baptist church, since his father, Ebenezer Healy was a deacon in the Baptist church. In fact, the regional Baptist Association had been formed in the Healy barn in 1801.[53]

Other local supporters of the Underground Railroad may have included John B. Benham, Ezra Brigham, Levi Hill, Philip Lockwood, Joel Meriman, Norman Strong, William Webster (who appeared in Congregational Church records as a member of that church), and Alanson White. According to state and federal census records between 1850 and 1870, all of these men had African Americans working as servants, laborers, or farm laborers, and several of these African Americans listed their birthplaces as Maryland, Africa, or the West Indies.[54]

Through census records, we also know the names of several African Americans who were probably freedom seekers who came to Sennett. In 1850, Charlotte Mathias, age 14, born in Africa, was living with the family of John Benham. Peter and Dinah Silver, aged 54 and 42, both born in the West Indies, were living in the Cayuga County poorhouse in Sennett, as they were also in 1855. In the 1855 New York State census, Henry Allen, aged 18, a servant with Joel Meriman, listed his birthplace as Maryland and noted that he had lived in Sennett for six months. Charles Henry, age 20, told the census taker that he was a servant with Levi Hill, a farmer, that he had been born in Maryland, and that he had lived in Sennett for eight months. John Swarts, born

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[51] "A Sermon, Preached at the Baptist Church in Sennett, Nov. 27, 1851, by the Rev. Charles Anderson," *Frederick Douglass Paper*, January 8, 1852.
[52] Obituary for Rev. Charles Anderson, *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, January 4, 1900.
[53] Elliot G. Storke, *History of Cayuga County, New York* (Syracuse: D. Mason, 1879), facing 345.
[54] New York State and U.S. census records, 1850, 1855, 1860, 1865, 1870, as compiled by Historical New York Research Associates for Survey of Historic Resources Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn and Cayuga County, Sponsored by the City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board and the Cayuga County Historian's Office, online at Cayuga County Rootsweb, http://www.rootsweb.com/~nycayuga/census/afriamer/index.html.

in Washington, D.C., was 65 years old and had lived in Sennett three months. In 1860, Samuel Hursey, age 23, was a Maryland-born laborer living with Alanson White. In 1865, Benjamin Jackson, age 52, born in Maryland, was a laborer living with Norman Strong, a farmer. In 1870, Mary and Thomas Savois, both born in Virginia, lived in their own home in Sennett with their one-year-old daughter, Settie.[55]

Our most detailed information about freedom seekers in Sennett comes through the printed and manuscript journals of William Still, who kept the main safe house in Philadelphia. In 1872, William Still published *The Underground Railroad: A Record of Facts, Authentic Narratives, Letters, &c., Narrating the Hardships, Hair-breadth Escapes and Death Struggles of the Slaves in their Efforst for Freedom, as Related by Themselves and Others, or Witnessed by the Author* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1872). This account was based on Still's own manuscript journals, kept for the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society and available on microfilm from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Thanks to William Still's careful records, we know the names of at least four freedom seekers who traveled from Maryland through Philadelphia to Sennett. They are John Cannon (known in slavery as Loudon Davis), who escaped in 1854; Harriet Eglin and her cousin, Charlotte Gildes (who escaped together in the spring of 1856); and Green Murdock. We have extraordinary documentation for two of them, John Cannon and Harriet Eglin. Their testimony hints at the involvement of many members of the Sennett community in giving refuge to freedom seekers.

John Cannon, formerly known as Loudon Davis, came from Cedar neck, near Milford, Delaware, escaping in October 1854. For some reason, William Still omitted Cannon's story from his published book, and it only came to light in 2004 thanks to research by Kate Clifford Larson. In Journal C, Still recorded Cannon's arrival in the Philadelphia office of the Vigilance Committee on November 2, 1854:

> Nov. 2, 54
> Arrived - John Cannon - old name Loudon(?) Davis. john is about 21 yrs of age - black. Slender ["slender" is crossed out.] Tall, rather of a round built. Was owned by Wm. Watson, who resided at Cedar Neck, near
> Milford (Delaware) - from whom John fled the latter part of last August. John left two Bros. & one Sister in slavery. The eldest Bro is named ["named" is crossed out] John Davis, youngest Bro. George Davis - both belong to Thos. Davis - blind man. John left before ["before" crossed out] because he feared that he was to be sold. Besides he had fared badly - had been beaten, starved etc. - John's farther-in-law [sic] Andrew Wilmer Milford.
> To 2 1/2 days board $1.25
> To Cash $2.00.[56]

We do not know whether John Cannon traveled immediately to Sennett from Philadelphia or where he lived once he reached Sennett. His name did not appear in Cayuga County as an African American in the 1855 New York State census. But we do know, however, that he was safely living in Sennett by 1856 for, as Kate Clifford Larson reported, "tucked into Journal C" was a letter which never appeared in Still's published book, which John Cannon wrote from Sennett in

[55] http://www.rootsweb.com/~nycayuga/census/afriamer/index.html.
[56] Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, Journal C of State No. 2 of the Underground Railroad (Philadelphia, Agent William Still), 1852-1857. Manuscript on microfilm, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Thanks to Kate Clifford Larson for finding and transcribing this, email to Judith Wellman, December 11, 2004.

May 1856:

"Sennett - May 19th, 56
Mr. Wm. Still
Dear Sir,
I take this opportunity of writing you a few lines to let you know that after I left you I got along well. I am now at work where I get twelve dollars per month. probably you have forgot me and to let you know who I am I will state that I came to your house about the 1st of November 1854 in the evening - you will remember that Mr. Blow, who went to New Bedford was there at the same time and that you went with me to one of my acquaintance who assured you that I was a fugitive - his name was Pete Lewis(?) of Lewistown and who was also acquainted with my father and mother - & You took me to George Davis next door to big Wesleyan Church. You recollect that you sent a letter to Lucretia Tilman stating to her that a friend wished to see her & she did not come - Also that I mentioned the name of Jacob Williams whom Jacob Cannon raised - & who made his home at Lucretia Tillman's when I was in Philadelphia - I am well acquainted with Cresey Cannon & Mary Cannon - I need not say anymore to let you know who I am - I wish you would ask Jacob Williams how Mother gets along in Delaware - at a place called Milford. My Mother's name is Grace Windsmore - I wish you would write me as soon as you can after you have got some information about my Mother & friends in Delaware. I am very anxious to hear from my old home - don't neglect to write - I have written a number of letters but have not heard a word from my people - You will recollect that you wrote my name that I bore when at home - Louden Davis - also that I told you I would change my name to John Cannon - this is the name by which I go now - Please do not forget to write me to this place Sennett – Cayuga Co. N.Y.
Your Friend - John Cannon[57]

John Cannon surely knew two more freedom seekers who came to Sennett about the time he wrote this letter. Harriet Eglin and her cousin, Charlotte Gildes, arrived in Sennett in June 1856. Their owner, William Applegate, owned a plantation in Dorchester County, Maryland, and a shipyard in Baltimore. With the help of an African American friend, James Adams, they had escaped by dressing in mourning clothes, with heavy veils over their faces, and boarding a train. Applegate, enraged, entered the railroad car looking for his runaways and actually spoke to the two girls. Not recognizing them, he left the train and declared to the conductor that the "two girls in mourning, were not the ones he was looking after." They arrived in Philadelphia, where they passed through the office of the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society and met the agent, William Still, who sent them on to Rev. Jermain Loguen in Philadelphia. With his wife, Caroline Storum Loguen, Loguen kept the main safe house in Syracuse, New York. There, reported Harriet, "two gentlemen from this community [Sennett] called and we went with them to work in their families." Harriet Eglin stayed with Rev. Charles Anderson and his wife, Elizabeth Anderson.[58]

Charlotte Gildes stayed in Sennett only a week before moving on to Canada, where she found a home near the Suspension Bridge. Harriet Eglin, however, remained in the Anderson home at

[57] Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, Journal C of State No. 2 of the Underground Railroad (Philadelphia, Agent William Still), 1852-1857. Manuscript on microfilm, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Thanks to Kate Clifford Larson for finding and transcribing this, email to Judith Wellman, December 11, 2004.
[58] William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 221-23. Information on William Applegate from Kate Clifford Larson, November 15, 2004.

least through October, and perhaps much longer. With the help of someone (perhaps Elizabeth Anderson), she wrote three letters to William Still about her experience. William Still published these letters in *The Underground Railroad*. From these letters, we learn details about her experience and that of her cousin, Charlotte Gildes.[59]

In her first letter, dated June 1856, she reported on her trip through Syracuse and her new home with Revd. Chas. Anderson in Sennett, and she asked that William Still send their clothes to Mr. Loguen so that he could send them on to Sennett. Her second letter, July 31, responded to Still's inquiry about the "trouble" in Baltimore. Apparently, Charlotte's letter to her uncle in Baltimore about their clothing had been intercepted, and their owner had learned about how they had escaped. James Adams, who had helped them get on the train, was imprisoned, and William Applegate brought suit against the railroad for assisting the girls to reach Philadelphia. Because, as William Still reported, the "Rail Road Company" had "money, power, friends, etc., and coul defy the courts," they argued that, since Applegate had boarded the cars and reported that he did not see the girls, they (and therefore also James Adams) won the suit.[60]

In her final letter to William Still, dated October 28, 1856, Harriet Eglin wrote that "I am happy to tell you that I am well and happy, I still live with Rev. Mr. Andersen [sic] in this place, I am learning to red and write. I do not like to trouble you too much, but I would like to know if you have heard anything more about my friends in Baltimore who got into trouble on our account. Do be pleased to write me if you can give me any information about them, I feel bad that they should suffer for me. I wish all my brethren and sisters in bondage, were as well off as I am." She reported that "the girl that came with me [Charlotte Gildes] is in Canada, near the Suspension Bridge." She also mentioned a fourth man who had fled from slavery and was living in Sennett. "I was glad to see Green Murdock," she wrote, "a colored young man, who stopped at your house about six weeks ago, he knew my folks at the South. He has got into a good place to work in this neighborhood." Finally, she inquired about another man, Johnson, "whose foot was smashed by jumping off the cars, he was at your house when I was there."[61]

Testimony from both John Cannon and Harriet Eglin suggests the widespread involvement of people from the Sennett community in Underground Railroad activities. John Cannon and Harriet Eglin were clearly staying with different families. Charlotte Gildes stayed with a third family. Murdock Green stayed with a fourth. If we add the names of those in the 1850-1870 census records who listed their birthplaces as a slave state, we come up with ten more names of possible freedom seekers. We can assume that this is an undercount, since many freedom seekers (or census takers) would report their birthplaces as New York State or their color as white, to protect themselves. Many more might pass through Sennett in between census years and so would never be counted (including perhaps John Cannon, Harriet Eglin, Charlotte Gildes, and Green Murdock.)

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[59] In her second letter to William Still, on July 31, 1856, Harriet Eglin reported that "my Cousin Charlotte who came with me, got into a good place in this vicinity, but she could not content herself to stay here but just one week—she then went to Canada." In October, Eglin reported that "the girl that came with me is in Canada, near the Suspension Bridge." Harriet Eglin to William Still, October 28, 1856, William Still, *Underground Railroad*, 223. Her last printed letter to William Still was dated October 18, 1856.
[60] William Still, *The Underground Railroad*, 221-223.
[61] Harriet Eglin to William Still, October 28, 1856, William Still, *Underground Railroad*, 223.

After Rev. Anderson left Sennett in 1864, he served at Union Springs, 1864-68, Savannah 1868-70, Sennett again,1870-77, Castile, 1877-78, and Sand Beach, 1879-81. Rev. Charles Anderson died on January 4, 1900, at his home on Seward Avenue in Auburn, New York. His obituary noted that "when the shackles of slaves were taken off, the principle desire of his life was the promotion of the cause of Prohibition." "He lived to see the abolition of slavery; he died believing the cause of Prohibition is surely approaching ultimate victory." [62]

Memories of people born in slavery continue to the present day in Sennett. Doug Riley, a member of the Sennett Federated Church, recalled that, when he was five or six years old, he saw a man called "Nigger Bill," who was once a slave. He lived in a little house in Miller woods, near Center Street, and worked with Doug Riley's grandfather, doing odd jobs. He "liked to keep himself concealed. That's why he slept in the woods. He slept in a horse manger, fifteen feet square. Kept himself unknown, as far as he could." He probably died about 1925 or 1926 and was buried on the grounds of the poorhouse. [63]

The history of the Sennett Federated Church, made up of the former Congregational and Baptist Churches of Sennett, powerfully illustrates the impact of abolitionism on one small community, as these two churches committed themselves to carrying out Christian ideals of equality for all people. Eventually, their antislavery beliefs led them to challenge the power of the federal government itself. Even after the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 levied heavy fines for Underground Railroad activists, people affiliated with these churches openly kept safe houses for African Americans who had escaped from slavery, The story of these churches also illustrates the importance of ecumenical action in this community, as these two congregations worked closely together to promote abolitionism and the Underground Railroad.

By the terms of the original building contract, dated April 8, 1848, Edward Munson and James W. Servis agreed to "make erect build and finish in a good substantial & workmanlike manner . . . a meeting house & Lecture room . . . of good & substantial materials . . . with the understanding that so much of said old meeting house may be used in the new one as will answer the specifications." Munson and Servis did not, however, construct a simple functional box. They created a work of art in the Greek Revival style, reflecting local commitment to relative simplicity and democratic ideals in the Early Republic. At the same time, their use of Greek Revival patterns suggests their awareness of contemporary high-style fashion. They did not reflect traditional building practices but rather articulated influences from the larger culture. Almost certainly, they used designs from Asher Benjamin's *The Architect, or Practical House Carpenter,* first printed in1830 and reprinted in Boston in 1844. Benjamin's influence is particularly noticeable in the Doric columns.

From its initial construction, this building illustrates the ecumenical cooperation that existed in Sennett between Baptists and Congregationalists and the resulted in the joining of these two congregations to create the Sennett Federated Church in 1929. The contract was signed by four men, the builders (Munson and Serviss), Jacob Sheldon, Clerk, and C.C. Cady, 2d. Both Curtiss C. Cady and his son, C.C. Cady, Jr. were doctors in Sennett and both were Baptists. The 1879

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[62] Obituary for Rev. Charles Anderson, *Auburn Daily Advertiser*, January 4, 1900; *Graduates and Students Auburn Theological Seminary* (Auburn,), 85

[63] Recollections of Doug Riley, March 13, 2005.

History of Cayuga County, New York noted that Curtiss C. Cady, Sr., was a Baptist "in religious sentiment" "but did not unite with the Church in Sennett. He was a liberal supporter of it, however, and contributed largely of his means to different denominations, in aid of the cause of Christ." His son, too, "in religious sentiments" was a Baptist, but we do not know whether or not he joined the Baptist Church in Sennett. It was C.C. Cady 2d who signed the building contract for the Congregational Church.[64]

The builders did their work well. With only minor modifications, the main building retains its original form, tower, and spatial configuration. It has lost its shutters, but original wood clapboards remain under the new vinyl siding. Stained glass windows were put in the church in the twentieth century, and the rear rooms of the church were enlarged in 1948-49.[65] The church and parsonage still stand in their original location at the crossroads of this small village, retaining their original feeling and association, surrounded by the homes of nineteenth century church members, a monument to values of equality and democracy in the early Republic.

Conclusion

The Sennett Federated Church and parsonage are important historic resources both because the church is an excellent example of Greek Revival church architecture and because both church and parsonage reflect the experiences of several freedom seekers and their helpers in the Congregational and Baptist churches, Documentation for both abolitionist and Underground Railroad activists is extremely good (especially for the experiences of John Cannon, Harriet Eglin, and Rev. Charles Anderson), relying on church records, census records, and the manuscript journals and 1872 publication, *The Underground Railroad*, of William Still, who kept the main safe house for the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society. The church is a fine example of Greek Revival architecture, built by Edward Munson and James M. Servis in 1848.

Many, many thanks to Sheila Tucker, who found most of the material relating to Reverend Charles Anderson; to Kate Clifford Larson, who found manuscript material in William Still's journals relating to Sennet, not printed in *The Underground Railroad*; and to several members of the Sennett Federated Church for research assistance.

[64] Original manuscript contract hanging in library of Sennett Church. Elliott G. Storke, *History of Cayuga County, New York* (Syracuse: D. Mason, 1879), 344.
[65] *Sennett Sesquicentennial*, September 11th, 1949.

William and Martha Kirk House
Sterling Center, New York
Town of Sterling

Significance: Strong oral tradition that this was a major Underground Railroad safe house

February 2005
Looking southwest

Description:

Located on the west edge of the village of Sterling Center, the William and Martha Kirk house is a large gable-and-wing Greek Revival farmhouse, with multiple wings. At least two other houses labeled "Kirk" appear on the 1853 and 1859 maps of Sterling, but this is that local oral tradition associates with the Underground Railroad.

Significance:

Local tradition, carried on through William Kirk's granddaughter Belle M. Kirk-Rea, strongly associates William and Martha Kirk with the local abolitionist Baptist Church in Sterling and with extensive Underground Railroad activity.

In 1938, Belle M. Kirk-Rea (1873-1952) wrote to county historian Leonard Searing regarding a proposal to mark her grandfather's home in Sterling as a station on the Underground Railroad:

> About a year ago Mr. Walter Long called and asked if I knew of historic places in Sterling which should be marked. Among other places, I mentioned our own, which was a station of the Underground RailRoad, on which my grandfather, William B. Kirk, was an engineer, associated with the leader Frederick Douglass, and with a Mr. John or Johnathan Edwards, Oswego.
>
> Mr. Long assured me that this marker could be placed, said he would call sometime during the winter to discuss what statement should be placed on the marker and that by spring it could be set on a large boulder at the entrance of the old lane up which the refugee slaves doubtless crept on the way to the house. By the way that window by which I sit as I write is the one to which they negroes came and tapped and called "Massa, Massa," to my grandfather. . . . There is very little record of this ? but certainly it made history. Frederick Douglas at times stayed in this home when about on his work. [66]

Another account by Belle Kirk-Rea was printed in the Sterling Historical Society's *Tales of Sterling*, courtesy of Raymond Arthur Waldron:

> As carpenter on a boat, in harbour in New Orleans, Grandfather Willaim B. Kirk saw the Slave market in action there. He came home determined to fight the slave trad.e Grandmother was with him. Theirhome became a station on the Underground Railroad. Fugitive slaves, coming probably from Auburn, crept up the old lane in the dark, tapped on a window, as they had been directed, softly called,"Massa." They were often taken in, hidden somewhere. I often wonder where. If there was a boat for Canada in harbour at Fair Haven, they were secretly gotten on board. If not they were taken or directed to Mr. John B. Edwards of Oswego who directed the affairs of Gerrit Smith's office in Oswego. In carrying on this system Mr. Edward represented Gerrit Smith, the great abolitionist who was at one time nominated for the Presidency on the Abolitionist ticket at a party convention held in Oswego's first City Hall. [67]

The John B. Edwards home on East Third Street in Oswego is now on both the National Park Service's Network to Freedom and the National Register of Historic Places, because of its importance as an Underground Railroad and abolitionist site.

Raymond Sant, local historian, noted that Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as well as Frederick Douglass, stayed in the Kirk home. The Kirks belonged to the abolitionist Baptist Church, although William Kirk's mother, Martha McCrea Kirk, the first woman school teacher in Sterling, was raised in the Presbyterian Covenanter Church, also strongly abolitionist. They were so thoroughly focused on living their version of a Christian life that they opposed any participation in secular politics.[68]

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[66] Belle M. Kirk to Leonard Searing, December 8, 1938, copy in Cayuga County Historian's Office.

[67] *Post-Herald*, January 19, 2005.

[68] Raymond Sant, *Sterling and Fair-Haven* (Waterloo: K-Mar, 1973), 88-89.

Belle Kirk-Rea noted that Frederick Douglass stayed at the Kirk home. Archival evidence supports William Kirk's knowledge of Douglass's work, because in 1853, Kirk gave $2.00 to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*. [69]

Belle Kirk-Rea also reported that, through her parents' work for temperance, she was introduced to Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton:

> When the time came to do something about the liquor traffice, William and Martha were one against it. In joining what was probably the first State Temperance organization, Grandma became associated with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. At one time when they were guests of hers at her Sterling Centre home, she brought them up across lots to see her youngest sons' daughter (now Mrs. Belle Kirk-Rea). Miss Stanton sat in Mother's best rocker and they stood me up in front of her. She talked to me. I don't recall what she said, but I've been a advocate of woman's rights ever since.[70]

Stanton and Anthony were most active in temperance work in the early and mid-1850s. Since Belle Kirk-Rea was born in 1853, she must have been a very small child when this incident occurred.

The 1860 U.S. census listed two William Kirks, probably father and son. William Kirk, father, age 58, was a farmer, with real estate worth $1050, married to Martha, age 57, with two daughters, Ellen (age 22) and Rachael (age 20) still at home. Son William Kirk was age 34, a carpenter, with real estate worth $500, married to Cornelia, age 28, and children George (age 4), and Martha (age 2). Belle Kirk-Rea's parents names are not known.

Further work:

William Kirk's names was not located on any extant antislavery petitions, nor did his name appear further in *Frederick Douglass's Paper* or in other references in the Accessible Archives index to African American newspapers. One reference to a William Kirk appeared in the Gerrit Smith papers, but the letter did not refer to abolitionist activities. Local tradition suggests that an obituary for William Kirk gives more details about his antislavery work.

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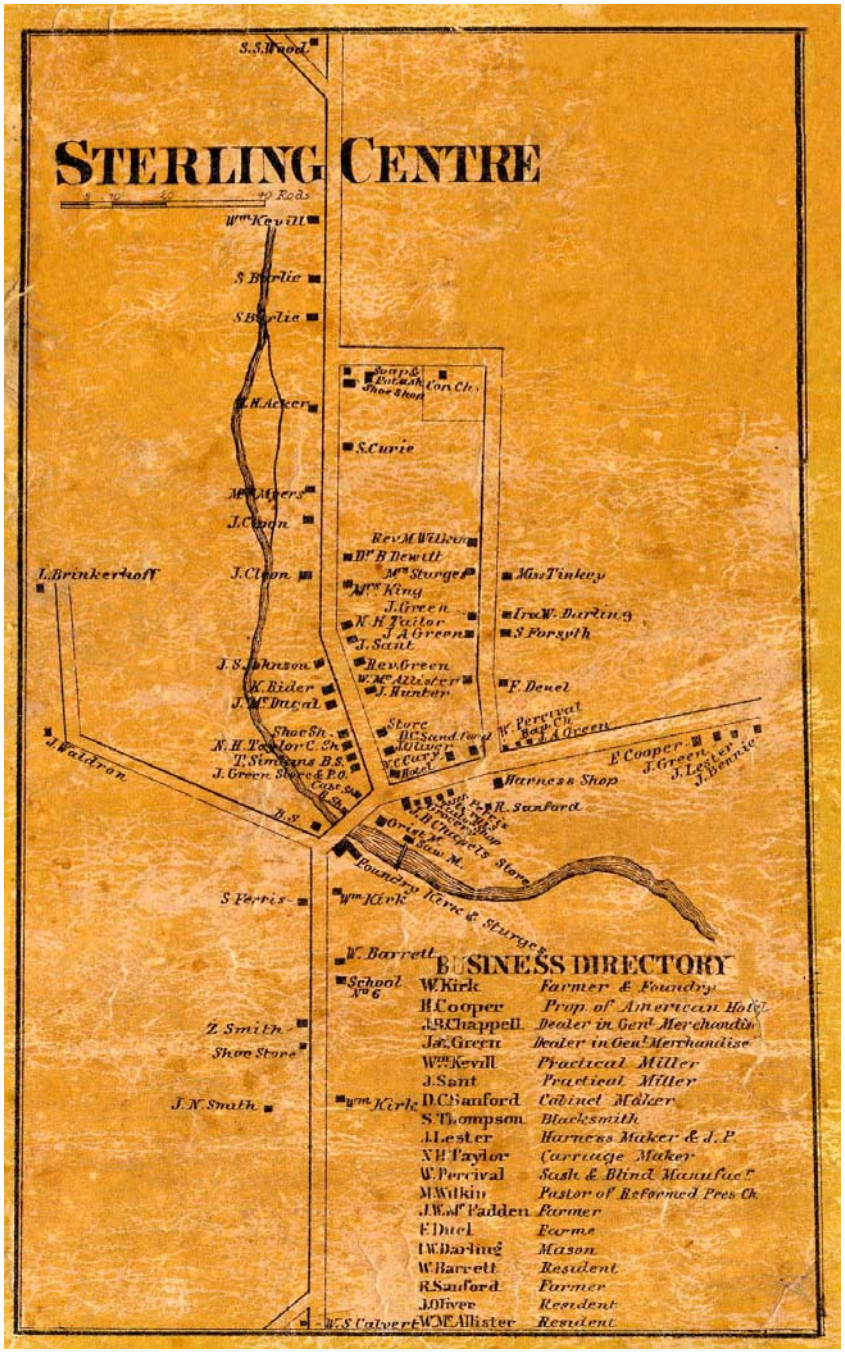
[69] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, May 13, 1853.

[70] Belle Kirk-Rea, quoted in "Tales of Sterling," *Post-Herald*, January 19, 2005. Thanks to Joni Lincoln for finding this article.



Ormando Willis Gray, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1859.
The Kirk house is on the south (right) side of the road leading west out of Sterling Center, toward the bottom of the map.

Churches in Sterling Center, New York
Town of Sterling

Significance: Both Covenanter Church and Baptist Church in Sterling were major abolitionist centers.

610
Site of Covenanter Church
February 2005
Sterling Center

The Covenanter Church (Presbyterian) in Sterling was an active abolitionist center, located on the northwest corner of the original town square. Raymond Sant, local historian, noted that the national body of this church voted in 1787 to educate people in slavery and to find some "prudent methods for the abolition of slavery as it was contrary to the laws of God and the spirit of Christianity."[71] At some point, the building was either demolished or moved.

The Sterling Baptist Church also passed a resolution on November 2, 1844, against slavery:

[71] Raymond Sant, *Sterling-Fair Haven: Where the Trails, Sails and Rails Met on the Shores of Lake Ontario* (Waterloo, N.Y.: K-Mar Press, 1973), 115), 115.

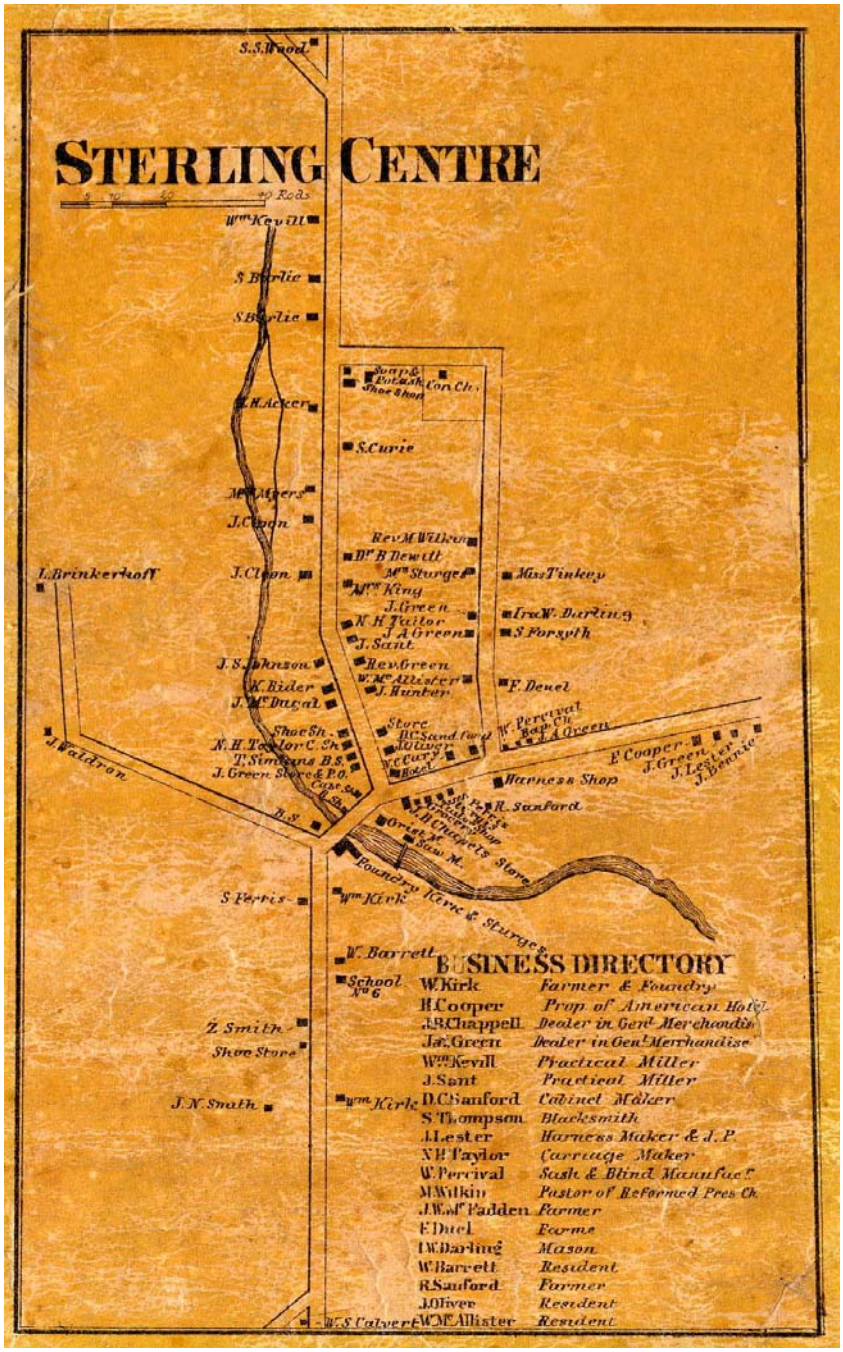
> We believe human slavery or the degrading of human beings to the condition of chattels is a gross violation of the principles of the Gospels and we withhold our fellowship from those who are guilty of this sin.[72]

Raymond Sant noted that Frederick Douglass spoke in this church.

Both churches appeared on Orlando Willis Gray's *Map of Cayuga and Seneca Counties, New York* (Philadelphia: A.R.Z. Dawson, 1859). Today, no church appears on either site, but a Greek Revival Church now stands on the main road, across from the schoolhouse. Probably this is either the Covenanter Church or the Baptist Church building, moved across the creek from its original site.

622
February 2005
Sterling Center Church
Looking NE

[72] Raymond Sant, *Sterling-Fair Haven*, 115.



Orlando Willis Gray's *Map of Cayuga and Seneca Counties, New York* (Philadelphia: A.R.Z. Dawson, 1859).

The Covenanter Church was located at the northeast corner of the town square (top right). The Baptist Church was on the north side of the main road entering the village from the east, the third building on the east (right) of the intersection of the east road of the square with the main road.

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Isaac Bell House
Northeast Corner Route 34 and Rude Street
Weedsport, New York

Significance: Home of abolitionist and reputed Underground Railroad supporter

Photo by Tanya Warren, August 2005
Looking north

Photo by Tanya Warren, August 2005
Looking northwest

Description: Five-bay frame Federal house on a slight rise, with six-over-six windows and a remarkable oval window in the gable end. Front door has sidelights and a tripartite fanlight.

Significance: Isaac Bell signed an antislavery petition from Weedsport. Local residents report a strong oral tradition that the house was used as a stop on the Underground Railroad. People came on the turnpike to Rude Street and then went on an old road (no longer there) to Hamilton Street, before they cut across Oakland to the Seneca River. From there, they might go west to Port Byron (perhaps to the island home of W.O. Duvall).

Local tradition suggests that other local places were also involved with the Underground Railroad, including:

1) Federal house, a mile from Route 31B on East Brutus Street Road at Crossman's Corners), on the north side of the road to Auburn.
2) house on Route 5, with a basement full of little rooms.
3) a cave off Hamilton St. on Harold Hawley farm. It was behind the house of one of the volunteers at the Brutus Historical Society. Kids used to play in it, so the owner blew it up. [73]

In 1855, the Town of Brutus (with the village of Weedsport) had 28 African Americans living in it (one percent of the total population of 2807)), more than any other town in Cayuga County except Ledyard (with the village of Aurora), which had 51 African Americans, 2.5 percent of the total population of 1976, Mentz (with the village of Port Byron), which had 48 African Americans, one percent of the total population of 5058, and the City of Auburn (which counted 183 African Americans, two percent of the total population of 9470).[74]

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[73] Thanks to Jean Baker, Town of Brutus historian, for collecting these stories.

[74] *New York State census, 1855* (Albany, 1857).

Some of the African Americans in the Town of Brutus may have lived and worked along the canal, especially in the village of Weedsport, where Erie Canal warehouses still stand at 8921 and 8923 Seneca Street, an Erie Canal-era building still stands at 8924 Seneca Street (Old Erie Restaurant), and a pre-Civil War blacksmith shop stands at 8952 Seneca Street.

Cayuga County: Central

Fleming

Van Nest House

Genoa

Hutchinson House, Northville
Northville Presbyterian Church

Ledyard

Cooper House, Aurora
Site of Griger House, Town of Ledyard (See Levanna)
Hart House, Aurora
Hutchinson House
King-Gaskin House
Levanna Square
Marriott Houses (two), Aurora and Town of Ledyard
North Street Friends Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse)
Taber House, Barber's Corners
Tate House, Site of, Aurora
Youngs House, Aurora

Niles

Fillmore Boyhood Home, Site of
New Hope Mills (Rounds Mills), New Hope
New Hope Mills Methodist Church, New Hope

Scipio

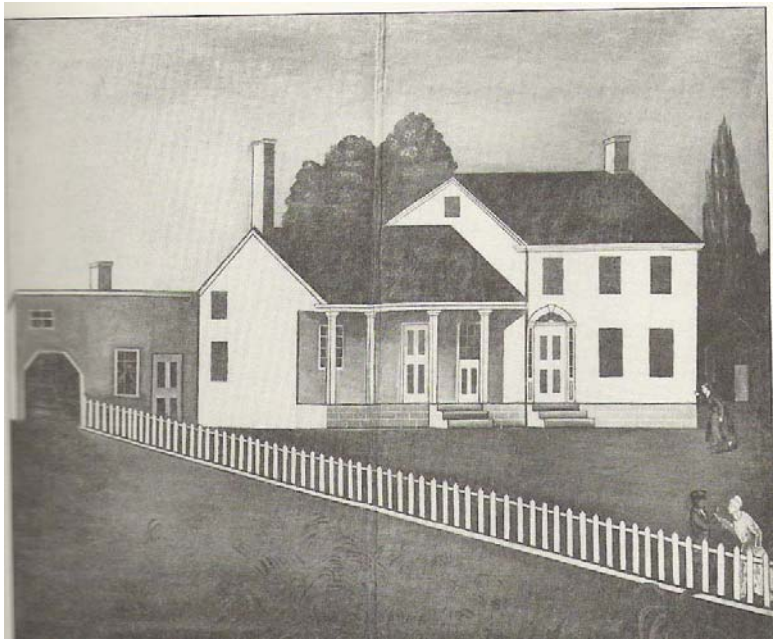
Howland House, Emily, Sherwood
Howland House, Slocum and Hannah, Sherwood
Howland House, William, Hannah, Isabel (Opendore), Sherwood
Howland Stone Store, Sherwood
Howland Tenant House, Sherwood
Letchworth House, Sherwood
Phillips House, Sherwood
School House, Sherwood

Springport

Hart House, Union Springs

Van Nest Family Home
Route 38
Fleming, New York

Significance: Home of family murdered by William Freeman, 1846



George J. Mastin, *Van Nest House*, c. 1846
Property of Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, NY

Van Nest House
Photograph by Carrie N. Barrett, June 2005

Van Nest House
Photo by Judith Wellman, June 2005

Description:

On Route 38 in Fleming, New York, stands a simple frame structure with attached wing. The structure has undergone only minor changes over the years (including adding an Italianate front porch and creating a full two-story wing). A comparison between recent photographs and the 1846 Mastin paintings (now in the collection of the Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown, New York) provides evidence of the integrity of the site.

Significance: In 1846, this house became famous as the site of one of the most horrific and controversial crimes in the history of New York State, the murder of five members of the Van Nest household by African American William Freeman. The subsequent trial raised issues of race, class, and capital punishment and made legal history when former Governor (and future Senator and Secretary of State) William Henry Seward defended Freeman on the basis of insanity. The events were commemorated by a local artist, George Mastin, in fourteen large murals now located in the Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown.

On the evening of March 12th, 1846, Freeman entered the Van Nest home at approximately 9:00 p.m. Eight individuals were within the home at the time, including Mr. and Mrs. John G. Van Nest, their three children, Julia, Peter, and George, Mrs. Peter Wykoff and her young great niece, Helen Holmes, and Mr. Cornelius Arsdale. The intruder was named William Freeman, a recently released African American prisoner from Auburn State Prison. This was not the first time he had visited the Van Nest home. According to Helen Holmes, Freeman had inquired after work a week prior but had been turned away. On the evening in question, Freeman had entered the home and first attacked John Van Nest, followed next by Mrs. Van Nest, young George Van Nest, Mrs. Wykoff, and Mr. Arsdale. The brutal savagery of the murders stunned local citizens and created a

wave of speculation and mania that encouraged figures like George J. Mastin, a "phrenologist, tailor, storekeeper, and farmer of Genoa, New York", to capitalize on the popular interest of such macabre events.[1] Under his direction, a number of artists were commissioned to paint fourteen tableaux of "Landscapes, Historical, Scriptural and Tragical Scenes".[2] *Van Nest House* as illustrated above is one of four paintings dedicated to the Van Nest Murders ranging in size from 8' x 10' to 10' x 14'.

William Freeman fled the scene of the murders and was eventually captured in Phoenix, New York on Friday, March 13, and returned to Auburn where he would await trial. Representing his defense was William H. Seward, former governor of New York, and fellow attorneys Christopher Morgan and Samuel Blatchford. On account of several factors, Seward chose to pursue a plea of insanity for his client whom he felt had suffered continued injustice and abuse at the hands of his caretakers throughout his short life. Freeman's incapacity to articulate himself clearly, incognizance of the events that had transpired, and his apparent delusionary behavior prior to the murders were seemingly indicators of the murderer's mental illness.

On the charge of insanity, William Freeman was found "sufficiently sane in mind and memory to distinguish between right and wrong".[3] Seward and his colleagues were eventually able to overturn the decision of the court which found Freeman guilty and punishable by death. The accused, however, had no opportunity to present his case before a higher court. William Freeman died in prison August 21, 1847, of numerous conflicting health issues including tuberculosis, paralysis, and loss of hearing and sight.

Very little is known of surviving members of the Van Nest Murders. Their story remains untold in the wake of the Freeman trial.

Carrie N. Barrett

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[1] Arpey, Andrew W., *The William Freeman Murder Trial: Insanity, Politics, and Race*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003), ix.
[2] Ibid, ix.
[3] Ibid, 65.

Matthias and Hannah Hutchinson House, pre-1835
Northville, New York

Significance: Underground Railroad safe house (probably where Herman and Hannah Phillips stayed, 1843)

December 2004
Looking NW

Description: There are at least two houses associated with the Hutchinson family in Cayuga County. This one, located on the west side of Route 34B at the north edge of Northville, is a large three-bay gable-end-to-the-street frame building with a half-oval window in the gable end and large chimney still protruding from the west end of the roof. Local tradition in central Cayuga County associates another house with the Underground Railroad, also owned by the Hutchinson family, later owned by the Heffernan family, located on the west side of Route 34B just north of the Genoa-Ledyard Town line. On the first floor of this house was a removable panel which concealed a small hiding place. In a summer kitchen in back of the house were metal cleats on the wall. These went up to an open attic or down to a storage area.[4]

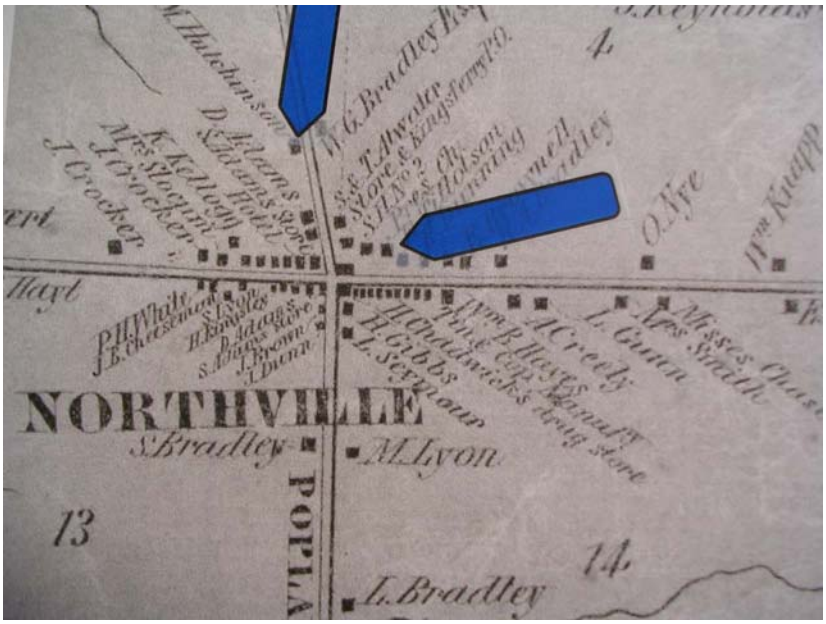
[4]Oral tradition passed on by Joan Heffernan, Ithaca, New York; Bradley Mitchell, Aurora, New York. 1875 *Atlas of Cayuga County*.

Significance: Emily Howland, in her "Early History of Quakers in Cayuga County," reported that Matthias Hutchinson was a Quaker who came to Cayuga County with his parents in 1821. He married Hannah, also a Quaker.[5]

In 1843, according to an oral tradition recorded by Jane Searing in the 1930s, Matthias and Hannah Hutchinson cared for Herman and Hannah Phillips and their four children, freedom seekers who had walked all the way from Maryland with their youngest child on their back. Matthias Hutchinson told Herman Phillips that he would take the family the next day to Slocum Howland, a few miles north, in Sherwood, who would be able to help him. Phillips replied that he had had a vision that he was to stay in a place where there was an orchard, a stone store, and a man crossing the road who was to be his friend. And indeed, that is what he found in Sherwood the very next day.[6]

In 1843, however, the Hutchinson family was living on the north edge of the village of Northville, in the Town of Genoa, in a house that Matthias had inherited from his father, Thomas Hutchinson. Hutchinson subscribed to William Lloyd Garrison's newspaper *The Liberator* from this house in King's Ferry from at least 1844 to 1859. Matthias Hutchinson contributed $2.00 to *Frederick Douglass' Paper* in 1851, 1852, and 1855. [7]

By 1850, Hannah Hutchinson had died. In 1859, Matthias purchased the house on the southeast corner of Lot 92 in Ledyard.



Northville, Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1853

[5] Emily Howland, "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County, N.Y., Read before the Cayuga County Historical Society, April 8th, 1880," *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society*, 2 (1882): 49-90, online through Cayuga County Historian's Office.
[6] Jane Searing, article in vertical file, Hazard Library.
[7] *Liberator* subscription list, Boston Public Library; *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, December 25, 1851; December 31, 1852; January 12, 1855.

Since he did not move to Ledyard until just two years before the beginning of the Civil War, most of his Underground Railroad work probably took place in the family's home in Northville (King's Ferry). Nevertheless, if the family was active in the Underground Railroad, it might make sense that they would incorporate physical hiding places in their new home.

Ormando Willis Gray, *Map of Cayuga and Seneca Counties, New York* (Philadelphia: A.R.Z. Dawson, 1859).

A warehouse labeled "M. Hutchinson" appeared on the 1859 Cayuga County map in Cayuga Village, at the north end of Cayuga Lake. If Hutchinson was one of those farmer-traders involved in commercial ventures along Cayuga Lake (much like Slocum Howland), he would have been in a good position to give shelter and work to freedom seekers, as well as help them travel north toward Canada.

Matthias Hutchinson appeared in the 1860 census but not in the 1870 census. He reappeared in the 1880 census as an 84-year-old widower living as a boarder in another family. No burial place has been found in any cemetery in either Ledyard or Genoa.[8]

Research by Joan Heffernan, Bradley Mitchell, Tanya Warren, Carrie Barrett.

[8] Deeds, Cayuga County Clerk's Office (deed search by Tanya Warren and Carrie Barrett); U.S. census records, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880 searched by Tanya Warren.

Presbyterian Church, built c. 1847
King Ferry (Northville)
Town of Genoa

Significance: Abolitionist meetings held here

December 2004
Looking NE

Description: This large frame church stands on the village green of Northville, in a classic village setting. It appears to have a Greek Revival front doorway, although the Florentine windows in its belfry may be a later addition. A letter from H. Collins, abolitionist lecturer to *The North Star* in 1848 noted that the church was "built new last year."[9]

Significance: Northville (King Ferry) in the Town of Genoa, was the site of several abolitionist meetings, supported by the 1850s by this local Presbyterian church and earlier by at least three families—those of Asa Crocker, Joseph Crocker, and Quakers Mathias and Hannah Hutchinson.

[9] H. Collins to "Dear Friend Douglass," *The North Star*, January 21, 1848.

This Northville Church represents the change in attitude toward abolition of many local Presbyterian churches, including those at Five Corners and Genoa.

The Western New York Anti-Slavery Society held at meeting at Northville on February 24-25, 1841. "Let us not forget that there is at work in midst a system which is antagontistical to sound civil and religious liberty, and that it lives and breathes only at the expense of Human Rights. The battle is in, and will be decided: Under which banner then shall we enlist—the pure and peaceful banner of Truth and Freedom, or the dark and blood-stained banner of Tyranny and Oppression?" read the notice, signed by J.C. Hathaway, Chairman, Farmington. [10]

When antislavery agent H. Collins visited Northville in 1848, the Presbyterian Church, newly built in 1847, was not sympathetic to his cause. Collins wrote to Frederick Douglass from Poplar Ridge on January 6, 1848,

> Dear Friend Douglass: Events do happen which ought to be told that expose the utter shamelessness of their authors. I have not the vanity, however, to suppose that I can chronicle them in such a manner as to interest your readers. I do often wish that I had the power of giving vent to my indignation, when I have the misfortune to witness what I did yesterday, at Northville, in this county. A Locofoco ex-judge and a Whig Presbyterian deacon were in conversation, on the subject of the Mexican war. The deacon expressed the opinion, unqualifiedly, that the war was justifiable on the part of the United States;and he thought that our "national honor" required that we should prosecute it vigorously, until we compel the Mexicans to pay the expenses of it, and give us an "honorable peace."
>
> Of course, the ex-functionary of state subscribed to all this, and said, further, that we ought to push the matter through, "right or wrong."
>
> church were this patriotic deacon attends was built new last year, and dedicated to the "worship of God, and, ato be kept for that prupose only;" and, consequently, is not opened to the friends of the slave. This fact is one of a thousand which show that on the CHURCH rests the responsibility of the iniquities of the land. Let her rottenness be exposed, and let her go down to posterity, hated and despised of all honest men, as she is now of God.
>
> Yours, for Truth and Freedom,
> H. Collins. [11]

In the meantime, however, individuals continued to be active for abolitionism. Herman and Hannah Phillips stayed with the Hutchinson family in 1843. In September 1850, Northville was on the route of those who spoke on behalf of William Chaplin, held in jail in Maryland for attempting to rescue—in at least the second major national rescue attempt—people from slavery. Those who spoke on this tour included outspoken freedom seekers such as James Baker, from South Carolina, and the Edmondson sisters, whose sage of attempted escape from slavery and

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[10] *Wayne Sentinel*, February 10, 1841. Found by Charles Lenhart in the King's Daughter Library, Palmyra, New York.
[11] H. Collins, *The North Star*, January 21, 1848.

recapture on the ship *The Pearl*, had made them famous throughout the northeast. Chaplin's story abolitionized many who been lukewarm to the movement. Certainly, by the 1850s, the Presbyterian Church in Northville was open to antislavery lecturers.

On November 6, 1851, Joseph R. Johnson, antislavery agent, increased the number of subscribers to *Frederick Douglass' Paper* from three to fifteen in Genoa (whether town or village is not clear):

> A THOROUGH EFFORT FOR THIS PAPER.
>
> To the friends of Freedom:
>
> Now let us be in earnest to increase the circulation of this efficient periodical. - Wherever I lecture, I do not desire that any contributions should be made to me, if the friends of Human Rights will generously enlist to subscribe for the paper. By doing this, they will help themselves to a good family newspaper, they will help Frederick Douglass, a fugitive from American Slavery, they will rebuke the slaveholders, and all the slave-catchers, South and North, James R. Lawrence and H.K. Smith included, and they will keep "J.R.J." in the lecturing field, and help him to secure the Missionary Home at Syracuse.
>
> These are the motives to influence you to act: In each place let the friends who have this world's goods, assist others to pay for the paper who are not able to give the full price. - In Genoa, Cayuga County, we found but three subscribers for the paper, and the number was increased to fifteen. Joseph Crocker of Northville especially aided. More such co-operators are wanted. Reader, will you be one?
> Yours, for Freedom,
> JOSEPH R. JOHNSON.
> SYRACUSE, Nov. 1st.[12]

At the same time, Liberty Party men were active in the village. The same issue of the paper contained a plea from someone in "King's Ferry" for Liberty Party votes. [13]

> LET US GO HOME TO VOTE.
>
> We, who are itinerating Liberty Party men, must take as much care to be at home to vote, Tuesday, November 4th, as if we expected to elect every man whose name is on our ticket, knowing also that each vote of ours would be necessary for that purpose. - Our neighbors should see our faces at the ballot box. We shall thus give them our practical commentary on our speech-making "Actions speak louder than words." Some, who have fled from the man-hunter, dare not venture to return home and mingle with their fellow-citizens at the polls. Think of that! Think it all over, the whole chapter, and vote for righteous civil government on the 4th of November. J.R.J.
> KING'S FERRY**,** Cayuga Co., Oct. 25th.

By 1852, Rev. Graves had become the pastor at the Presbyterian Church, and under his leadership, the church opened its doors to abolitionist lecturers. William C. Nell, who worked in William Lloyd Garrison's office, printing *The Liberator*, in Boston, made a lecturing tour of western New York in 1852 and reported that

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[12] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, November 6, 1851.
[13] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, November 6, 1851.

> Rev. Mr. Graves, of the Presbyterian Church at Northville . . . granted his pulpit and exerted an influence that secured me an intelligent and attentive audience, participating very faithfully in the exercises himself. I felt encouraged for the sake of the cause, regarding it as a Sabbath day's journey in the right path. [14]

In June, 1854, "W." wrote to *Frederick Douglass' Paper* that he had come to Northville from Ledyard, carried by William Savage, an Englishman, "one filled with pure unadulterated abolitionism."

> We here [at Northville] met a very cordial reception. Our meetings were held in the Presbyterian church, of which a Mr. Braves [Graves] is the worthy pastor. He is an out spoken Abolitionist—a model Reformer—an eyesore to the Presbyterian Church because of his fearless denunciation of crime and iniquity in the Church, as well as out of it. He is one of the ablest ministers in the Church, and one, too, possessing considerable influence. But to our meetings here. They were well attended by most attentive and seemingly interested audiences, upon whom, we think, a favorable impression was made. To our friend Crocker and family, we were especially indebted. We never experienced kinder treatment, even at the hands of our mother, than at the hands of Mrs. Crocker and family. May the Lord reward them all! Friend C. conveyed us for Northville to Five Corners, the place of our next meeting. Where we had a very good meeting in the Presbyterian Church, which was filled with anxious inquirers of freedom. They love the Bible, and resolved to obey its sacred behest. They love the Declaration of American Independence, and exemplify its principles. Our friend Palmer and family will receive our thanks for the many manifestations of their kindness to us, while sojourning beneath their hospitable roof. From this pretty village we went to Genoa. We lectured to large and interested audiences, in the Presbyterian Church. We were the recipient of the hospitality of Messrs. Brownell and Smith—men well known as firm and consistent advocates of Human Rights.[15]

Further research: More research would help document the homes and families of Asa Crocker and Joseph Crocker and the Presbyterian churches in Five Corners and Genoa.

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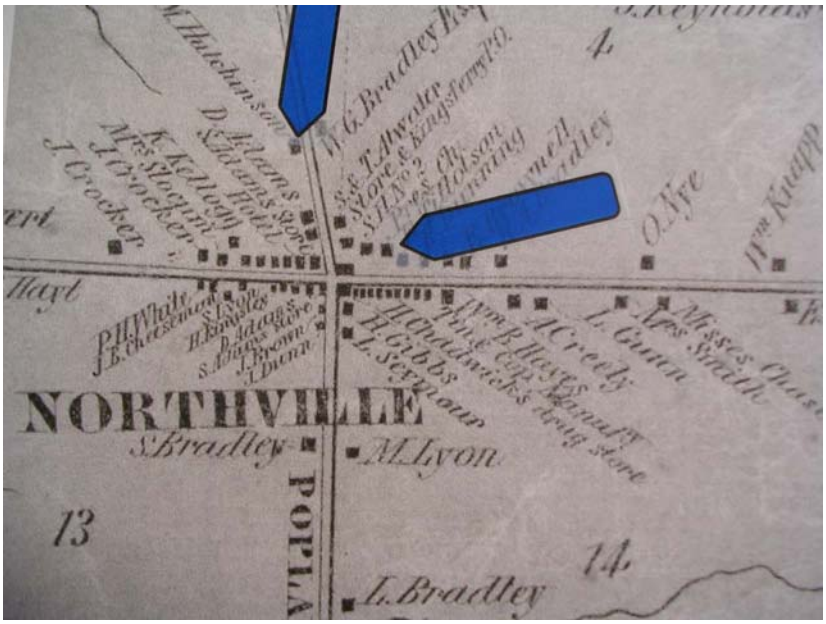
[14] William C. Nell, Rochester, August 6, 1852, *National Anti-Slavery Standard,* August 26, 1852.
[15] W. to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, June 30, 1854.



Northville, Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1853

Cromwell-Cooper House
231 Main Street
Aurora, New York (part of Aurora Village Historic District)
Town of Ledyard

November 2005
Looked west

Description: This gable-and-wing, two-story house stands on the edge of Cayuga Lake, facing Main Street at the south end of the village of Aurora. Mandell's *History of Aurora Houses* notes that this house was moved to its present site around 1840 and was the original law office of Glen Cuyler, originally just north up Main Street near the Episcopal Church. Although the basement is insulated, so that original materials are mostly covered up, at least one cut nail was visible in the spring of 2005 in floor joints in the basement on the north (gable) section.

Significance: Joseph Cooper was born in slavery in New York City about 1790. He came to Aurora about 1828. His wife Sarah Cromwell was born in Cayuga County about 1813 and had lived in Aurora since about 1822. They were manumitted, and lived the rest of their lives as free people of color in Aurora. In 1849, Joseph Cooper bought, via a mortgage, this house here on the shore of Cayuga Lake. In 1851, the tax assessment noted that Cooper owned 1/ 2 acre worth $500.00, a figure confirmed by the 1855 census (although the tax assessment for 1855 dropped the value of their house to $270.00). At least part of the time, the Coopers lived next door to

daughters and sons-in-law Zilpha Cromwell, Moses and Mary Cromwell Johnson, and Sarah Jane Cromwell Hart and Thomas Hart, freedom seeker who came from Maryland in 1840. Cooper sold this property in 1871 to Henry Chase.[16]

According the 1865 census, the Coopers had five children. In his record book, 1789-1881, E.B. Morgan noted that Mrs. Cooper died in 1869. [17]

By 1880, Joseph Cooper, a widower, was living with his son, William, William's wife Elizabeth, and their nine children, probably not in this house. Joseph's birthplace was listed as New Jersey. On February 5, 1881, E.B. Morgan noted in his diary that "Joseph Cooper died at 10 this evening, aged 91 years 6 months. He was an old citizen, once a slave." The next day, Sunday, February 6, 1881, Morgan wrote that "Went to see remains of Joseph Cooper, an old colored man who died last night aged 92 years and a half." [18]

Census records for Cooper family, Ledyard, 1850-1870:

cooper	joseph	1850	59	m	b	1294	laborer		NY		500/ landowner
cooper	sarah	1850	27	f	b	1294			NY		
cooper	william	1850	16	m	b	1294	laborer		NY		
cooper	zilpha	1850	10	f	b	1294			NY		
cooper	joseph	1855	54	m	b	367	laborer	27	NY	frame	500/ landowner
cooper	sarah	1855	42	f	b	367	wife	33	cayuga		
cooper	zilpha	1855	15	f	b	367	child	15	cayuga		
cooper	charles	1860	1		b	28			NY		
cooper	charlotte	1860	3		b	28			NY		
cooper	joseph	1860	70	m	b	28	laborer		NJ		800 / landowner
cooper	sarah	1860	47		b	28	domestic		NY		
cooper	sarah e	1860	23		b	28	domestic		NY		
cooper	william h	1860	24		b	28	laborer		NY		
cooper	zilpha	1860	19		b	28	domestic		NY		
cooper	william	1860	1	m	m	29	blank		NY		
Cooper	Charles	1865	6	m	b	341	Child		Cayuga		
Cooper	Charlotte	1865	8	f	b	341	Child		Cayuga		
Cooper	Edward	1865	1 1/3	m	b	341	Child		Cayuga		
Cooper	Eliz.	1865	37	f	b	341	Wife		Albany		
Cooper	Frederick	1865	4	m	b	341	Child		Cayuga		
Cooper	Joseph	1865	72	m	b	341	Laborer		NJ	none	160
Cooper	Sally M.	1865	52	f	b	341	Wife		Cayuga		
Cooper	William	1865	29	m	b	341	Laborer		Cayuga		
Cooper	Alexander	1870	8	m	M	132			Canada		
Cooper	Anna	1870	26	f	M	132	KH		DE		
Cooper	Arenta	1870	4	f	M	132			Canada		
Cooper	Charles	1870	30	m	M	132	Farm Laborer		DE		
Cooper	Laura	1870	5 mo.	f	M	132			NY		

[16]Birth dates estimated from census records. Counties of birth and years of residence in Cayuga County reported in 1855 census. Cooper appeared as a debtor in the estate papers of Cornelius Cuyler in 1857. Thanks to Sheila Edmunds for finding this.
[17] Thanks to Sheila Edmunds for this research.
[18] Thanks to Sheila Edmunds for Morgan diary entries.

Cooper	Joseph	1870	17	m	b	287	Laborer		NJ		w/ T.C. Stork-Iron Foreman
Cooper	Charles	1870	10	m	b	288			NY		
Cooper	Charlotte	1870	12	f	b	288			NY		
Cooper	Edward	1870	6	m	b	288			NY		
Cooper	Eliza	1870	1	f	b	288			NY		
Cooper	Fred	1870	9	m	b	288			NY		
Cooper	Robert	1870	4	m	b	288			NY		
Cooper	Sarah	1870	29	f	b	288			NY		
Cooper	W.	1870	30	m	b	288			NY		

Deed History: 231 Main St. (Cooper, Chase, Hickey House). Research and transcriptions by Tanya Warren:

1. **13 March 1963. Annie M. Hickey (daughter of Patrick a& Rosa Hickey to Wells College. Book 329, p. 1088.**
"…between Annie M. Hickey of the Village of Aurora and Wells College of the same place…All that parcel of land in the village of Aurora bounded and described as follows: Beginning in the center of the highway (or Main St., so called) at the southeast corner of lands formerly owned by William H. Bogart, and now owned by Wells College and running thence southerly along the center of said highway to the northeast corner of lands formerly owned by Lawrence Hickey and now owned by Wells College; thence running westerly along the north line of said lands of Wells College to the low water mark of Cayuga Lake; thence northerly along the said Lake to the lands formerly of the said William Bogart and now Wells College and thence east along the south line of said lands to the place of beginning, and containing about ¼ acre of land, more or less. Subject, nevertheless, to such vested rights as the Cayuga Lake Railway, or its successors may have therein.
The premises hereby conveyed being those conveyed by Henry Chase and Harriet Chase, his wife, to Rosa Hickey, by deed dated 22 March 1877 in book 146, p. 416.

1. **22 March 1877. Henry and Harriet Chase to Rosa Hickey. Book 146, p. 416**.

"Between Henry and Harriet Chase of Genoa and Rosa Hickey of Aurora, for the sum of ***hundred dollars, all that parcel, etc. of land described as follows: Beginning in the center of the highway (or Main St., so called) at the southeast corner of lands owned by William H. Bogart and running thence southerly along the center of said highway to the northeast corner of lands owned by Lawrence Hickey; thence running westerly along the north line of said lands of Lawrence Hickey to the low water mark of Cayuga Lake; thence northerly along the said Lake to the lands of the said William Bogart and thence east along the south line of said Bogart's lands to the place of beginning, and containing about ¼ acre of land, more or less, and being the same premises formerly owned by Joseph Cooper and conveyed by him to the said Henry Chase on 18 May 1871 in book 130, p. 529. Subject, nevertheless, to such vested rights as the Cayuga Lake Railway, or its successors may have therein.

2. **18 May 1871. Joseph Cooper to Henry Chase. Book 130, p. 529.**

"Between Joseph Cooper of Aurora and Henry Chase of the Town of Genoa, for the sum of $175.00, all that parcel of land described as follows: Beginning in the center of the highway (or Main St., so called) at the southeast corner of lands owned by William H. Bogart and running thence southerly along the center of said highway to the northeast corner of lands owned by Lary (Lawrence) Martin; thence running westerly along the north line of said lands of Lary (Lawrence) Martin to the low water mark of Cayuga Lake; thence northerly along the said Lake to the lands of the said William Bogart and thence east along the south line of said Bogart's lands to the place of beginning, and containing about ¼ acre of land, more or less. Subject, however, to the payments, conditions and agreements specified and contained in a certain Indenture Mortgage executed by the said Joseph Cooper to Lewis Himrod on the 31st of July 1849 and recorded in Mortgage book 39, p. 384, in which said mortgage was given for securing the payment of $100.00 in the manner specified and upon which is now due and payable this day in the sum of $151.12 which the party of the 2nd part assumes. The usual closings."

3. **31 July 1849. Joseph Cooper & wife to Lewis Himrod. Mortgage Book 39, p. 384**.

"This indenture made between Joseph Cooper and Sarah his wife of Aurora and Lewis Himrod of Aurora, for the consideration of $100.00 do grant, sell and confirm unto the party of the second part and to his heirs, etc., all that certain parcel of land situated and lying in the Village of Aurora and bounded as follows: Beginning in the center of the highway or Main Street leading from the said village southerly at a point 2 chains and 18 links south of the south of the southeast corner of the lot of land (formerly) owned and occupied by Austin Cross running thence northerly along the center of said highway 2 chains, 18 links to the southeast corner of said Cross' land thence westwardly along the south line of said Cross' land to the Cayuga Lake, thence southerly along the margin of the lake 2 chains, thence eastwardly to the place of beginning, supposed to contain about 3/8 of an acre of land, be the same more or less. The conveyance is intended as a mortgage to secure the payment of $100.00 in one year from the date hereof with interest on the same annually at 7% per annum, etc.

Signed by the mark of Joseph Cooper and the hand of Sarah Cooper. Witnessed by Ebenezer W. Arms.

Conclusion:

Tax assessment records did not include Henry Chase as a property owner at any time between 1850 and 1901. Perhaps Joseph Cooper sold the lot to him and had an agreement to pay taxes on it until Chase sold it to Rosa (Patrick's wife) Hickey in 1877? The tax records do show that Joseph Cooper's land decreased from ½ to ¼ between 1868 and 1869. What relevance this may have to his deed to Henry Chase is not known. The 1875 Cayuga County map still shows Joseph Cooper as living at this house, four years after selling to Chase.

Mandell's "History of Aurora Houses" as cited above, claims that this house was moved to its present site around 1840 and was the original law office of Glen Cuyler, originally just north up Main Street near the Episcopal Church. Note in the tax records that in 1851, Cooper has 1/ 2 acre worth $500.00 and the very next year the lot decreases to 1/3 acre and the value decreases to $125.00. Perhaps the Cuyler structure burned in this year and Cooper built a new, smaller house? Mandell makes no other mention of any further disturbances or alterations to the house as of 1906. **It is likely that this house, especially the original north structure, is the house that was lived in by Joseph Cooper.**

Tax assessments for Joseph Cooper-Patrick Hickey, lot 34, Town of Ledyard, 1851-1901.
Research by Tanya Warren:

Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1851	34	1/2	500.00	500.00	1.55
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1852	34	1/3	125.00	125.00	0.57
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1854	34	1/2	300.00	300.00	1.10
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1855	34	1/2	270.00	311.00	1.26
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1856	34	1/2	270.00	270.00	1.26
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1857	34	1/2	270.00	270.00	1.53
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1858	34	1/2	270.00	270.00	1.43
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1859	34	1/2	270.00	270.00	1.40
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1860		1/4		212.00	1.34
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1861	34	1 1/4	212.00	212.00	1.31
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1862	34	1/2	175.00	175.00	1.66
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1863	34	1/2	175.00	175.00	1.85
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1864	34	1/2	175.00	175.00	3.37
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1865	34	1/2	175.00	175.00	3.42
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1866	34	1/2	175.00	175.00	3.66
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1867	34	1/2	175.00	175.00	3.02
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1868	34	1/2	175.00	175.00	2.68
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1869	34	1/4	175.00	175.00	2.53
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1870	34	1/4	175.00	175.00	3.17
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1875	34	1/4	200.00	200.00	1.30
Cooper	Joseph	Ledyard	1876	34	1/4	200.00	200.00	
Hickey	Patrick	Ledyard	1877-1899	34	1/4	360.00	360.00	
Hickey	Patrick	Ledyard	1900-1901	34	1/4	400.00	400.00	

Many thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Village Historian of Aurora, for research assistance with this family. Deed and assessment research by Tanya Warren.

Thomas and Sarah Jane Hart House, Site of
237 Main Street
Aurora, New York (part of Aurora Historic District)

Significance: Thomas Hart was a freedom seeker who came from Maryland in1840 and Sarah Jane Cromwell Hart was a descendent of family brought to Aurora in slavery

Looking west
November 2005

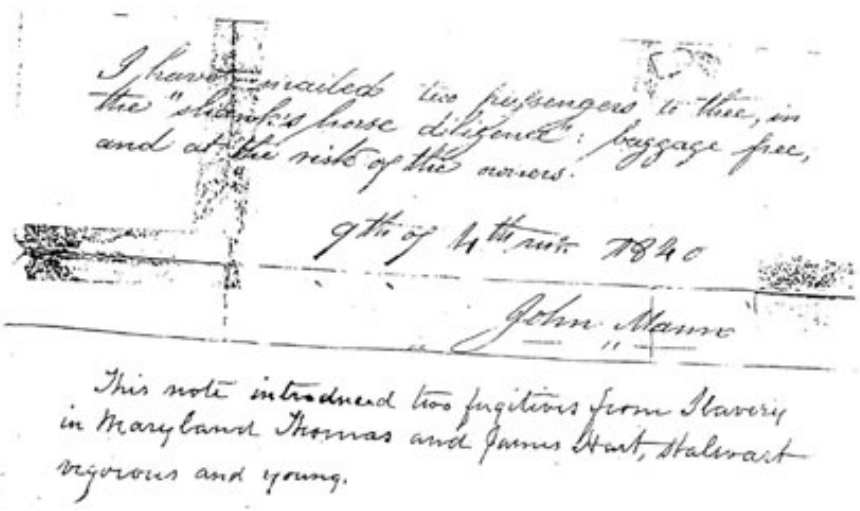
Description: This gable-and-wing Greek Revival type house sits on the shore of Cayuga Lake, at the south end of the village of Aurora, just south of another house once owned by the Cromwell/Cooper family, an African American family born into slavery, well-known in the village, who acquired this land in 1826 from Cornelius Cuyler, wealthy white settler. Deeds suggest that the Harts purchased this property in 1857 and sold it in 1861. This house actually burned in 1899 and was immediately rebuilt, probably on the same foundation, since it so closely reflects the style of an earlier building and its foundations show signs of soot from a fire. Research by Tanya Warren, with the assistance of Aurora Village Historian Sheila Edmunds, suggests that, "From both tax assessment history (see attachment) and information provided by Sheila Edmunds from the Samuel D. Mandell "History of Aurora Houses", it is possible that a house was here as early as 1826 when Zilpha Cromwell obtained a deed for the parcel from Cornelius Cuyler. This property is listed variably as 1/8 and ¼ acre. Tax assessments show a rise in value in 1860 under the ownership of Thomas and Sarah Jane Hart, precisely the year Mandell claims that later owner Lawrence Martin built a new house on the lot. The value remains fairly consistent until 1874, when Lawrence Martin sells to Lawrence Hickey and the value rises by $100.00. Lawrence and Ann Hickey remain in ownership through to 1900 when the value then jumps to $700.00. This would coincide with Mandell's claim that a fire destroyed the previous

house and a new one built in its place in 1899. It can be concluded from this information that the house presently at 237 Main Street is, unfortunately, **not** the house lived in by the Cromwell/Hart families." It is possible, however, that parts of the original house still remain, especially its foundations and basement.

Significance: Thomas and James Hart, born in slavery in Maryland, were some of the earliest documented freedom seekers to arrive in Cayuga County. On April 9, 1840, they left the home of Quaker John Mann, in Friendsville, Pennsylvania, who gave them a small slip of paper addressed to "Slocum Howland, Sherwood's Corner, Scipio, N.Y., Owego, Ithica." It read:

> I have mailed two passengers to thee, in the "shank's horse diligence": baggage free, and at the risk of the owners. 9th of 4th mo. 1840. John Mann.

This is a remarkable and rare extant example of a pass for two freedom seekers. A note in Emily Howland's shaky handwriting at the bottom adds details: "This note introduced two fugitives from Slavery in Maryland Thomas and James Hart, stalwart vigorous and young."


I have mailed two passengers to thee, in the "shank's horse diligence": baggage free, and at the risk of the owners.

9th of 4th mo. 1840

John Mann

This note introduced two fugitives from Slavery in Maryland Thomas and James Hart, stalwart vigorous and young.

Emily Howland suggested later that both Thomas and James remained in the area, but only Thomas Hart's name appeared in the Cayuga County census. He married Sarah Jane Cromwell, daughter of William and Zilpah Cromwell of Aurora, and, in Sarah Jane's name, the family owned a home from 1857 to 1861 next to the African American Cromwell-Cooper family on the shore of Cayuga Lake in Aurora, just west of Sherwood. In 1861, the Harts sold this property on Cayuga Lake to Ann Martin in 1861. That same year, the bought land in Union Springs from Lawrence and Ann Martin. They were living in Union Springs when Thomas died, sometime before 1865. In 1865, Sarah Jane Hart. The "widow and survivor of Thomas Hart," sold this property to James Milliman. In 1869, she purchased an acre land on Lot 124 in Ledyard, near Levanna, where the Griger family also lived, where she lived until at least 1872, when she sold

this land to John Bradford. She paid taxes on this property, and she also paid a dog tax. Sarah Jane was still in Ledyard in 1880 with children Francis & Thomas as a widow.[19]

[19]Pass owned by Howland Stone Store Museum. Sarah Jane Hart purchased property in 1857 from Moses and Mary Cromwell Johnson. Thomas and Jane Hart sold it to Ann Martin, 1861, Book 101, p. 46.

Hart, Sarah Jane and Thomas-Deeds
Ledyard and Springport, Cayuga County, NY
Research and transcription by Tanya Warren

Moses and Mary Cromwell Johnson to Thomas and Sarah Jane Hart

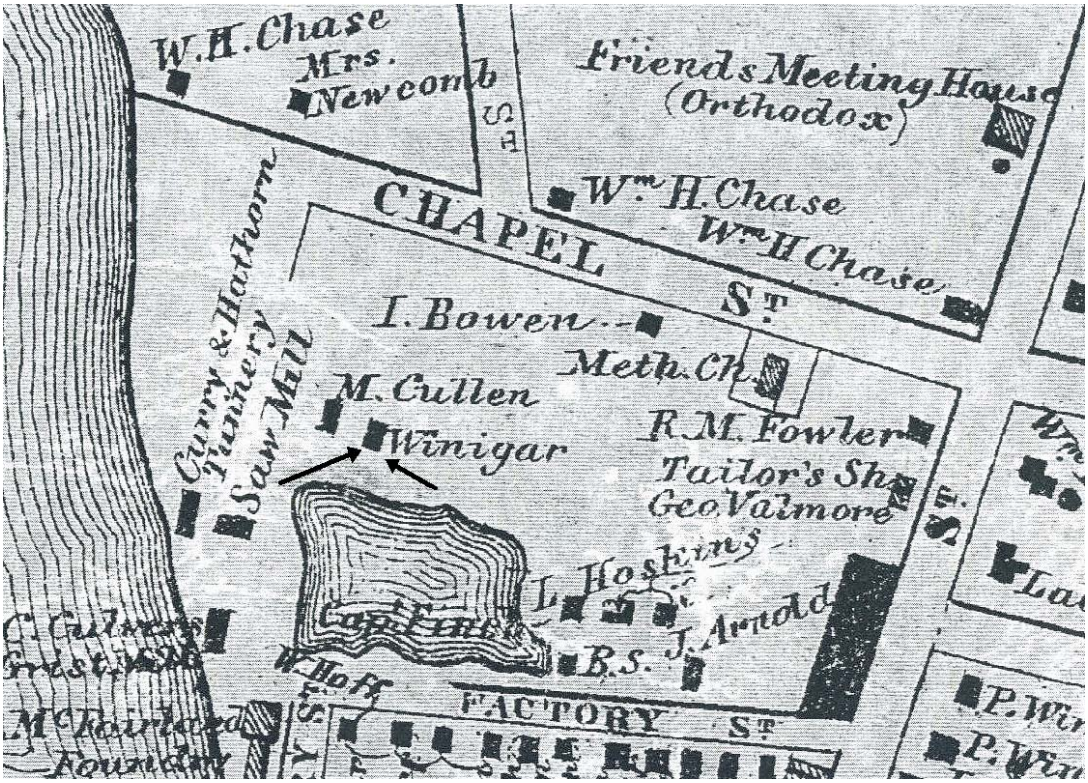
8 September 1857. Cayuga County Clerk, Book 95, p 208.
Lot # 34 of the original Military Tract town of Scipio.

This indenture made this eighth day of September, 1857 between Moses Johnson and Mary his wife, late Mary Cromwell of Scipio in the county of Cayuga and state of New York of the first part and Thomas Hart and Sarah Jane, his wife, of Aurora in the county and state aforesaid of the second part. Witnesseth that the party of the first part for and in consideration of one hundred and twenty five dollars to them in hand paid by the party of the second part do grat, etc. onto the party of the second part , etc. All that certain piece or parcel of land, being part of Lot number 34 in the Village of Aurora in the County of Cayuga aforesaid, being the south part of half an acre of land conveyed by Cornelius Cuyler and wife to Zilpha and Mary Cromwell by deed bearing April 1, 1826 and recorded in Cayuga County Clerk's Office in Book EE of Deeds page 442. Said south part hereby intended to be conveyed is bounded on the east by the Main Street in Aurora, on the South by Lot # 43, called the Fisher Lot, now owned by Charles Wells, on the West by Cayuga Lake and on the North by land now owned by Joseph Cooper. For evidence of chain of title to the above described premises reference is hereby made to the last will and testament of Zilpha Cromwell, deceased bearing date February 26 1851 witnessed by Eleazer Burnham and Cornelius Cuyler, not yet proved before the surrogate and now in the possession of Ebenezer Arms, Esq. The premises above described and hereby conveyed are designed to be held as a homestead, exempt from sale on execution according to the provisions of the act entitled "An act to exempt from sale on execution the homestead of a householder having a family, passed April 10th 1850." …The said Moses and Mary Johnson do hereby grant, etc…
Witness E. W. Arms

County Book 101, p. 46.
Thomas Hart and Sarah Jane Hart to Ann Martin
21 Sept. 1861
$175.00
Description**:**
"Between Thomas and Sarah Jane Hart of Ledyard and Ann Martin, wife of Lawrence Martin of said town for the consideration of $175.00, have sold, etc all that parcel of land situate in the Village of Aurora, etc. and being the south part of half an acre of land conveyed by Cornelius Cuyler and wife to Zilpha & Mary Cromwell by deed dated 1 April 1826 and recorded in Book EE, p. 442. Said south part hereby intended to be
conveyed is bounded on the east by the Main Street in Aurora, on the south by lot #43, called the Fisher lot formerly owned by Charles H. Wells. On the west by Cayuga Lake and on the north by lands now owned by Joseph Cooper. For evidence of claim of title to the above described premises reference is hereby made to the last will and testament of Zilpha Cromwell, deceased,

bearing date Feb 26 1851, witnessed by Eleazur Burnham and Cornelius Cuyler, not yet proved before the Surrogate Court and now in the possession of E. W. Arms. (note: not found in the records of Cayuga County as of 2005-TLW) Being the same premises conveyed by deed dated 8 Sept 1857 made by Moses Johnson and Mary his wife, late Mary Cromwell, to Thomas Hart and Sarah Jane Hart his wife and which deed was recorded in book 95, p. 200. This conveyance is made subject to a mortgage for $100.00 (mortgage book 51, p. 157) made by the said Thomas and Sarah Jane Hart to Moses and Mary Johnson on 8 Sept 1857, etc., and which is now assumed by the said Ann Martin. The usual closings…"

East Cayuga Reservation (ECR) Deed Book L, p., 261
Lawrence & Ann Martin to Thomas and Sarah Jane Hart, all of Ledyard.
21 September 1861
#250.00
Description: "All that tract or parcel of land situate in the Village of Union Springs, town of Springport on the south side of Chapel Street bounded on the east by the land of Michael Cullins, on the south by the lands of Mr. Culver, on the west by the land of Michael Cullins, on the north by Chapel Street, said to contain ¼ acre of land. Being the same as conveyed to Lawrence Martin by Samuel Winegar and subject to a mortgage of Martin to Winegar made on the 25th day of 1859 of which remains due #100.00 which Thomas and Sarah Hart agree to pay."
Signed by the marks of Lawrence and Ann Martin.
(Tax Map # 141.13-1-19)



ECR Deed Book M, p., 162
Sarah Jane Hart to James Milliman
27 June 1865
$300.00
Description: "Between Sarah Jane Hart as the widow and survivor of Thomas Hart, late of the Village of Union Springs, deceased and James Milliman of the U. S., all that tract or parcel of land situate in the Village of Union Springs, town of Springport on the south side of Chapel Street bounded on the east by the land of Michael Cullins, on the south by the lands of Mr. Culver, on the west by the land of Michael Cullins, on the north by Chapel Street, said to contain ¼ acre of land.
Signed by the hand of Sarah Jane Hart.

ECR Deed Book N, p., 324
Wadsworth Hauchett to Sarah Jane Hart
1 April 1869
$500.00
Description: "Being a part of Lot #124 in Ledyard (Levanna) and starting at the northwest corner of land formerly of Seneca Boyce, thence east to the center of the Lake Road, thence north along the center of the road to the lands of Samuel Ayres, being the store lot, thence west to the lands of Samuel Bowen, jr., thence south to the south line of Bowen's land thence west to the land of Elias Manchester then south to the place of beginning, containing 1 acre of land.

ECR Deed Book H, p. 293
Sarah Jane Hart to John H. Bradford, both of Ledyard.
2 March 1872
$500.00
Description: "Being a part of Lot #124 in Ledyard (Levanna) and starting at the northwest corner of land formerly of Seneca Boyce, thence east to the center of the Lake Road, thence north along the center of the road to the lands of Samuel Ayres, being the store lot, thence west to the lands of Samuel Bowen, jr., thence south to the south line of Bowen's land thence west to the land of Elias Manchester then south to the place of beginning, containing 1 acre of land."
Signed by the hand of Sarah Jane Hart.

Cromwell	Zilpha, Mary	Ledyard	1851	34	1/8	250.00	800	
Johnson	Mary (Moses)	Ledyard	1856	34	1/8	150.00		150.00
Johnson	Mary (Moses)	Ledyard	1857	34	1/8	150.00		150.00
Johnson	William	Ledyard	1858	34	1/8			
Hart	Thomas	Ledyard	1860	34	1/4	400.00		400.00
Hart	Thomas	Ledyard	1861	34	1/4	200.00		200.00
Hart	Thomas	Ledyard	1862		Blank	Blank	Blank	Blank
Martin	Lawrence & Ann	Ledyard	1862-1873	34	1/8	300.00		300.00
Moore-Hickey	Ann (Lawrence Hickey)	Ledyard	1874	34	1/4	500.00		500.00
Hickey	Lawrence	Ledyard	1880-1896	34	1/8	400.00		400.00
Hickey	**Lawrence**	**Ledyard**	**1897-1898**	**34**	**1/4**	**350.00**		**350.00**
Hickey	Lawrence	Ledyard	1899	No book				
Hickey	**Lawrence**	**Ledyard**	**1900**	**34**	**1/4**	**700.00**		**700.00**

Thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Aurora Village Historian, for research assistance, and to Tanya Warred for deed and assessment research.

John and Susan King House,
possibly incorporating parts of Richard and Mary Gaskin House
Dixon Road
Ledyard

Significance: Home of European American abolitionists and probable Underground Railroad supporters, possibly incorporating part of home of freedom seekers

John and Susan King House
Dixon Road, Ledyard
Looking East
February 2005

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

John and Susan King House
Dixon Road, Ledyard
Looking NE
February 2005

John and Susan King House
Dixon Road, Ledyard
Looking NW, February 2005

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

King/Gaskin/Green House
Looking Southwest

Introduction

The Survey of Historic Sites Related to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn and Cayuga County (sponsored by the City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board and funded by Preserve New York, a program of the Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts) revealed that a house on Dixon Road in the Town of Ledyard was associated with two families involved in abolitionism and the Underground Railroad. The John and Mary King family, allied with abolitionist and educator Susannah Marriott, were English Quakers. Richard and Mary Gaskin (Gaston) were born in Virginia and came to Ledyard, most likely fleeing slavery, about 1864. They purchased two acres of land just north of the current site in 1869, until they sold their land and moved to 18 Aspen Street in Auburn in 1886. By 1904, both the Gaskin and King properties were owned by W.W. Hazzard. The Gaskin property is listed on the 1904 Cayuga County map as a farm called "The Meadows." The King house was purchased by Alfred and Georgia Richardson in 1932. The current owner is William Green, their grandson.

While the Gaskin house is no longer standing in its original location, Green family tradition, passed on through Alfred and Georgia Richardson and carried on by the current owners and their families, suggests that part of this house was once owned by a black man and was moved to the current site from a location just north of this one. This is consistent with deeds, which show that the Gaskin family owned the lot north of the current site. Current family members recall a well and foundation north of the current house. Bill Green recalled that his grandfather was sure that at least the north wing of the house had been moved to its current site. Pauline Copes Johnson,

great-granddaughter of Richard and Mary Gaskin, recalled that family tradition suggested that the Gaskins once had a house somewhere "out near Union Springs."

Were parts of this house moved to the current location? Were parts of this house the original Gaskin house?

On February 19, 2005, William and Dick Green invited several people involved with the project to take a tour of this house. It was a blustery, very cold gray day, but we were warmed by a kerosene heater and by the shared hope that by pooling all of our information we might make new discoveries. Present were several members of the Green family, including Dick Green, William Green, Chris Green, and Allison Williams, as well as Tanya Warren, project researcher; Paul Malo, architect; and Judith Wellman, project coordinator.

Certainly, this is a fascinating house, a real treasure, built in at least two and perhaps three parts. The back wing in certainly one of the earliest buildings in the area. While the house did not yield all (or even most) of its secrets based on our quick tour, here are some preliminary hypotheses and some suggestions for further research.

Summary

1. The back section is one of the oldest houses still standing in the region. It was built on its present location, most likely before 1825, perhaps as early as the 1790s, certainly before 1835.

2. The front section was probably built in its present location, most likely in the late 1830s or early 1840s about the time that John and Susan King were married (1839). It is unlikely but possible that the house was built at this time somewhere else and moved to this location at a later date.

3. The north wing may have been moved to this site or may have been built *in situ*. This may have been the Gaskin house (or a part of it), built between 1857 and 1859 and moved from the "2-acre piece," as Alfred Richardson called it, just north of the current lot, sometime after 1904. Or it may have been part of the original house. The physical fabric of this section warrants further investigation.

The following is a very quick sketch of what we had learned about the house based on earlier research. Tanya Warren, project researcher, did all deed and assessment research and much of the genealogical work. Sheila Edmonds contributed research on Susannah Marriott and some of the family information on the Kings. Jane Simpkin, Judy Furness, and Karl Kabelac contributed much detailed information about local families and local Quakers. Charles Lenhart found a key letter from John King. Christopher Densmore found the Quaker antislavery petition. William and Richard Green and their family shared information, including many photographs, about their grandparents, as well as their own memories of this house.

<u>King and Marriott Families</u>

William King (b. 1784) and Mary King from Nottinghamshire, England, were Quakers who immigrated to the U.S. with their two sons, Alfred, b. 1814, and John, b. 1813, and perhaps also with a girl named Susan Swenarton, b. 1814. Moving first to Pennsylvania, they arrived in

Ledyard about 1828, and four were received into membership that year into Scipio Orthodox Meeting of Friends from Stroudsburgh Monthly Meeting of Friends.

Susannah Marriott, b. 1769, immigrated from England about 1793, spending time in Dutchess County, New York; Muncy, Pennsylvania; and Manhattanville, New York, before moving to Ledyard. Susannah Marriott settled in Aurora, where she took over a school that she named Brier Cliff, after her birthplace in England, from 1820-27. In 1827, she purchased a house on Court Street in Aurora.

In 1831, William and Mary King purchased 120 acres, the whole northwest corner of Lot 70 in Ledyard, in March 1831 for $3000, from William and Ruth Birdsall. (William Birdsall, b. 1784, had purchased the 120 acres from Monmouth Purdy of Scipio in 1819.) On 5 March 1849, Alfred King purchased most of this property, including the family homestead from his parents. In 1845, Alfred had married Marianne Armistead, a 30-year-old woman who had arrived from England with Edward Simkin (who purchased the property just south of the Kings), his wife, and eight children in 1844. Alfred King moved to Autora in the late 1870s and sold his property on Lot 70 to his son John F. King for $1.00 and "natural love and affection." Alfred King died in 1914, aged 100. In 1911, John F. King and Lydia King, Hamilton County, Iowa, sold the Ledyard property, 121 acres, to Sandford Lyon, "beginning at the southwest corner of lands of William Hazard estate."

John King, William and Mary's youngest son, purchased 20 acres from his parents, just north of his brother's house. On 19 September 1839 at North Street meeting in Ledyard, John King married Susan Swenarton. They may have built the front section of the current house about this time, as their new home.

Susannah Marriott apparently moved in with the Kings in the last years of her life. A letter from John King to Thomas B. Gould, February 2, 1855, ended with the note: "Please to inform thy wife that Susannah Marriott still continues to enjoy a comfortable state of health. In love to thyself, wife and family, my wife and Susannah Marriott uniting with me. Thy affectionate friend John King." Susannah Marriott paid $4000 of personal property tax, listed under Lot 70, in the 1850s. Susannah Marriott died in 1857, and in her will, she left her estate to Susan King.

By 1875, the county atlas listed the King property under Mrs. King's name alone.

Gaskin Family

Between 1863 and 1865, Richard and Mary Gaskin and their four children (Eliza, 17; Philip, 13; Rose, 11; and Emma, 2) left Virginia and came to Ledyard. We know this because, according to the 1865 New York State census, Emma was born in Virginia in 1863. The whole family appeared in the 1865 census in Ledyard, which also noted that Richard had served in the Civil War. Richard Gaskin was listed as a farmer. They were living in a frame house worth $250. Rosa Gaskin, aged 17, was living with Samuel Simkins and Elizabeth Cadiff.

On 11 September 1869, Richard Gaskin (Gaston) purchased two acres on lot 70 for $700, "beginning at northwest corner of land now owned by John King," from the John and Mary Flanagan.

In 1874, Richard Gaskin joined an Orthodox Friends meeting affiliated with Scipio Yearly Meeting. He was disowned in 1902.

On 1 April 1886, Richard and Mary G. Gaskin sold this land to John Coiley for $800. Both signed with their marks. Shortly thereafter, they built a house at 18 Aspen Street in Auburn. Their daughter, Rose, married James Phillips, of Sherwood, and Richard Gaskin moved to the Phillips house about 1906, where he died.

I. Back Wing

This was probably built exactly where it now stands, as a little saltbox house facing south. Most likely, it was one of the earliest settlement houses, dating before 1825, but certainly no later than 1835. Date of construction is based primarily on evidence from the fireplace, including the basement foundation, which obviously was reinforced to make it a working fireplace on the first floor, with a large hearth, broken pieces of which are still visible in the basement. Fireplaces were replaced with stoves by the mid-1830s, so this would not have been built after that. Other evidence for early construction includes Norfolk latches, beaded molding, and wide floorboards.

II. Front Section. This was probably built *in situ*, 1835-55, mostly likely in the late 1830s or early 1840s. Perhaps this was added when John King and Susan Swenarton married in 1839. The entrance stairway and hall, with the creation of a five-bay façade on the south side, suggest a formal plan, reflecting other large Quaker houses in the area.

Evidence for construction in this period includes:

1. Most molding, outside and in, is consistent with Greek Revival period, including mantelpieces. These mantelpieces were also made to go around a stove, not as working fireplaces.
2. Federal features (including corner blocks on exterior doorway and the stair railing) could have been made by an old-fashioned carpenter or may have been recycled from an earlier dwelling, perhaps even from the back wing when the new front section was added.
3. Window sashes were originally six-over-six panes (changed by Alfred Richardson), consistent with construction before 1855.
4. Cut nails suggest pre-Civil War construction.

III. North wing

May be the Flanagan-Gaskin House (or part of Flanagan-Gaskin house), built between 1853 and 1859 on 2-acre piece north of current site. (A house shows on that site on the 1859 Cayuga County map but not on the 1853 map.) In 1857, John and Bridget Fox bought two acres of land from a 44-acre parcel owned by Augustus Mosher. Perhaps they constructed a house shortly thereafter. A Greek Revival mantel, similar to that in the front part of the King house, is consistent with a mid-nineteenth century construction date. This could have been the whole house, approximately 20 x 20 feet, perhaps subdivided inside into a hall-and-parlor form. It could also have been part of a larger house. Most likely the original Gaskin house had at least a small kitchen and woodshed wing.

If this is the Flanagan-Gaskin house (or a part of it), it was moved to its current side sometime after 1904, since a house appears on the 2-acre piece on the 1904 county map. Foundation is entirely separate from rest of house. There is only a crawl space underneath.

Alternatively, this could have been moved from across the street from E. Simkins' property just south of the current site, where an A. King tenant house appeared between 1853 and 1859, owned by W. King in 1904. (A house owned by W. King across the street just north of the current site was built between 1859 and 1904, probably too late to be consistent with interior moldings of current north wing.)

Finally, this wing could well have been built as part of the original house. We were not able to get into this wing during this brief tour, and it deserves further investigation.

Doorway on south side
Looking North

Mantel in back wing
Looking NE

Alfred Richardson applying siding to the house, 1940s
Photo in possession of Green family

Ideas for further research:

1. Assessments
   King—See if there is a rise in King assessments at the same time there is a drop in assessments for W.W. Hazzard (after 1904), or W. King (after 1904).
   Fox-Flanagan (1850-1869)—when built?
   W.W. Hazzard, Lot 70
   W. King, Lot 69
   Tanya Warren has checked assessments for several years after the Gaskins sold this house to Coiley in 1886. No taxes show for the land at all. People who live there pay only taxes on dogs!

2. Deeds
   Post-Hazzard

3. Census records
   Gaskin—Virginia
   1850. A free person of color named Richard Gaskins appeared in Fauquier County, Virginia, on a National Register nomination for the planatation of John Marshall, as a carpenter in 1850. Is this the same person?
   1860
   New York
   1865—check regiment
   1875
   Kings/Marriott

1830-70

4. Pension records-Gaskin

4. Oral History Interviews
A careful interview about what family remember their grandfather saying about the house would help piece together these memories.

5. Photographs
Family photographs, generously shared, will be very helpful in analyzing some of the changes to the house and grounds over the years.

6. Physical Analysis of Two-acre Piece
Measuring extant foundations of house that once stood on this lot may help determine whether north wing of current house was moved from that site.

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John King to Thomas B. Gould, February 2, 1855, Philip Schlee Collection,
http://64.233.161.104/search?q=cache:PXfSEPc-eHEJ:pastvoices.com/usa/
> king1855.shtml+%22John+King%22+Ledyard,++Cayuga&hl=en. Found by Charles Lenhart.

Judith Wellman and Paul Malo
February 2005

Levanna Square
Town of Ledyard

Significance: Site of Underground Railroad Activist Slocum Howland's docks, warehouses, and steam mill. Sites of homes of African Americans Jerome Griger (freedom seeker), Sherburne Griger, and Alfred Tate

Levanna Square, December 2004, Looking northeast from road along Cayuga Lake.
Possible site of Jerome Griger's property and home.

Levanna Square, Site of Howland docks, February 2005, Looking southwest toward Cayuga Lake

Levanna Square
Site of Howland docks, December 2004
Looking northwest

Levanna Square
Steam mill, looking north, March 2005

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Levanna Square
Yellow house, with steam mill in background, looking southwest, February 2005

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Ellis House, just north of S. Grigg house (1853 map)
Levanna Square. Howland docks would have been at left and rear.
December 2004, Looking northwest

Ellis House, Levanna Square, looking toward dock at left
Carole U. Sisler, *Cayuga Lake: Past, Present, and Future*
(Ithaca, New York: DeWitt Historical Society, 1999)

Levanna Square, December 2004
S. Grigg House (1853 map)

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Levanna Square, Road to lake on north side of square
Gable-and-wing, looking south

Description: A small square, perhaps three-eights of a mile on a side, stands between Route 90 and Cayuga Lake, north of Aurora, New York, marking the site of Slocum Howland's main dock facilities on Cayuga Lake in the nineteenth century. Today, docks and warehouses are gone, but the square remains ringed by large trees and nineteenth century houses, with a steam mill in its center, reputed to have been built by Slocum Howland. Just north of the square, the former Manchester home was the site of the early (1870s) Levanna catsup manufacturing plant.

Significance: Slocum Howland, Quaker merchant and Underground Railroad agent, maintained a docks and warehouses at Levanna. With the help of African Americans such as Alfred Tate (whose parents had been born in slavery in New York State), Jerome (or Rome) Grigor (or Gregor, who was almost certainly a freedom seeker), and Grigor's son, Sherburne, Howland shipped products from his store at Sherwood north along Cayuga Lake to the Seneca Turnpike and the Erie Canal. In 1868, he shipped 40,000 to 60,000 bushels of grain out of Levanna.[20]

According to various census records, Rome Griger was born about 1795. He arrived in the Town of Ledyard sometime before 1837, when he purchased his first property in Levanna. He consistently reported his occupation as carpenter. From one census year to another, however, he variously reported his place of birth as unknown (1850), the West Indies (1855), Spain (1865), and New York (1870). It is reasonable to assume that Grigor was a freedom seeker, and that to protect his identity, he did not tell the census takers (or us) his real place of birth. His first wife was Barbery Ann, mentioned in court and estate records beginning in 1849. His second wife Matilda was listed in the 1865 as born in Maryland. After Griger's death in the early 1870s, his son Sherburne said that his father had been born in the West Indies. [21]

Both Jerome Gregor and his son Sherburne owned property on Lot 124 in Ledyard. One of the houses still standing on the south side of the road leading to Cayuga Lake along the north side of the Levanna quare may by the Grigor house, or the house may have been torn down. (See attached deed abstracts.)

We can surmise that both father and son were an integral part of Howland's operations at Levanna. Howland may also have had a steam mill at Levanna, and Gregor may have been involved in making barrels and crates for shipping flour and other goods on lake boats. Between 1851 and 1870, Rome Griger was assessed for property on Lot 124, valued between $250 and $500. In 1851-52, he was also assessed for personal property worth from $2500-$3000. His name appeared on a local poll list in 1849 as a voter. Rome Griger died in June 1871, and E.B. Morgan of Aurora mentioned in diary on June 7 that "Rome Griger was buried this morning." [22]

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[20] Carol Sisler, *Cayuga Lake: Past, Present, and Future* (Ithaca: Enterprise Publishing, 1989), 49.
[21] Census records for 1850, 1855, 1860, 1865, 1870, 1880. Tax assessment research by Tanya Warren. Many thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Village of Aurora Historian, for information from E.B. Morgan'a diary and for research on Barbery Ann Grigor.
[22] Many thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Village of Aurora Historian, for information on poll lists and on Rome Gregor generally. Assessment research by Tanya Warren.

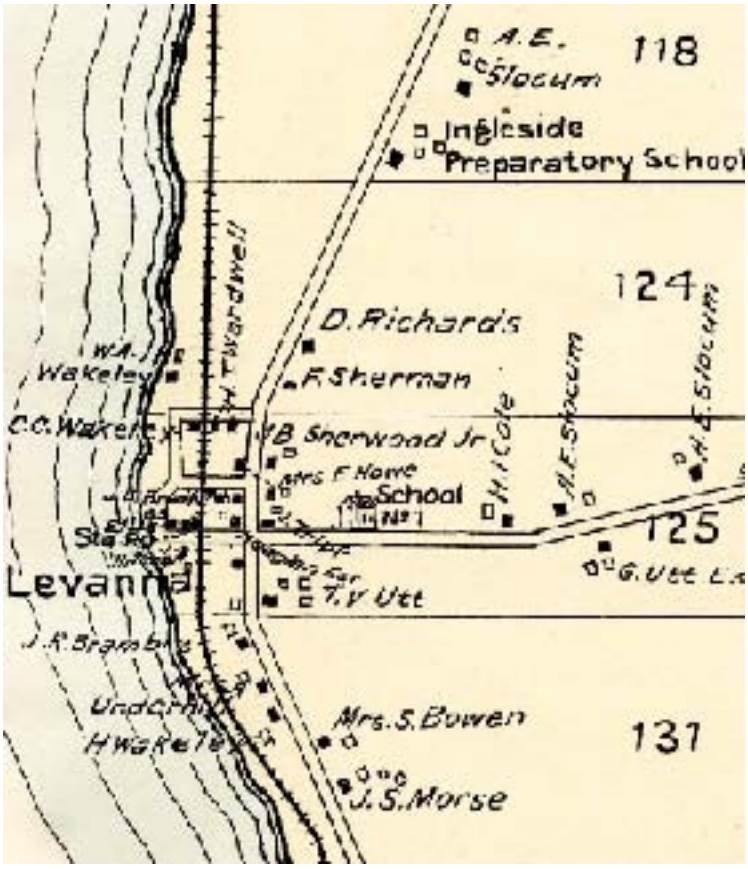
LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	LOT	ACRES	REAL-$	PERS-$	TOTAL-$
Gregor	Jerome	Ledyard	1854	124	½	400.00		400.00
Gregor	Jerome	Ledyard	1855	124	½	360.00	416	360.00
Gregor	Jerome	Ledyard	1856	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Jerome	Ledyard	1857	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1858	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1859	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1860	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1861	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1862	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1863	34	¼	500.00		500.00
Gregor	Sherburn	Ledyard	1863	34	¼	500.00		500.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1864	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1865	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1866	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1867	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1868	124	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1869	125	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1870	125	½	360.00		360.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1851	124	½	400.00	3000	400.00
Gregor	Rome	Ledyard	1852	124	½	250.00	2500	250.00

Sherburne bought land in "Milton" (Genoa?) in 1868 and also had a lot in Ledyard, Aurora Village.Tax roll from 1863 shows Sherburn and father Rome each paying on a 1/4 acre in Aurora or nearby. Sherburne Griger apparently kept some kind of restaurant or eating place near the railroad, for in 1880, E.B. Morgan noted that “I gave to some thirty colored voters who voted the Republican ticket a fine supper at Griger’s.” In 1881, in guidebooks for people on the railroad, S. Grigor advertised that he was running a “confectionary,” with “fruits, oysters, tobacco, and cigars.” By the early twentieth century, Sherburne Griger was living in Harrit Tubman’s Home for the Aged in Auburn.[23]

Alfred and Diane Tate also owned property in Levanna Square. Alfred was probably related to James Tate, who owned property on Dublin Road in Aurora. Both were probably born in slavery in New York State, perhaps in the household of the Cuyler family. Diane may have been born in slavery. In the census, she listed her birthplace variously as New York, New Jersey, or unknown. Alfred Tate also worked as a carpenter, for on October 14?, 1879, E.B. Morgan noted in his diary that he “ordered Alf Tate to build bins in Morgan store for fruits, etc.”[24]

[23] Book 123, p. 554; 1876, Book 133, p. 253. Thanks to Sheila Edmunds for refernces to E.B. Morgan’s diary and S. Griger’s advertisements.
[24] Thanks to Sheila Edmunds for information from E.B. Morgan’s diary.

Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1853



Levanna, *Map of Cayuga County*, 1904

Jerome Griger Deeds
Ledyard, Cayuga County, NY
Research and transcription by Tanya Warren

East Cayuga Reservation (ECR) Deed Book H, p., 294
Slocum Howland and Benj. Comstock to Rome Griger
9 December 1837
Description: "Slocum Howland and Benj. Comstock, as agents of the estate of Gardner Chidester of Scipio and Springport, and Rome Griger of Ledyard for $300.00: Being a part of Lot #124, beginning 10 rods, 7 feet west of Polly Munn's west line thence west 5 rods, 10 feet along the south side of the road leading from the Lake Rd. to the storehouse formerly owned by Gardner Chidester, thence south 7 rods to the land of Elias Manchester thence east 5 rods and 2 feet along Manchester's land thence north 7 rods to the place of beginning, containing 39 perches of land."

ECR Deed Book H, p., 293
Gardner Chidester to Rome Griger, both of Ledyard.
2 May 1839
$300.00
Description: "Being a part of Lot #124, beginning 10 rods, 7 feet west of Polly Munn's west line thence west 5 rods, 10 feet along the south side of the road leading from the Lake Rd. to the storehouse formerly owned by Gardner Chidester, thence south 7 rods to the land of Elias Manchester thence east 5 rods and 2 feet along Manchester's land thence north 7 rods to the place of beginning, containing 39 perches of land."

ECR Deed Book J, p., 202
Asahel Warner of Scipio to Rome Griger of Ledyard.
15 January 1850
$170.00
Description: "All that land in Levanna, being a part of Lot #124, beginning at a certain willow tree on the north line of the Steam Mills lot thence north 127 feet to the center of the highway leading from the Lake Road to the Chidester Store, thence along the center of the highway east to the west line of Rome Griger's west line 150 feet, thence south 127 feet to Samuel Hoskins's north line, thence west to the place of beginning, containing 70 perches of land."

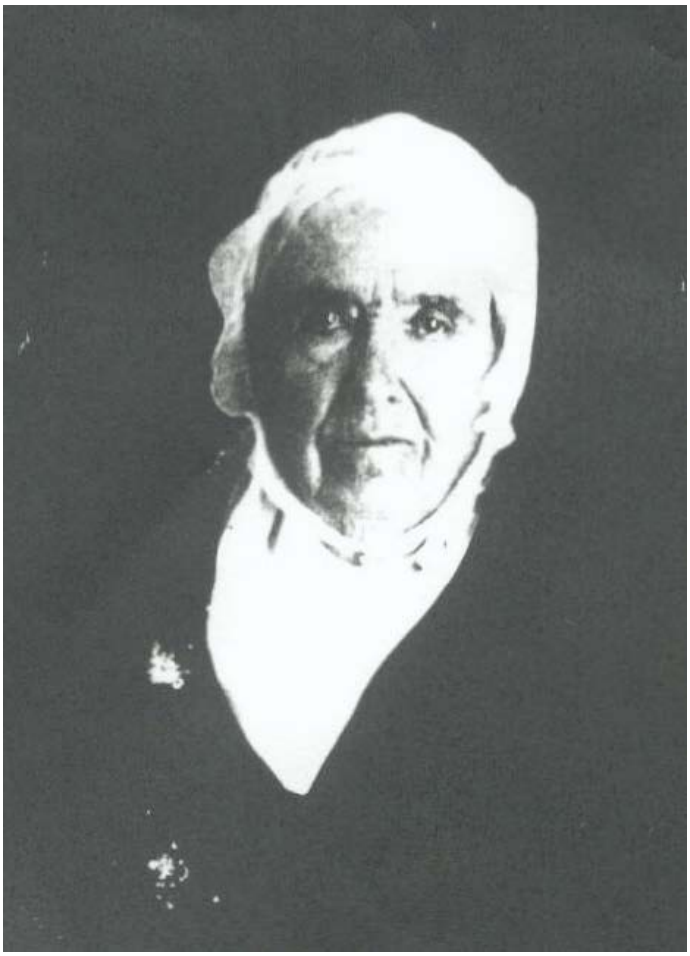
ECR Deed Book L, p., 299
Rome Griger to Linneus Tallman Griger, of Ledyard.
17 March 1862
$850.00
Description: "Being a part of Lot #124, beginning 10 rods, 7 feet west of Polly Munn's west line thence west 5 rods, 10 feet along the south side of the road leading from the Lake Rd. to the storehouse formerly owned by Gardner Chidester, thence south 7 rods to the land of Elias Manchester thence east 5 rods and 2 feet along Manchester's land thence north 7 rods to the place of beginning, containing 39 perches of land."

ECR Deed Book O, p., 510
Leonard Aiken of Moravia, (as referee) to Sherborn Griger of Aurora.
3 September 1872
$490.00
Description: "Whereas at a special term of the Supreme Court of the state of New York heard at Rochester on 26 June 1872, it was judged by the court in a certain action here pending in court between Linneus Griger, plaintiff and Sherburne and Dorcas Griger, William P. Griger, John Griger, Edward Griger, Wallace Griger, Jerome and Ann Griger, Henry Griger and Josephine Griger Demund and her husband Charles Demund as defendants.
Aiken did sell on 17 August 1872 sell at public auction at the Village of Levanna, for $490.00, to the party of the second part (Sherburne Griger) that part of Lot #124 being the same premises of which Rome Griger died seized and possessed."

Note: The 1880 census of "Shaborn" Griger lists him in Ledyard with wife Dorcas and children Hattie, Frederick, Avery and Carrie. Sherburn lists his father's birthplace as the WEST INDIES.

Susannah Marriott Houses
Sherwood-Aurora Road and
Corner Court St. and Sherwood-Aurora Road, Aurora
Town of Ledyard

Significance: Abolitionist Quaker educator, especially important in schools for women



Susannah Marriott
c. 1850
Courtesy of Howland Stone Store Museum

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Susannah Marriott House
Sherwood-Aurora Road, North side
Photo by Tanya Warren, August 2005

Description: This five-bay Federal house has six-over-six windows, a central doorway with a central portico with four iron supports that appear to be original. A hipped roof has two chimneys emerging at the peak. Judging from the style of the building as well as land prices reflected in deeds, the house may have been built between 1824 and 1835, during Susannah Marriott's ownership. In 1824, she purchased the original 100 acres for $2750, with an additional 19 acres for $516 in 1832. In 1835, she sold the entire plot to Benjamin Gould for $6500. An almost identical house (with the exception of a Florentine window in the center of the second story) was later built across the street.

Marriott sold this house ((“the same now and heretofore occupied by . . .Susannah Marriott as and for a farm”) in 1835 to Benjamin Gould, one of the builders of the North Street Friends Meetinghouse, located east of this house on the Sherwood-Aurora Road. Gould built himself a four-bay brick house with limestone lintels across the road from this house and gave the Marriott house to his son, Thomas, who in turn gave it to his daughter Anna Gould Gilcher. In 1904, this house was called Glen Mailen. The *New Century Atals of Cayuga County, New York,* described it as:

> GLEN MAILEN, **Mrs. H. J. Gilcher**, owner, post office address, Aurora. This farm with its fine surroundings beautiful view, excellent buildings, apple orchard of five acres, and dairy, consisting of one hundred and nineteen acres, located on the Sherwood Road to Aurora, within three miles of Sherwood, fifteen to Auburn, and within a short distance of Aurora. This is one of the few farms upon which there is no wasteland, and with the exception of the timber, it is all under cultivation, and well adapted to the raising of vegetables and various farm products. The water is obtained from wells for the house and barns, and living springs and creeks for the use of the stock. There are twenty acres of hardwood timber. This farm was formerly owned by Susan Merritt, who sold to Benjamin Gould, in 1835, and has always been in the family name, as Mrs. Gilcher, previous to her marriage, was Miss Gould.[25]

In 1915, Anna Gould Gilcher sold this property to **William Lewis and Gertrude Schuster Beck of Aurora**. William was a descendant of West Indian immigrants who came to Aurora in 1870, and his daughter became a local school teacher.[26]

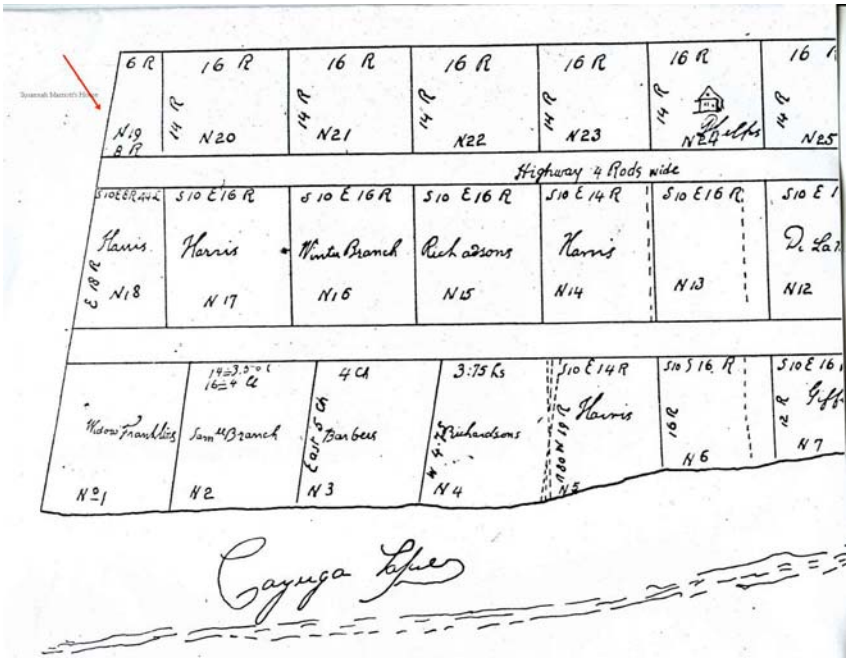
[25]"The Most Valuable And Productive Farms Section," *The New Century Atlas Of Cayuga County, New York* (1904), 120. Many thanks to Tanya Warren for finding this, and for her excellent and thorough documentation of all of Susannah Marriott's property holdings. All references to deeds, tax assessments, and census records for Susannah Marriott come from Tanya Warren's detailed report.

[26]Thanks to Bradley Mitchell, who noted that Mrs. Beck was one of his teachers. In 1991, the property was sold by William Beck, III of Freeville, Tompkins County, New York (as executor of Charles C. Beck of Aurora) to Richard Beck of Houston, Texas. In 1996, the property was sold by Richard Beck to Frank and Jordan Piechuta who are now the current owners. Deed Book W, p., 297; Deed Book 951, p., 177.

Southeast corner Court Street and Sherwood-Aurora Road
Aurora, New York, Looking east, November 2004

Description: The five-bay Federal house still has its original six-over-six window panes, but its first floor façade is obscured by a twentieth century porch addition. Susannah Marriott bought this property, "in her possession now being," from Charles Kimball in 1826 for $400. Shown below is the map mentioned in this deed.[27]

[27] This map is a tracing by Leonard Searing in 1957 of the original Seth Phillips map done in circa 1795 of the village of Aurora. Cayuga County maps U-97.



In 1831, Susannah Marriott sold this property to Oliver Bartlett, who then sold it to Stephen Gifford in 1832, "in his actual possession now being . . . excepting thereout and therefrom all that **certain upper room in the dwelling house** situate upon said premises which has for some time past been occupied by the Methodist Society as a place of public worship, so long as they should continue to use and occupy same, keeping in good order and repair."[28] As Temple Rice Hollcroft, Aurora Village Historian, noted "The Aurora Methodist Church was organized about 1835. One of its principal founders was Stephen Gifford, in whose home the first meetings were held. **The Gifford residence still stands on the northeast corner of Court St. and Sherwood Road**."[29]

[28] 9 December 1831, Deed Book OO, p. 153; 27 December 1832, Deed Book QQ, 124.
[29] *Aurora: Village of Constant Dawn* (Ovid, 1976), 40.

Significance: Susannah Marriott, b. 1769, emigrated from England about 1793, spending time in Muncy, Pennsylvania; Dutchess County, New York; and Manhattanville, New York, before moving to Aurora in 1820, where she took over a school on Court Street that she named Brier Cliff, after her birthplace in England. According to Emily Howland, this school had been operated earlier by Asa and Ruth Potter, Quakers who had come from Uxbridge, Massachusetts, about 1809 and who had opened "a select school for girls" in their own home, taught by Phila Aldrich. They later moved to Aurora, where Cynthia and Sophia Southwick taught the school, and young women, even if they were not Quakers, came as boarding students. (As Sheila Edmunds has noted, however, these were not young women but girls, aged 7-15.) Judge Elijah Miller of Auburn, whose mother was a Quaker, sent his daughters Lizette and Frances to this school in 1817. The 1820 census listed Susannah Marriott as living with fifteen young woman, probably students, six other European Americans, and three African Americans. [30]

Susannah Marriott left Brier Cliff in the autumn of 1827, when the "Philadelphia group" (as Sheila Edmunds, Aurora Village Historian, called them) took over. This group consisted of Martha Wright (Lucretia Mott's) sister, Anna Coffin (Martha's mother) and Rebecca Bunker (Martha's cousin). Perhaps this was related to the split between Hicksite and Orthodox Quakers in 1827-28, when Susannah Marriott sided with North Street Friends Meeting and the Orthodox group. Martha Wright and her family (and perhaps the trustees of Brier Cliff School) became Hicksite. Susannah Marriott, however, continued to run schools in Ledyard.[31]

Emily Howland noted that "this school was destined to mould characters which should shine in the highest walks of social life, and influence for good, the affairs of the nation." Certainly, the connections forged among Lizette Miller Worden, Frances Miller Seward, Martha Wright (who taught at the school after Susannah Marriott left), Emily Howland, and undoubtedly Susannah Marriott herself continued far after their immediate connection with the school ended. It does much to explain the ongoing Underground Railroad network to linked Aurora, Sherwood, and Auburn in the pre-Civil War years.

In 1824, Susannah Marriott purchased 100 acres on lots 139 and 146 on the north side of the Sherwood-Aurora Road. From 1826-31, she also owned a house at the southeast corner of Court Street and the Sherwood-Aurora Road in Aurora, where she may have held a school after she left Brier Cliff. The presence of a large room on the second floor of this house, later used as the site of the first Methodist meetings in the village, suggests this possibility.

In 1835, she moved to another farm, just north of the North Street Friends Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse). There she lived until after 1850. She also ran another school while she was there, although we do not know whether that school met in her own house, in the meetinghouse, or in another location.

Emily Howland, daughter of Underground Railroad activist Slocum Howland, probably attended Susannah Marriott's third school about 1837, and she later would regard Susannah Marriott as one of the three most influential people in her life.

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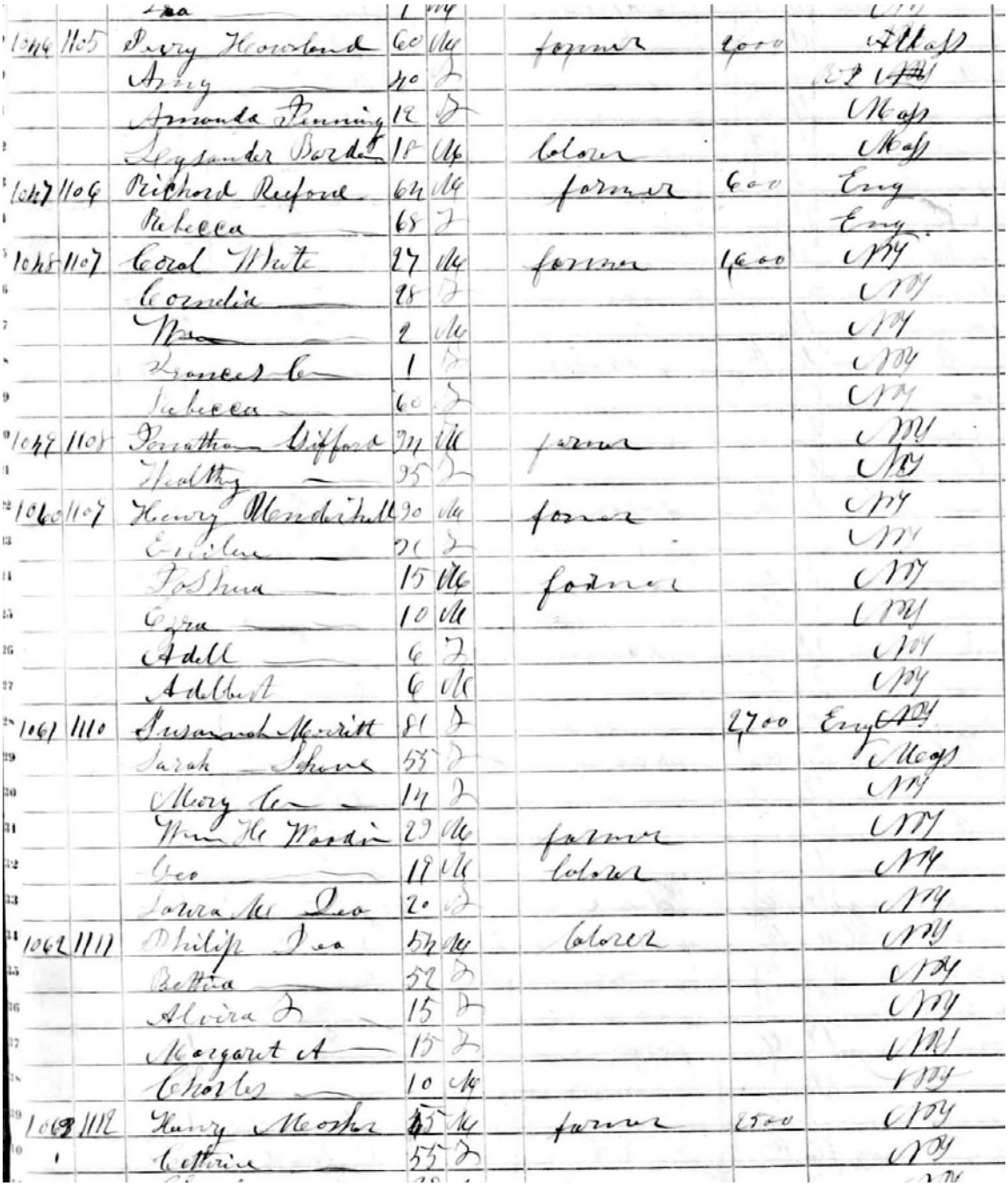
[30] Howland, Emily. "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County, N.Y., Read before the Cayuga County Historical Society, April 8th, 1880,"" *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society*, 2 (1882), 49-90. Available on-line at: http://www.co.cayuga.ny.us/history/friends/.

[31] Many thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Aurora Village Historian, for this information about Susannah Marriott.

Susannah Marriott was influential Quaker and abolitionist. Along with several other Quakers affiliated with Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends (Orthodox), she signed an antislavery petition published in The Friend, a Quaker newspaper, in 1835.

The 1850 Census showed Susannah Marriott, age 80, born in England, owning property worth $2700, living with Sarah Shaw, age 55, born Massachusetts; Mary Shaw, age 14, born New York; William H. Woodin, age 29, farmer, born New York; George Woodin, age 19, laborer, born New York; and Laura M. Woodin, age 20, born New York.



		Ira	1	M				NY
1044	1105	Perry Hoveland	60	M		former	4000	Mass
		Amy	40	F				R I
		Amanda Fleming	12	F				Mass
		Leysander Borden	18	M		Colour		Mass
1047	1106	Richard Refone	64	M		former	600	Eng
		Rebecca	65	F				Eng
1048	1107	Coral White	27	M		former	1600	NY
		Cordelia	28	F				NY
		Mary	2	M				NY
		Frances C	1	F				NY
		Rebecca	60	F				NY
1049	1108	Jonathan Gifford	94	M		former		NY
		Hedthy	95	F				NY
1050	1109	Henry Mendenhall	90	M		former		NY
		Emilia	70	F				NY
		Joshua	15	M		former		NY
		Ezra	10	M				NY
		Adell	6	F				NY
		Adelbert	6	M				NY
1051	1110	Susannah Marriott	81	F			2700	Eng ~~NY~~
		Sarah Shove	55	F				Mass
		Mary C	14	F				NY
		Wm H Mordin	20	M		former		NY
		Geo	18	M		Colour		NY
		Laura M Geo	20	F				NY
1052	1111	Philip Geo	57	M		Colour		NY
		Bettia	52	F				NY
		Alvira J	15	F				NY
		Margaret A	15	F				NY
		Charles	10	M				NY
1053	1112	Henry Mosher	55	M		former	2500	NY
		Catherine	55	F				NY

Susannah Marriott was very close to a woman named Susan Swenarton King, sponsoring her for membership in Quaker meeting when Susan was twelve years old. Susan Swenarton later married John King, and they lived in a house on Dixon Road, built about 1840 next to John's father, William, and later owned by John's brother, Alfred.

Susannah Marriott moved in with John and Susan King after 1850. A letter from John King to Thomas B. Gould (son of Benjamin Gould), who was then in Newport, Rhode Island, on

February 2, 1855, noted that:

> Please to inform thy wife that Susannah Marriott still continues to enjoy a comfortable state of health. In love to thyself, wife and family, my wife and Susannah Marriott uniting with me. Thy affectionate friend John King.[32]

The 1855 NYS census listed Susannah Marriott as a boarder with John and Susan King along with a young 18-year-old servant girl from England, named Harriet Taylor. Susannah Marriott died in 1857, age 87. In her will, she left many bequests to friends and relatives and the residue of her estate to Susan King.

The tax records of Ledyard, available only from 1851 on, reveal that Susannah Marriott, after the sale of her Lot #142 property in 1850, moved to Lot #70 in southeastern portion of Ledyard (the King property). She paid her last taxes on Lot #142 in 1852, the original 50 acres now shown as 48. She did appear to have paid taxes in 1851 on 1 acre near the Kings, but no deed reflected this ownership. This may possibly be the 1-acre that was later owned by Richard Gaskin.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Town	YEAR	Property/Lot #	ACRES	REAL-$	PERS-$	TOTAL-$
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1851	70	1	600.00	3300	
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1852	142	48	1100.00	600	1700.00
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1854	70			4000	
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1854	70			4000	4000.00
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1855	70			4000	4000.00
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1856	70			4000	4000.00
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1857	70			4000	4000.00
Marriott	Susannah	Ledyard	1858	70			4000	4000.00
Marriott	Estate-P.King	Ledyard	1859	70			4000	4000.00

From 1854-59, Susannah Marriott paid $4000 of personal property tax, listed under Lot 70. Could this have been agricultural machinery and cattle, interest in a wool factory, or some other form of investment?

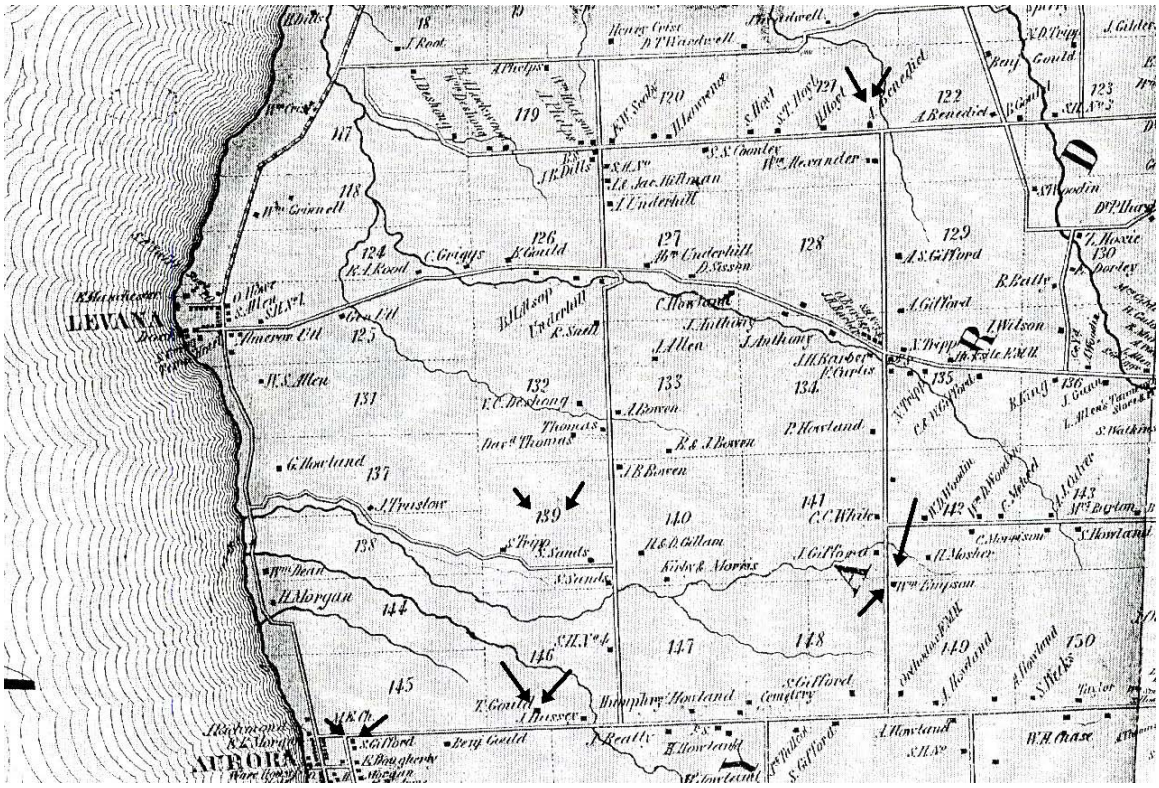
Susannah Marriott was an influential Quaker, member of North Street Friends Meeting (Orthodox), which was, as Emily Howland remembered, “a storm center of reform.” She left her mark especially on abolitionism and women’s education, teaching in and around Aurora, New York, creating women’s schools that were precursors of the much better known Wells College. As Tanya Warren has suggested, based on extensive property research, she also had another side to her multi-faceted personality: “Susannah Marriott appears to have been not only been a memorable Quaker teacher and abolitionist but a shrewd and wealthy real estate tycoon as well.”

Special thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Village Historian of Aurora, for her help with research

[32] Phillip F. Schlee Collection, online. Found by Charles Lenhart.

and writing Susannah Marriott's biography, to Tanya Warren for her work on Susannah Marriott's property ownership, and to the Howland Stone Store Museum for use of Susannah Marriott's daguerreotype.

The following map, prepared by Tanya Warren from the 1853 base map of Ledyard, Cayuga County, shows Susannah Marriott's property ownership in Ledyard. Each property is marked by two arrows.



Susannah Marriott's Deeds

Lots 139 and 146 (North Side of Sherwood-Aurora Road)
Lots #139 and #146:

East Cayuga Reservation (ECR) Deed Book E, p. 134
Amos Cook to Susannah Marriott
31 August 1824
$2750.00
Description: "All that parcel of land being distinguished as **Lot #146** and bounded as follows: Beginning at the SW corner of said lot at the center of the highway and runs from thence North to the NW corner of the said lot, thence East on the North line of the lot, until a line drawn south to the south line of the lot then West to the place of beginning-this will contain 100 acres, reserving out of said premises to Jesse Field of Ledyard to enter said premises or such parts thereof as may contain **stone coal** at all reasonable times and ways with his servants, teams and implements to dig, take and carry away, free from all demands whatsoever the equal undivided half of all the stone coal that is upon the premises."
(Note: **Anthracite**, also known as stone coal, burned at higher temperatures and became very important in the production of good quality iron for the rapid growth of Victorian industry. http://history.powys.org.uk/school1/ystradgynlais/links.shtml)
William Hecht, geologist, of Union Springs states that no coal mines were ever discovered in Cayuga County, but that early settlers had hopes there would be.

ECR Deed Book F, p. 359
Eleazer Burnham to Susannah Marriott
9 February 1832
$516.00
Description: "In her actual possession now being, all that parcel of land, being part **of Lot #139** in Ledyard, etc., Beg. at the SW corner of the said lot, thence running North 8 chains 64 ½ links to the top of the north bank of a ravine, thence easterly along the top of said bank of said ravine which is the south line of lands this day conveyed by Burnham to Lucius Gaylord so far that a line drawn south will intersect to the south line of said lot, 25 chains, 7 ½ links east of the SW corner of said lot, thence south to the south line of the lot, thence west to the place of beginning, containing 19 acres and 22 ½ rods of land.

Susannah Marriott then sells the above two lots as <u>1 transaction</u>, selling them both to Benjamin Gould in 1835:

ECR Book G, p. 295
Susannah Marriott to Benjamin Gould
1 September 1835
$6500.00 **Lots #146 and #139**
Description: Same as the two descriptions in ECR Book E, p. 134 and Book F, p. 359, with the addition of "Which said above described lands are the same now and **heretofore occupied by said party of the first part (Susannah Marriott) as and for a farm."**

Lot 19 (Court Street in Aurora)

Deed Book F F, p. 360
Charles Kimball to Susannah Marriott, both of Ledyard
2 December **1826**
$400.00
In her actual possession now being…land in the village of Aurora laid out in a town plat map by Seth Phelps on Lot #34 in old Scipio, now **Lot # 19** of Aurora.
Beginning at the northwest corner **of Lot #19** where it corners on the road leading from Poplar Ridge to said Aurora and **Court Street** on the east side thereof, thence running east along Poplar Ridge Rd (now Sherwood Rd.). 20 rods, thence south 6 rods then west 20 rods, then north along the east line of Court Street to the place of beginning, supposed to contain ¾ of an acre.
Witness: Glen Cuyler
Recorded: 5 January 1827

Deed Book OO, p. 153
Susannah Marriott to Oliver C. Bartlett (Oliver Cromwell Bartlett, born 1775, Newport, RI)
9 December 1831
$450.00
Description: Same as Deed Book FF, p. 360.

And then Oliver Bartlett to Stephen Gifford:

Deed Book QQ, p. 124
Oliver C. Bartlett to Stephen Gifford
27 December 1832
$450.00
Description: Same as above with the addition of: "in his actual possession now being…excepting thereout and therefrom all that **certain upper room in the dwelling house** situate upon said premises which has for some time past been occupied by the Methodist Society as a place of public worship, so long as they should continue to use and occupy same, keeping in good order and repair. In case said society shall at any time neglect to occupy for a place of public worship for the space of six months, this reservation will cease. Signed Oliver and Fanny (Lamson) Bartlett." (Oliver and Fanny were married on Nantucket in 1820 and moved to Aurora in the 1820's. Ancestry.com)

Stephen Gifford's relationship to this house is explained in the following article:

"The Aurora Methodist Church was organized about 1835. One of its principal founders was Stephen Gifford, in whose home the first meetings were held. **The Gifford residence still stands on the northeast corner of Court St. and Sherwood Road**. Later, Stephen Gifford's son, George W. Gifford, grandfather of Estelle and Floyd Gifford, became the leading member of this church." (*A Brief History of Aurora NY*. Temple Rice Hollcroft for the *Wells College Alumnae News* 1950 - 1958.)

Stephen Gifford is shown as owner of the house at the corner of Court and Sherwood streets in the 1859 and 1875 Cayuga County maps and his son George Gifford as owner in the 1904 County Atlas.

Lot 121 in Ledyard

About the same year Susannah buys her Court Street property she also purchases Lot #121.

ECR Deed Book E, p. 206
Aaron and Melinda Lyon to Susannah Marriott
5 February 1827
$830.00
Description: "Being distinguished as part of **Lot#121** of the East Cayuga Reservation lands, beginning at the NE corner of land owned by Robert Durkee and running thence east 9 chains, 19 links along the north bounds of Lot #121 to lands owned by Andrew Benedict, thence south along said Benedict's land 32 chains 14 links to the center of the highway, thence west along the highway 9 chains 19 links, thence north along the east bounds of Robert Durkee's land 32 chains 14 links to the place of beginning, containing 29 acres and 2 rods and 4 rods of land. Also, 3 acres of land in Lot #121 on the north 3 chains 12 links by a highway, on the East 9 chains 62 links by the land of Robert Durkee, on the south 3 chains 12 links by Jesse Babcock's land then west 9 chains 6 links by Samuel Hoyt's land, the bounds of said lot running due north, south, east and west."

Susannah Sells this same lot in 1830 to Andrew Benedict for a profit:

ECR Deed Book F, p. 485
Susannah Marriott to Andrew Benedict
2 June 1830
$1200.00
Description: **Lot #121**. Same as in ECR Book E, p. 206 with the addition of "In his actual possession now being".

Note: Both Lot #19 in Aurora Village (Court St.) and Lot #121 in Ledyard were bought and sold in a 4-5 year period. During this time period, Susannah is living on her farm on Lots #146 and #139 up on the Sherwood Rd. Does she buy the Court St. property solely for a schoolhouse? She could have easily walked the short distance between her farm on Sherwood Rd. and the corner of Court St. in any weather. That a large room on the second floor is mentioned in subsequent deeds of the Court St. property leads one to believe that it may have been built and designed by Susannah as a school with a large classroom, but this is pure speculation. The 1820 census is the only one that shows Susannah living WITH many students (15+) in the same building. Her 1826 deed for Court St. mentions that it was "in her possession now being". This could mean that she was living and teaching at this Court St. house up until 1824 when she moves to her farm on Sherwood Rd (Lot #146-139). She then continued her school there

as a non-resident teacher, perhaps "renting to own" until actually purchasing it in 1826.

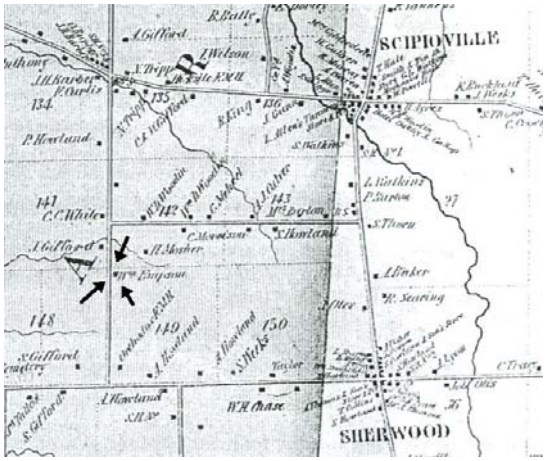
Lot 142 in Ledyard (North of Brick Meetinghouse)

ECR Deed Book G, p. 345
Ezra D. Barnes to Susannah Marriott
17 March 1836
$2250.00
Description: "Being part of **Lot #142** of the late East Cayuga Reservation, beginning at the SW corner of said lot in the center of the highway that leads south from Barber's Corners and runs from thence east 34 chains 70 links to the SW corner of the land now in possession of Cyrus Gage. Thence northerly in company with the line of said Gage's land 14 chains 41 links to a stake and stones thence westerly 34 chains 70 links to the
center of the highway thence south along the center of the highway 14 chains 41 links to the place of beginning. Contains 50 acres.

Susannah sells this property 14 years later:

ECR Deed Book J
Susannah Marriott to William Empson
5 October 1850
$2700.00
Description: Same as Book G, p. 345, with the exception of Cornelius Weeks as land owner of a boundary property instead of Cyrus Gage.

1853 map showing William Empson as new property owner. Lot numbers differ for this particular property, though, being in the extreme northwestern corner of lot 149, not in Lot #142 as in the deed. An explanation for this comes from Mrs. Hiram Lyon, current owner of the Perry Howland house (see Lot # 134). She claims that this house was torn down a few years back and that the driveway to it is off of today's Goose Lane Road, on Lot #142.



North Street Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse), 1834, built by Noah Dennis and Benjamin Gould
Brick Church Road
Town of Ledyard, New York

Significance: Friends Meetinghouse. Center of abolitionism, Underground Railroad activity, and woman's rights.

Looking northeast
June 2004

Description: With its gable end to the street, two front doors flanked by two windows, twelve-over-twelve window sashes, and limestone lintels, the North Street Meetinghouse, built in 1834, represents a departure from the frame meetinghouses built earlier in this area. Although similar in interior layout to the meetinghouse constructed in 1810 for the Scipio Monthly Meeting on Poplar Ridge Road in Ledyard, and probably also for the one constructed in 1820 for the North Street Meeting at Barber's Corners, this meetinghouse represents a distinctly different exterior form. While the 1810 meetinghouse was a frame building, with its broad side to the street, reflecting a common pattern in both Pennsylvania and New England, this new meetinghouse was brick, built with its gable end to the front, about 48 feet wide by 45 feet deep. While exterior details are

different, its basic form strikingly resembles the meetinghouse built in Philadelphia in 1804 and for the Arch Street Meetinghouse of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends.

After the Hicksite-Orthodox split in 1828, the "larger body," as Emily Howland referred to them, of Friends in Scipio became Hicksite and took over the original two-story frame meetinghouse, built in 1810 by Aaron Baker, one mile west of Poplar Ridge, near Dixon Road, as well as the North Street meetinghouse near Barber's Corners. Minutes of the North Street Preparative Meeting (Orthodox), part of Scipio Monthly Meeting (now located in Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore) record:

> 12 Mo. 11, 1834. Having for some time been deprived of our meeting house at our usual time by those who have separated from us subjecting us to much inconvenience particularly on first days we have thought best to build one 1 ½ mile west of Sheerwood [sic] Corners and it now being ready to occupy we propose to hold our next meeting there.[33]

Like all traditional Quaker meetinghouses, the North Street Meetinghouse incorporated values of simplicity, symmetry, and integrity. Its exterior and much of its interior (with the exception of its furnishings, the facing bench, and the dividing wall) are virtually intact from its original construction in 1834, and it possesses an exceptional degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Significance: Emily Howland, a member of this meeting, called it "a storm center for reformers." Built in 1834 for North Street Preparative Meeting of Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends (Orthodox), this meetinghouse was the center of a Quaker network of abolitionists, Underground Railroad supporters, supporters of Seneca Indian land rights, and woman's rights activists. Abolitionist members of this meeting included the Slocum and Hannah Howland family, David and Edna Thomas, Isaac and Susan Jacobs, Susannah Marriott, and Joseph and Sarah Tallcott. In its earliest years, before the split in 1827-28, this meeting also had at least one African American member (Gideon Wainwright, a nephew of Paul Cuffe, the famous sea captain). At least one freedom seeker, Richard Gaskin, also joined this meeting. He was "received by request" in 1874. In 1837, the Cayuga County Anti-Slavery Society held one of its first meetings here on November 29 (having been refused space in the Presbyterian Church in Aurora). "The meeting was well attended principally by the Friends who are numerous in this quarter and quite generally abolitionists," reported the *Friend of Man*, newspaper of the New York State Anti-Slavery Society. In 1843, Garrisonian abolitionist Abby Kelley spoke here, probably with Frederick Douglass, who accompanied her on a tour of New York State. Also about 1843, members of this meeting signed one of six petitions sent to Congress in support of Seneca land claims in New York State. In 1850, the meeting helped raise bail money for William Chaplin, jailed in Maryland for attempting to rescue 77 people from slavery in 1848. The meeting also raised money to give him an inscribed silver pitcher. During the Civil War, a women's sewing circle made clothes for freed people. Harriot Hunt, one of the earliest woman physicians in the U.S. gave a lecture here. In 1906, the meetinghouse reverted to the original owners of the land and became a barn.[34]

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[33] Minutes of North Street Preparative Meeting (Orthodox), part of Scipio Monthly Meeting. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore. Thanks to Christopher Densmore, Curator,s for finding this.

[34] *Friend of Man*, December 27, 1837; Emily Howland, "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County, N.Y.," *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society*, 2 (1882), 49-90; Emily Howland to [Caroline] Putnam, January 8, 1906, transcript of letter in possession of Paul and Jane Simkin. Many thanks to the Simkins for

Background

According to Emily Howland, a member of North Street Meeting (Orthodox), the first Friends came to Cayuga County about 1795. These included her own grandparents, Benjamin and Slocum Howland, who built a two-story saltbox house on Poplar Ridge Road between 1797 and 1799. They also included Gideon Wainwright, a nephew of the famous African American ship captain, Paul Cuffee, who had died on an expedition to Sierra Leone in 1814. Many of these Quakers came from eastern seaport cities such as Nantucket and New Bedford. [35]

The first Friends met in 1799 at the home of Benjamin and Mary Howland. In 1808, Friends were numerous enough to form Scipio Monthly Meeting, under Easton Quarterly Meeting, of New York Yearly Meeting of Friends. In 1810, they built a meetinghouse, constructed by Aaron Baker, one mile west of Poplar Ridge, near Dixon Road, not far from Benjamin and Mary Howland's house. Local tradition suggests that Benjamin Howland, a mason, may have helped build the stone and brick foundations and chimneys.

The five Quaker meetinghouses built in the Scipio-Ledyard-Venice area reflected both geographic location and various splits in local meetings. Beginning in 1817, another early meeting was held at Barber's Corners. In 1828, the original group of Friends meeting on the Poplar Ridge 1810 meetinghouse on the Poplar Ridge Road split into Hicksite and Orthodox. In 1847, Orthodox Friends split into Orthodox and Wilburite. In 1859, the Wilburites split into Otisite and Kingite branches. According to local Quaker historian Jane Simkin, "these branches [Otisite and Kingite] re-united in 1881. In 1947, the remaining Wilburites in the area were reorganized into Scipio 4-Months Meeting, which was laid down in 1964. In 1962 the Orthodox branch became Poplar Ridge Monthly Meeting, the body which continues to the present day."[36]

Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends (Orthodox) had at least four preparative meetings, North Street, South Street, Skaneateles (laid down between 1917-1922), and Union Springs (which sold its meetinghouse to the Springport Library in 1910 and was laid down in 1920). Two of these—North Street and South Street—were in present-day Ledyard and Venice (both part of the original town of Scipio), with North Street in the town of Ledyard.

These meetings created five meetinghouses:

1. Scipio Meetinghouse, Poplar Ridge Road, near Dixon Road, 1810. It became Hicksite at the time of the separation in 1828. In 1810, Aaron Baker built the original meetinghouse for Scipio Preparative Meeting and Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends on Poplar Ridge Road near Dixon Road. Minutes of Scipio

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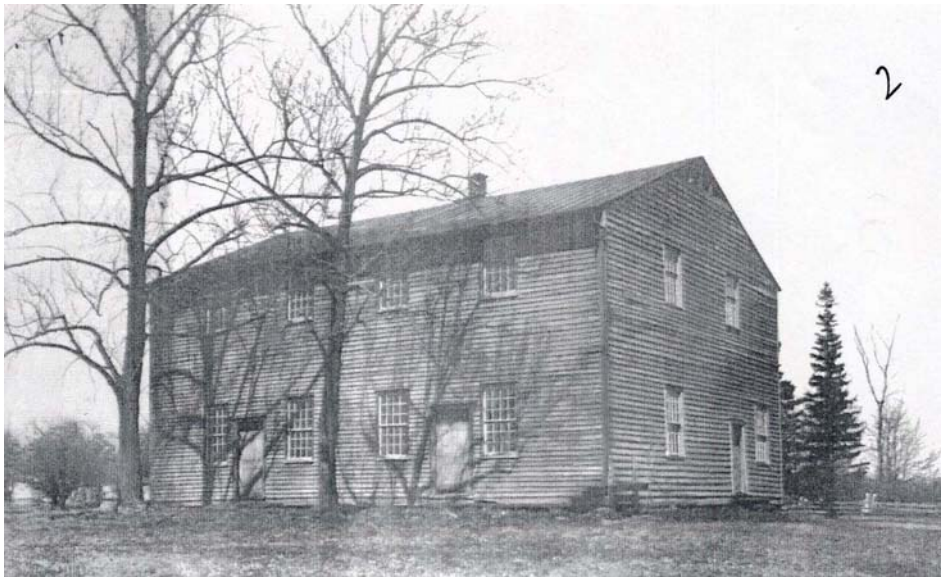
sharing this letter. A transcript of this letter is on the Cayuga County Historian's website, along with a historic photo of the Brick Meetinghouse. Richard Gaskin's membership was recorded in Orthodox minutes of North Street Preparative Meeting Minutes (Orthodox) in 1874. Research by Jane Simkin.

[35] Emily Howland, "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County, N.Y.," *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society*, 2 (1882), 49-90. Available on-line at: http://www.co.cayuga.ny.us/history/friends/.

[36] Email from Jane Simkin, January 16, 2005.

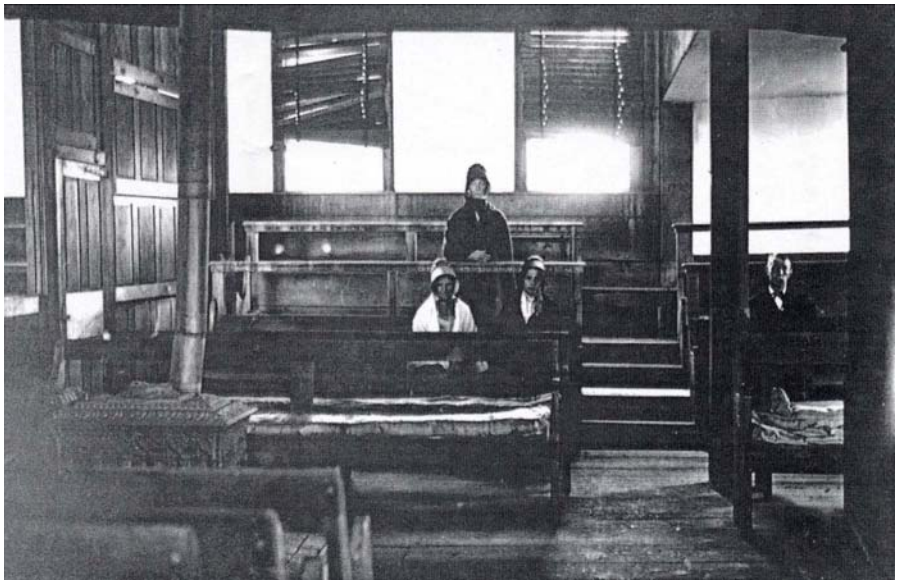
Monthly Meeting for 10th Month 20, 1808, requested a building 34 x 50 feet, with 22-foot posts.[37] It was a two-story frame building, with two front doors (one for men and one for women), flanked by two windows each.



Friends Meetinghouse
Built by Aaron Baker, 1810, Poplar Ridge Road near Dixon Road
Became Hicksite Meetinghouse after 1828. Taken down in 1912.
Photo courtesy of Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College.

This form reflected meetinghouses common in New England. See, e.g., Pomfret, Connecticut, meetinghouse (no longer standing), built in 1805; Apponegansett Friends Meetinghouse, built in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts, in 1790; New Bedford Friends Meetinghouse, built in 1822 (brick, with a hipped roof); Little Compton, Rhode Island, built 1700; and Dover Friends Meetinghouse, built in 1768 (with five bays and two doors side-by-side in the center). It was also a common form in Pennsylvania, although there it was usually built in stone rather than wood. See, for example, Buckingham Meetinghouse (1768).[38]

[37] Minutes of Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College. Thanks to Christopher Densmore for this research.
[38] Silas B. Weeks, *New England Quaker Meetinghouses: Past and Present* (Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 2001), 10, 57, 68, 96, 120; Catherine C. Lavoie, "Historic American Buildings Survey Recording of Friends Meetinghouses within the Region of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting," *Silent Witness: Quaker Meetinghouses in the Delaware Valley, 1695 to the Present* (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends with support from HABS, [2003]), 25-26.



Hicksite Meeting (Hicksite), Interior, c. 1912
Courtesy Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore, and
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Note high windows behind facing bench, gallery at right, and interior dividers at left

About 1912, Olive Ryon, wife of a local Quaker pastor, posed with Jane Searing, Matilda Jacobs and an unidentified man on the facing bench inside this building, shortly before it was taken down. Nothing remained above ground at this site in 2005 except the gravestones and a stone marker for the building itself.[39]

2. North Street Preparative Meeting. Barber's Corners. According to Christopher Densmore,

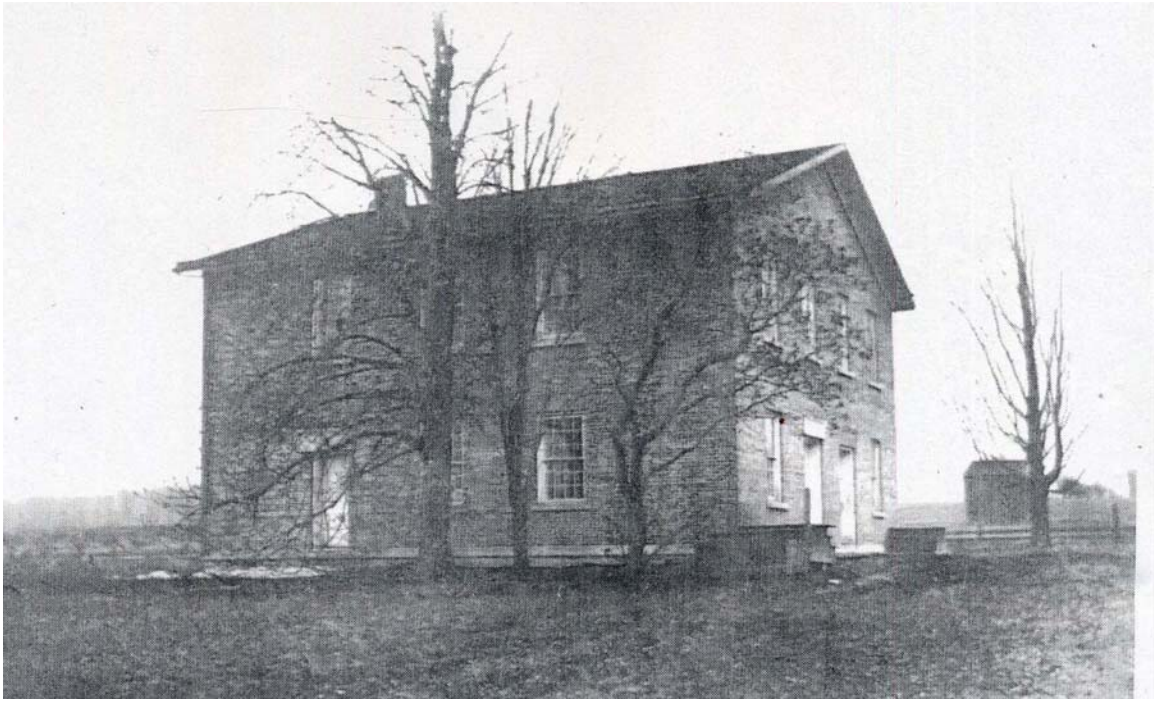
   Minutes of Scipio Monthly Meeting, 2nd Month 13, 1817, record the request for a meeting for worship 'near Charles Gifford's." This seems to be the beginning of North Street meeting. On 4th Month 15, 1819, Scipio Monthly Meeting temporarily granted North Street the status of a Preparative Meeting. Apparently at this time becoming a preparative meeting also required the permission of the Quarterly Meeting, and Scipio Monthly Meeting reports that approval in its minutes of 1st Month 27, 1820. The minutes of Scipio Monthly Meeting for 3rd Month 16, 1820, report that North Street wants to erect a meeting house on a lot of two acres, about forty rods west of Charles Gifford's, to be 32 x 44 feet with 21 foot posts, and estimated to cost $1300, with $515 already subscribed.

A small cemetery still exists near there. Jane Simkin reported that the meetinghouse was sold in 1903, and it became a barn for Arthur Gamlen, which stood until the late twentieth century. Jane Searing was the last of the Hicksite Friends. According to Jane Simkin, the North Street

[39] Howland, "Early History of Friends." Bradley Mitchell, conversation with Judith Wellman, November 2004. Email from Christopher Densmore, June 13, 2005; Email from Jane Simkin, June 9 and June 17, 2005. Bradley Mitchell identified Matilda Jacobs and Jane Searing. Jane Simkin identified Olive Ryon and Jane Searing.

Friends meetinghouse (Hicksite) had a porch, "but otherwise the exterior would be difficult to distinguish from the 1810 building."[40]

3. North Street Preparative Meeting. North Street Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse), corner Sherwood-Aurora Road and Brick Church, 1834.



North Street Meetinghouse, built 1834
Note steps for dismounting from carriages.
Also note lintel over right front door is of rough stone rather than smooth.
Earliest known photo, late 19th century [?]
From glass plate negative
Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore [?]
Howland Stone Store Museum has a glass plate negative of this,
damaged in fire

[40] Email from Jane Simkin, August 19, 2005.

4. Conservative (Wilburite) Meetinghouse, 34B at Poplar Ridge, across from the Octagon house, where there is still a cemetery, identified in an early twentieth century postcard as the North Street meetinghouse. As a possible explanation about why this meetinghouse may have been labeled the North Street meetinghouse on an old postcard, Jane Simkin reported that "Phyllis Ward Stanton who lives in her family's home across the road and slightly south of this meetinghouse site said in connection with this postcard that her father (or grandfather) always called the part of 34B where they lived North street." This building was used by both Otisite and Kingite branches. Members of the Otis family were the last members of that meeting. It was still standing as late as 1934.[41]

Conservative Friends Meetinghouse, 34B, built 1850-51, from earlier building [?]

Courtesy of Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore

[41] Emails from Jane Simkin, January 16, January 23, 2005, and June 9, 2005.

5. South Street Meetinghouse (Poplar Ridge Meetinghouse), 1883. South Street meeting was probably the one at Wheeler's corners (the site of the Ridgeway cemetery). Local oral tradition suggests that the original building may now be a farm building on the Haines farm. The current South Street Quaker meetinghouse was built in 1883. At some point, the meeting changed its name to Poplar Ridge meeting. It moved its meetinghouse to Poplar Ridge in 1897, where it is now the Poplar Ridge meetinghouse.[42]

Poplar Ridge Friends' Meetinghouse, 1883. Moved from Ridgeway Cemetery Site, 1897

6. Union Springs Meetinghouse. Union Springs Preparative Meeting of Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends (Orthodox) sold its meetinghouse to the Springport Library in1910 and was laid down in 1920. [43]

7. Skaneateles Preparative Meeting of Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends had a meetinghouse on West Lake Road. Several members, including James Canning Fuller and Lydia Fuller, were very active in abolitionism and the Underground Railroad. The meeting was laid down between 1917-1922.

In terms of the North Street Meetinghouse, the most significant of the splits among Quakers was the Orthodox-Hicksite separation in 1828. In the context of Philadelphia, where the split has been

[42] Emails from Jane Simkin, January 16, January 23, and June 17, 2005.
[43] Jane Simkin, email, August 9, 2005.

most closely studied, the Orthodox were more urban, often influenced by religious revivals, and tended to emphasize the Bible as the revealed word of God. Hicksites, on the other hand, were tied more closely to rural areas and emphasized continuing revelation as the primary source of spiritual wisdom.

In a rural area such as Scipio, we know much less about the causes or the implications of this split. We do know, however, that it profoundly and painfully affected personal relations, so strongly that local Quakers preferred not to refer to themselves as Orthodox or Hicksite but only, in Emily Howland's terms, as "the larger body " [Hicksite]. Both the meetings with meetinghouses on Poplar Ridge Road (Scipio Preparative Meeting and Monthly Meeting) and at Barber's Corners (North Street Preparative Meeting) became Hicksite, so that Orthodox Quakers had to build new meetinghouses.

In 1834, North Street Preparative Meeting of Friends (Orthodox) chose to build a new brick meetinghouse on the north side of the Sherwood-Aurora Road, about a mile-and-a-half west of Sherwood.

North Street Preparative Meetinghouse (Orthodox)—Brick Meetinghouse

Because of problems with both groups sharing the old North Street meetinghouse, especially on Sundays, Orthodox Friends began to discuss the construction of new meetinghouse in March 1833. As meeting minutes noted in December 1834, "Having for some time been deprived of our meeting house at our usual time by those who have separated from us subjecting us to much inconvenience particularly on first days we have thought best to build one 1 ½ mile west of Sheerwood Corners."[44]

Minutes further record details of the building's construction, from its first planning in March 1833 until its completion, ready for occupancy, by December 11, 1834:

> 3 Mo. 14, 1833 committee appointed on the building of a new meetinghouse (and continued over the next year)
>
> 2 Mo. 6, 1834 to build a little north west of the Augustus Howland, $1600 subscribed.
>
> 3 Mo. 13, 1834 Noah Dennis and Benjamin Gould to build meetinghouse.
>
> Lot for the meeting house is to contain 1 ½ acres & to be paid for, a suitable portion is to be prepared by proper fencing & draining for a burial ground for this preparative meeting. The whole lot is to be properly fenced. Good horse sheds are to be made of at least two hundred feet total length. Other requisite out buildings & enclosures are to be well made. The meeting house is to be faithfully

[44] Minutes of North Street Preparative Meeting (Orthodox), 12 Mo. 11, 1834. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore. Thanks to Christopher Densmore for researching these.

> [?] built of brick & about the size of North Street meeting house. The outside of the house & the inside, except the stairs, the galleries above them & the room, if any, over the entry, are to be finished. Neither this meeting nor any of its members are to be called upon for any further contributions towards the building described.
>
> 12 Mo. 11, 1834. Having for some time been deprived of our meeting house at our usual time by those who have separated from us subjecting us to much inconvenience particularly on first days we have thought best to build one 1 ½ mile west of Sheerwood [sic] Corners and it now being ready to occupy we propose to hold our next meeting there.

Slocum Howland helped collect money to build the meetinghouse, for on 2 mo 1, 1837, Martha Heazlit (one of Slocum Howland's sisters) wrote "Brother Slocum Howland" a letter noting that "I have subscribed twenty dollars towards building the meeting house for North Street preparative meeting but it not being convenient to pay it at this time I wish thee to pay it for me and I will pay it to thee on the decease of our dear mother soon as any comes to my hands from my deceased Father's estate with interest from this on said subscription." A note on the back read: ""Received of Slocum Howland the within order of twenty dollars. Benjamin Gould."[45]

Augustus Howland gave the land on which the new meetinghouse was built. In 1837, the deed officially conveyed one acre three rods, and seventeen perches to David Thomas and Benjamin Gould, subsequently conveyed to Slocum Howland, Abram M. Underhill, and Nicholas D. Tripp, Trustees of North Street Preparative Meeting, reserving from that conveyance the burial ground in the northwest corner of the property.[46]

As noted in the minutes of the meeting, the builders were Noah Dennis and Benjamin Gould, both Quakers. Noah Dennis was born between 1795 and 1800 in Cambridge, Washington County, New York. His parents were Wilbur John Dennis, born in Little Compton, Rhode Island in 1775, and his first wife. Wilbur John Dennis married twice more, one to Elizabeth Cornell Dennis, born in Easton, Washington County, New York, and again to Susanna Brown, in 1812. (Little Compton, Rhode Island, had a Quaker meetinghouse very similar in form to the 1810 Scipio Meetinghouse, and Scipio Meeting was organized originally under the care of Easton Friends Meeting.) Noah Dennis taught in the district school locally in 1817-18, became a civil engineer (according to the *History of Cayuga County)*, and married Hannah Jane Gifford on October 27, 1831, in Ledyard, and they had a child Noah W. Dennis, born on August 22, 1832, at "Scipio Monthly Meeting." Wilbur Dennis died on May 6, 1834, and his son Noah Dennis, one of the builders of the meetinghouse, also died sometime during that year.[47]

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[45] Martha Heazlit to Slocum Howland, February 1, 1836, from Tallcott Family Papers, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester. Martha Heazlit's name is also spelled "Hazlit" in genealogies and local records.
[46] August Howland to David Thomas and Benjamin Gould, Deed Book H, page 12, Cayuga County Clerk's Office. Thanks to Patricia White, descendant of Augustus Howland, for finding this.
[47] *International Genealogical Index* (http://awt.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=browermd1&id=I40997); Emily Howland, "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County"; Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County* (1878), 424. Research by Tanya Warren.

Benjamin Gould (1804-1888) was a Quaker, born in New York State about 1801. Benjamin Gould married Abby Gifford in 1825 at North Street Meeting (probably the meetinghouse then at Barber's Corners). She died in February 1826. He then married Anna Heazlet, daughter of Martha Heazlet, Slocum Howland's sister. When she died in 1869, age 66, he married a third time, Sylvia Ann Wood, another niece. Benjamin Gould and Anna Heazlet Gould had at least five children, all buried with them in the Howland family graveyard at the corner of Poplar Ridge and Angling Road. [48]

Grave of Benjamin Gould
Howland Family Cemetery, looking west
Poplar Ridge Road, near Angling Road
July 2005

Benjamin Gould was just at the beginning of his career in the 1830s, but he eventually became one of central Cayuga County's wealthiest farmers. The 1850 census listed Benjamin Gould as owning property worth $17,000. The 1853 Cayuga County map showed him owning several properties in Ledyard, including a large brick farmhouse on the south side of the Sherwood-Aurora Road, just east of Aurora, across the road from a farm that he had purchased in 1835 from Susannah Marriott and given to his son, Thomas.

[48] *International Genealogical Index;* Cemetery Listings, online at Cayuga County Historian's Office.

As per directions from the meeting to build this new meetinghouse "about the size of [the original] North Street meeting house," the new building was actually slightly larger than the proposal had been for its predecessor. The original 1820 North Street Meetinghouse, as defined in the request to the builder, had been 32 x 44 feet. The new brick meetinghouse was about 48 feet wide by 45 feet deep.[49]

The new building, however, most likely reflected the basic floor plan of both the 1810 and the 1820 building. Its two front doors created separate entrances for men's and women's meetings for business. Inside, the interior could be divided by panels into separate rooms for business meetings for women and men, with facing benches for ministers and elders, who sat looking out toward the larger congregation. Local residents remembered these folding panels. Physical placement of the windows high on the north side indicated that facing benches were placed on the north wall to raise ministers and elders above the level of the congregation.

In the early twenty-first century, construction of a third sash at the bottom of the one remaining high two-sash window (of the original two) revealed two unusual bricks hidden in the middle of the north wall, one reading "Pece and plenty" and the other inscribed with two intersecting diagonal lines, one crooked, the other straight.

In *Silent Witness: Quaker Meetinghouses in the Delaware Valley, 1695 to the Present*, Catherine C. Lavoie argued that this interior meeting plan, with equal spaces for men's and women's meetings, had become standard for American meetinghouses, by the late eighteenth century. English meetinghouses and those constructed earlier in colonial American had typically used one large meeting space for meetings for worship and for men's meetings for business and created a smaller room for women's meetings for business. In 1768, however, Buckingham Friends Meeting in Pennsylvania incorporated two equal sections in its meetinghouse, one for men and one for women. This new plan reflected a spiritual reform movement within Quakerism. Friends began to withdraw from worldly concerns, including the militarism of the French and Indian War and the increasing affluence of the society around them, to pay more attention to internal discipline, including, in 1762, "marrying out of meeting." Since this offense was typically under the care of women's meetings, this 1762 guideline elevated the role of women within Quaker meetings. It also led to a relatively standardized plan of meetinghouse

[49] Thanks to Christopher Densmore for finding these dimensions in the Scipio and North Street Preparative meeting minutes.

construction, with one large meeting for worship that could be divided into two equal sections for men's and women's meetings for business.[50] Both the 1810 Scipio meetinghouse and the 1834 North Street Preparative Meeting brick meetinghouse incorporated this basic interior layout.

If the interior of the new North Street Meetinghouse reflected that of the 1810 Scipio Meetinghouse, however, its exterior did not. Built of brick, with its gable-end-to-the street, it was a dramatic departure in both materials and design from either the 1810 Scipio Meetinghouse or the 1820 North Street Meetinghouse. Still simple and plain, it was nevertheless both more sophisticated and more elegant than the earlier buildings.

Where did North Street Meeting (Orthodox)—and builders Noah Dennis and Benjamin Gould--get their ideas for such a dramatically different building? They might have absorbed some influences from new Greek Revival designs in the larger culture. But one likely influence came from the Arch Street Meetinghouse in Philadelphia, home of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends (Orthodox). Built in 1804 from a design by Quaker Owen Biddle, with a west wing added in 1811, it was a simple brick building, with a main central gable and a full pediment flanked by two wings—one each for the men's and women's yearly meetings. There were distinct differences between the two buildings. North Street Preparative Meetinghouse had no porticos and Arch Street Meetinghouse had three, one over each of the front doors, for the central hall and for the men's and women's meeting rooms. North Street Meetinghouse was distinctly Greek Revival in feel, with large limestone lintels, compared to the Roman Revival character of Arch Street, with Tuscan columns supporting each of the porticos.

Arch Street Meetinghouse had one large central room with wings on each side for separate men's and women's meetings. When North Street Preparative Meetinghouse tried to incorporate the older interior plan of dividing one large room into two separate but equal spaces (which they had used so successfully in the earlier meetinghouse on Poplar Ridge Road), into a gable-end-to-the-street design, they created a building that was broader than it was deep (48 feet wide by 45 deep), so that the gable became very large and very wide.

Cayuga County Quakers had regular contact with friends, family, and fellow Quakers in Philadelphia, including those who channeled freedom seekers north to safe houses in Cayuga County. In addition, they were attempting to establish their identities as Orthodox Friends (the real inheritors of George Fox's tradition). They might well have patterned their new meetinghouse after the home of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox), the largest Yearly Meeting in North America, to make a statement about the validity of their own historical lineage. Were they trying to make this new North Street Meetinghouse into the Cayuga County equivalent of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting? Or perhaps they simply liked the way the Arch Street Meetinghouse looked, and they wanted to build in brick as a lasting contribution to the future.

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[50] Catherine C. Lavoie, "Historic American Buildings Survey Recording of Friends Meetinghouses within the Region of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting," *Silent Witness: Quaker Meetinghouses in the Delaware Valley, 1695 to the Present* (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends with support from HABS, [2003]), 4-5, 25-26.

Both Arch Street Meetinghouse and North Street Preparative Meetinghouse project a sense of balance, harmony, and quiet simplicity. Both are brick, with a main gable to the street, very different from anything else that Quakers had built in upstate New York.

Friends used North Street Preparative Meetinghouse regularly into the late nineteenth century. On December 18, 1905, a quitclaim deed from Giles F. Slocum, Trustee of North Street Preparative Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, returned the brick meetinghouse to George Howland. In April 1906, records of Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends noted that the North Street Meetinghouse had been sold. Sometime after 1906, the meetinghouse was converted into a barn.[51]

Many years later, North Street Meetinghouse became a private residence.

Significance: Social History of North Street Preparative Friends Meetinghouse

Immediately after Friends first occupied this meetinghouse, it became what Emily Howland, one member of the meeting, called "the storm center of reformers." In 1835, Slocum Howland, trustee of North Street Meeting, signed an antislavery petition printed in *The Friend*, asking *The Friend* to cover more antislavery news. Other members of this monthly meeting, both men and women, also signed this petition, including trustee Abram M. Underhill, Charles Gifford, Abram Samuel Savage, Samuel Shords, David Thomas, Martha Heazlit, Susannah Marriott, William King, and James C. Fuller. The last three were all originally British Friends, and James Canning Fuller, like Slocum Howland, was an extremely active Underground Railroad agent.[52]

On January 20, 1835, Friends from North Street Preparative Meeting (including Slocum Howland, Humphrey Howland, Allen Thomas, Josiah Letchworth, and Benjamin Gould) also signed the first antislavery petition sent to Congress from Cayuga County:

> Your petitioners Inhabitants of the County of Cayuga and State of New York
> Do earnestly entreat Your Honorable body to pass such laws at the present session that will immediately liberate the slaves in the District of Columbia, that all may enjoy freedom within the limits of our capital District and put it out of the power of any persons living at the seat of our government to exact the labor of a fellow being without paying satisfactory wages.
>
> Your petitioners sensible of the excited feelings that rests on this subject do not ask Congress to interfere with slavery as it exists in any of the states. The experiment of immediately emancipating the slaves in the District of Columbia may be beneficial to the interest of those states where slavery is not abolished.

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[51] Deed from Giles F. Slocum to George Howland, December 18, 1905, Deed Book U, Res. Deeds, page 577, filed March 5, 1906, Cayuga County Clerk's Office. Thanks to Patricia White for finding this deed. Thanks to Jane Simkin and Christopher Densmore for research in the Scipio Monthly Meeting records, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College. Emily Howland to [Caroline] Putnam, January 8, 1906, transcript of letter in possession of Paul and Jane Simkin, Keeper of the Records of Poplar Ridge Monthly Meeting of Friends. A transcript of this letter is on the Cayuga County Historian's website.
[52] *The Friend*, 9:11 (December 12, 1835).

> Your petitioners trust that the wisdom of Congress will easily devise some plan by which the slaves of the District may be liberate without injustice to any and to the entire satisfaction of all parties. January 20th 1835.[53]

Slocum Howland also regularly attended annual meetings of the American Anti-Slavery Society and subscribed to Frederick Douglass's *North Star* and *Frederick Douglass' Paper*. In 1852, he was president of a meeting of the "friends of freedom," held in Port Byron, New York, that celebrated the emergence of slavery as the one great issue before the American people at the next election and freedom of speech, and of the press, as "the great weapon of defence of civil liberty; that when we part with these, we part with all; and we will, therefore, never associate nor vote with any political party that is willing to purchase peace from the enemy, by delivering as hostages our principal means of protection."[54]

Emily Howland recalled that "there was much more freedom of speech there [in the brick meetinghouse] than there ever was in the South Street meeting, because David Thomas and Susan Marriott and my father [Slocum Howland] were active abolitionists as well as leading members of the meeting." In contrast, when James Canning Fuller, "the little English Friend, who always wore knee breeches, was to give an address in that house on slavery, and when the speaker and some others arrived they found the house barred and bolted; nothing daunted, a window was raised. I think James himself crawled through it, unbolted the door on the inside, and so the audience assembled and held their meeting." The home of James Canning Fuller and Lydia Fuller on West Genesee Street in Skaneateles in on the National Register as part of the Multiple Property Document of Historic Resources Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Central New York.[55]

In 1837, the Cayuga County Anti-Slavery Society, barred from holding its meeting in the Aurora Presbyterian Church, met in the North Street Meetinghouse. "The meeting was well attended principally by the Friends who are numerous in this quarter and quite generally abolitionists," reported the *Friend of Man*, newspaper of the New York State Anti-Slavery Society.[56]

In 1843, Abby Kelley, a Garrisonian abolitionist, spoke at an antislavery convention at the North Street Meetinghouse. Kelley's first public speech was at a national women's anti-slavery meeting held in Philadelphia in 1838. So hostile were local people to these abolitionist women, black and white, that they burned down the brand new hall around them. When Kelley made a tour through upstate New York for the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1843, she spoke out against churches as proslavery institutions, and so radical were her words that few people gave her space in which to lecture. The North Street Meetinghouse was an exception. At that convention, Emily Howland, then an impressionable sixteen-year-old girl, also met John Collins, founder of a Fourierist utopian community near Skaneateles, New York, and Thomas and Mary Ann M'Clintock and

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[53] National Archives and Records Administration. HR23A-H1.2.
[54] Howland, Emily. "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County, N.Y., Read before the Cayuga County Historical Society, April 8th, 1880," *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society*, 2 (1882): 49-90, online through Cayuga County Historian's Office; *North Star*, January 25, 1850; Frederick *Douglass' Paper*, March 18, 1852; August 13, 1852; May 13, 1853; August 24, 1855.
[55] Emily Howland to Caroline Putnam, January 8, 1908, from Jane Simkin, online at Cayuga County Historian's Office website.
[56] *Friend of Man*, December 27, 1837.

their daughters, Elizabeth, Mary Ann (and perhaps also Sarah and Julia), who in 1848 helped organize the first woman's rights convention in the United States at Seneca Falls, New York. "Those were thrilling, mentally active times in this country," remembered Emily Howland. "The struggle to improve caused intense activity and brightening of the mind in that time."[57]

About 1843, hundreds of citizens of Cayuga County—from Auburn, Springport, Venice, Ledyard, and Scipio--sent six petitions to Congress (one signed by men and women and the rest signed only by men) supporting the claims of Seneca Indians to keep their lands in western New York. Members of North Street Preparative Meeting signed at least one of these, signed by J[osiah] Letchworth, Allen Thomas, Slocum Howland, Humphrey Howland, Augustus Howland, and others (155 men in all) that read:

> To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled:
>
> The undersigned, inhabitants of the County of Cayuga in the States of New York being convinced that a majority of the Seneca Nation of Indians are decidedly averse to emigration, and have never given their assent to the treaty for the sale of their lands, as amended by the Senate, and believing that the honour, dignity, and interest of the United States do not require that Treaty to be forced upon said Indians; would most respectfully petition your Bodies to adopt such measures, as in your wisdom shall appear best adapted to sustain the honor of the Unites States, and prevent injustice to the Indians [sic].[58]

Other reformers and reform movements left their mark on the North Street Meetinghouse. Harriot Hunt, an early woman physician, lectured there. Emily Howland remembered little about her lecture except that she was "a bright lovable women," with "fat dimpled hands" and "a little fat figure," and "a young woman who was one of her hearers thought some of her allusions to maternity were immodest."[59] In 1850, William Chaplin, an antislavery editor and Underground Railroad activist, attempted to rescue about fifty people from slavery in Washington, D.C., including two teenaged girls, Mary and Emily Edmundson. Captured and thrown in jail in Maryland, Chaplin's only hope of survival was to raise bail and escape to the North. *The North Star*, September 5, 1850, noted that meetings to raise money for William Chaplin's bail would be held in Ledyard on Friday, September 20, 1850, at which the Edmondson sisters as well as many other noted abolitionists would speak. At a large meeting in the North Street Meetinghouse, abolitionists raised money not only for Chaplin's bail but also for an inscribed silver pitcher to commemorate Chaplin's bravery. Emily Howland collected money, a dime from each donor. A notice printed in the *New York Tribune* and reprinted in the *Syracuse Standard*, September 14, 1850, noted that this silver pitcher was ordered by "a Committee of Ladies in Western new-York" from the firm of Jones, Ball, and Poor, in New York, and contained the following inscription:

To
WILLIAM L. CHAPLIN, IN PRISON,
from

[57] Emily Howland to Caroline Putnam, January 8, 1906, from Jane Simkin, online at Cayuga County Historian's Office website.
[58] Sent to Christopher Morgan with five other other similar petitions, National Archives and Records Administration, HR27A-H1.6.
[59] Emily Howland to Caroline Putnam, January 8, 1906, from Jane Simkin, online at Cayuga County Historian's Office website.

ONE THOUSAND OF HIS FRIENDS.
A Testimonial of their high regard for his Character.
August 8th, 1850.

On the other side, it read:

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor;
the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble" Ps. Xll.1.

No one was allowed to contribute more than ten cents. Since the pitcher cost $100, one thousand women, young and old, contributed.[60]

During the Civil War, women in Scipio met at the North Street Meetinghouse to sew clothes for freed people of color. [61]

On a regular basis, Emily Howland remembered "many weddings and many funerals, and hundreds of hours have I sat on the hard seats as motionless as the sphinx in perfect silence and sometimes when there was speaking I thought that 'silence was golden and speech silver.' The social life in the lobby before and after meeting was the best part of it." One of Emily Howland's most welcome memories was of Edna Thomas, "rosy, her face handsome," who was not only an abolitionist but also a believer in woman's rights. Howland looked forward to "heart-to-heart chats" with Edna Thomas and "enjoyed meeting her more than any other person whom I met there." Edna and her husband David had a large nursery just west of the meetinghouse, and Edna Thomas "often brought me a bouquet in the season of flowers." "Yet more, she never wore an expression of reproof and rebuke, as many of the elder friends did when they met any of us younger members."

In addition to these European American reformers, North Street Meeting may have had at least one African American member. Richard Gaskin, born in Virginia, brought his family (including his wife Mary and his four children) to Ledyard in 1864. By 1869, they had purchased a home on Dixon Road. Gaskin joined a Quaker meeting in Scipio, most likely this one, where his neighbor, William King, was also a member.[62]

North Street Preparative Meeting was also a center of Quaker education, including education for girls. Susannah Marriott, b. 1769, immigrated from England about 1793, spending time in Dutchess County, New York; Muncy, Pennsylvania; and Manhattanville, New York, before moving to Ledyard. Susannah Marriott settled in Aurora, where she took over a school that she named Brier Cliff, after her birthplace in England, from 1820-27. Earlier, daughters of Judge Elijah Miller in Auburn –Lizette and Frances—later Lizette Miller Worden and Frances Seward, wife of William Henry Seward, who would both become strong abolitionists—attended this school. From 1824 to 1835, Susannah Marriott owned a house still standing on the north side of the Sherwood-Aurora Road, later owned by Benjamin Gould, his son Thomas Gould, Thomas Gould's daughter, Mrs. Gilcher, and then an African American family named Beck. In 1827,

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[60] *Syracuse Standard*, September 14, 1850. Vertical file, Onondaga Historical Association.
[61] Emily Howland to Caroline Putnam, January 8, 1906, from Jane Simkin, online at Cayuga County Historian's Office website;
[62] Scipio Montly Meeting Records, found by Jane Simkin. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore.

Susannah Marriott purchased a house on the corner of Court Street and the Sherwood Road in Aurora. She later purchased a house on the Brick Church Road, just north of the North Street Meetinghouse.[63]

After she left Brier Cliff, she continued to run schools. She was listed in the 1820 census as operating a school with several pupils boarding in her home. Emily Howland probably attended her school about 1836, because she listed Susannah Marriott as one of the three most influential people in her life. Susannah Marriott was one of several signers from North Street Preparative Meeting of the antislavery petition published in The Friend, a Quaker newspaper, in 1835.

For not everyone in North Street meeting was a reformer. Many were very conservative in their dress, speech, and attitudes, focused on maintaining traditional Quaker ways rather than on changing the larger world. "Sometimes when the bonnet rose skyward too high," remembered Howland,

> as the fashion of those days required, a reproving hand would be raised to press the lofty front down to a lower level. This was a kind of freedom that was decidedly exasperating to the victim and made an unpleasant impression that must endure as long as life lasts. They knew not what they did; they thought they were doing their duty; they permitted their lives to run in such narrow grooves that instead of enforcing the value of high moral sentiments, they put all of their emphasis on their peculiarities, which give no reason for their strenuous enforcement of saying "thee" instead of "you," except that it was the rule of their society. . . .It used to seem to me that they said more about it than they did about what was really wrong.[64]

Conclusion

In 1996, the New York Landmarks Conservancy noted in a report on the Amawalk Friends Meetinghouse that "the architectural design of American Quaker Meetinghouses developed independently without formal directives but according to "the sense of the meeting."" "Plainness, simplicity, and symmetry were fundamental design principles and any functional requirements were minimal." [65] Its incorporation of one main room for worship with a divider to create room of equal size of men's and women's meeting for business reflected a standard interior plan for Quaker meetinghouses that emerged in the late eighteenth century in response to a new emphasis on the importance of women's meetings. Its exterior design was a dramatic departure from early Quaker meetinghouses in New York State and may have been influenced by the 1804 Arch Street Meetinghouse, home of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox).

The North Street Meetinghouse as it stands today communicates the ideals of plainness, simplicity, symmetry, integrity, and honesty that its builders incorporated in 1834. Its exterior and much of its interior possess an exceptional degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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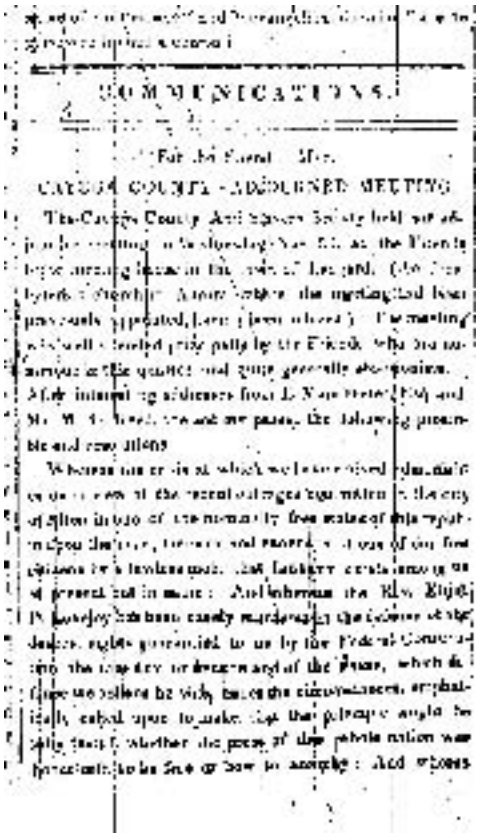
[63] Deed searches by Tanya Warren. Deed, Charles Kimball to Susannah (Susan) Marriott, both of Ledyard, Book FF, p. 360, December 2, 1826, for $400.

[64] Emily Howland to Caroline Putnam, January 8, 1906, from Jane Simkin, online at Cayuga County Historian's Office website.

[65] "Quaker Meetinghouse Architecture: Amawalk Friends Meeting House", New York Landmarks Conservancy, *Common Bond*, Volume 12, No.2 [American Religious Buildings, 2], October 1996. Quoted in National Register nomination for Easton Meetinghouse.

In addition, the North Street Meetinghouse is significant for its association with nineteenth century reform movements, especially abolitionism and woman's rights. As a "storm center of reform," it attracted nationally-known speakers, such as Abby Kelley and Harriot Hunt. Its members included Slocum Howland, keeper of the most important Underground Railroad station in Cayuga County outside of Auburn; his daughter Emily Howland, whose work with schools for freed people of color and for woman's suffrage made Sherwood a major center of activism for both African American and woman's rights; and Susannah Marriott, whose work with Briercliff, a school for girls in Aurora, New York, and other schools in the Ledyard area helped make Aurora a center for women's education to the present day.

Many thanks to Christopher Densmore, Jane Simkin, Patricia White, Carrie Barrett, Alison Van Dyke, Sheila Edmunds, Bradley Mitchell, Bernard Corcoran, Mary Huth, Judy Furness, and Tanya Warren for their help with research for this description.


COMMUNICATIONS.

Friend of Man, December 27, 1837
Courtesy of Cornell University

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Taber House
Barber's Corners
Levanna Road
Town of Ledyard

Significance: Strong oral tradition connects this house to Underground Railroad

December 2004, looking northwest

Description: Located on the Levanna Road, at the northwest corner of the crossroads at Barber's corners, this three-bay brick house has a center doorway and large stone lintels, similar to those on the North Street Meetinghouse (Orthodox) and the Benjamin Gould house just east of Aurora. The stone lintels, combined with six-over-six windows and an lunette window in the gable end suggest a construction date in the mid-1830s. A large frame addition extends to the west. Kevin Hunt, whose grandmother owned the house, did a detailed description of this building. He described a false wall and concealed passageway on the second floor.[66]

Significance: A strong local tradition identifies this house with the Underground Railroad, but no documentary evidence has so far been found that connects the owners of this house to abolitionism. The Wood family came from Maryland to Barber's Corners about 1809, bringing Whittington Armwood in slavery, and Whittington Armwood and his son Timothy later purchased property in the area. Beginning in 1817, this was also near the site of a the North Street Preparative Meeting of Scipio Monthly Meeting of Friends, who built a meetinghouse in 1820 just north of here, on the north side of the Levanna Road. The Gifford family name is a Quaker name, so this house may have been owned by Quakers.

[66] Kevin Hunt, "The Brick House," paper on file in Cayuga County Historian's Office.

Records show William R. Taber to be the second owner after James Barber and many subsequent owners and inheritors followed:

Grantee:	Susannah & Edward Dorland	Date:	Mar 25, 1861
	Mary Ann Gifford		Apr 1, 1873
	Arthur & Jessie Gifford		May 30, 1898
	Oscar Hill		Mar 1, 1901
	John Gamlin		Apr 1, 1912
	Fannie Carr		Sept 30, 1921
	Jay Harwood		Jul 2, 1935
	Jon & Lottie Scott		Nov 7, 1935
	Wallace & Viola Chapman		Nov 28, 1936
	Edgar Mosher		Oct 21, 1937
	Mary Mosher		Oct 28, 1939
	Mary Jane Gatsby		May 21, 1940
	Paul & Dorothea Farnham		May 16, 1947
	Hazel E. Stearn		Feb 6. 1955
	Verda E. Hunt (current owner)		Jun 28, 1963

Deed research by Kevin Hunt, “The Brick House,” paper on file in Cayuga County Historian’s Office.

Site of James Tate Home
Dublin Hill Road
Aurora, New York

Significance: Home of African American who was formerly enslaved in New York State

February 2005
Looking south

In 1855, James Tate, age 39, was a boarder with Stephen Gifford, butcher. According to an 1851 poll list, he voted that year, which means that he owned property worth at least $250. In 1856, he was listed in Cornelius Cuyler's administration/will papers as owing a loan for $21.28. In 1860, he was , a farmer, age 43, living alone in Aurora, two doors down from the Saul and Lucretia Youngs family, with property worth $1300. Deeds and maps reflect ownership as willed to Tate via James Avery will and deed for Dublin Hill property. He was buried at Oak Glen Cemetery.[67]

[67] Deed Book 96, p. 170. Deed Book 123, p. 341. Deed Book 123, p. 340-341. Deed Book 124, p. 247. Deed research by Tanya Warren. Poll book, Cornelius Cuyler information, and cemetery records thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Historian, Village of Aurora.

Saul and Lucretia Youngs House
Dublin Hill Road
Aurora, New York

Significance: Home of African Americans born in slavery

Looking southwest
March 2005

Description: The Saul and Lucretia Youngs house is a two-story gable-and-wing house unsoffited eaves and with a porch with two simple supports. Windows (with single-pane sashes) and siding (with shingles) have been changed in the twentieth century.

Significance: Saul and Lucretia Young, born in New York State, ages 49 and 45, appeared in the 1850 census in Ledyard, with Mary (age 20), Caroline (18), Arien ? (age 9), Charles (7), and George (age 3). By 1855, only Charles (13) and George (9) were still living at home. Saul , age 54, was listed as born in Queens, a boat builder, who had lived in Ledyard for 28 years. Lucretia had lived all of her fifty years in Ledyard. They lived in a frame house worth $250 but were not listed as landowners. Ann E., now 16, was a servant with John Leech, and Caroline, now 18, was a servant with William and Jane Bryant. By 1865, Saul had died, and Lucretia owned property

worth $450. Her children (George, Eliza, and Carrie) lived with her. By 1870, “Lenerva” Young was 68 years old and listed in the census as “with Wells College.”

Deeds amplify this picture. In 1831, Saul Youngs purchased 36 Rods of land in Aurora on Main St. from Lazarus Ewer. It is not clear how this related to the Dublin Hill property, or when the family acquired theland on Dublin Hill Road. Saul Youngs appeared as both debtor to and grave digger for Cornelius Cuyler of Aurora. Youngs still owned property on Dublin Hill Road in. 1904.

Sources: 1850, 1855, 1865 Census. (The Youngs family appears in the 1860 census but without a designation as African Americans.) Deed book NN, p. 195. Cornelius Cuyler Estate papers, Ledyard Town Hall, Judy Furness, Town Historian.

Site of Fillmore Boyhood Home
Carver Road, just west of North Glen Haven Road
Niles, New York

Significance: Site of boyhood home of President Millard Fillmore, signer of Fugitive Slave Act

Looking northwest
July 2005

Photo by Paul Malo
Sign reads: "Boyhood Site, 1802-1816, Millard Fillmore, 13th President of the United States."
This home was moved to the front of the Purchase farm barns. When the barn was about the collapse, The Cayuga County Agricultural Museum salvaged beams from it and then the local fire

department burned it down, not realizing its significance.[1] Sxz For more discussion of the importance of this site for abolitionism and the Underground Railroad, see Fillmore Birthplace Cabin: Replica, Cayuga County: South.

[1] Sheila Tucker, email, August 10, 2005.

Rounds Grist Mill Complex (National Register)
Glen Haven Road and New York 41A
New Hope Mills
Niles, New York

Significance: Workplace of Sampson Eddy, freedom seeker

Looking northwest
Photo by Paul Malo
May 2005

Description: This large frame mill, situated in a glen, is virtually in original condition, with mill pond, race, wheel, and machinery still intact, in operating condition, producing grain

commercially until a few years ago. Owners intend to open it as a museum. It was placed on the National Register in the fall of 2004.

Significance: Sampson Eddy represents a pattern that some African Americans born in slavery followed, as they joined the Union Army during the Civil War and came North to settle in upstate New York when the War was over. Eddy left a special mark, because he had a remarkable gift as a Christian evangelical preacher.

Sampson Eddy was born in slavery in Goldsboro, North Carolina, in 1844. According to Eddy's obituary, "Sampson's life as a slave as related by him was anything but pleasant. He bore the marks of the lash until his dying day, not because he refused to obey his master but because he had become a Christian and had learned to pray, and his master was trying to whip the praying out of him." When the Civil War began, Sampson's master, Colonel Handy, kept him as a waiter in the Confederate Army. During the battle of Goldsboro, which took place on Handy's plantation, Sampson was captured by Union troops. He joined the Union Army and served for three years. At the end of the war, he came North to Skaneateles, New York, where he worked for many years for a man named Gillett. He married Mary Caesar and moved to Sempronius for a few years before moving to New Hope about 1880, where he worked for the Rounds Milling Company for almost 35 years.

After the death of Mary Caesar Eddy and six children, he married Mary Williams of Auburn, who survived him, along with two children, at his death in New Hope on December 30, 1909. He was buried in New Hope Cemetery. [2]

Sampson Eddy was "a preacher of power and one fervent in prayer. He conducted evangelistic and worship services in local churches and school houses, private homes and camp meetings." In 1936, the local Methodist Church, to which his widow and son still belonged, installed a window in Eddy's memory.[3]

Research by Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian.

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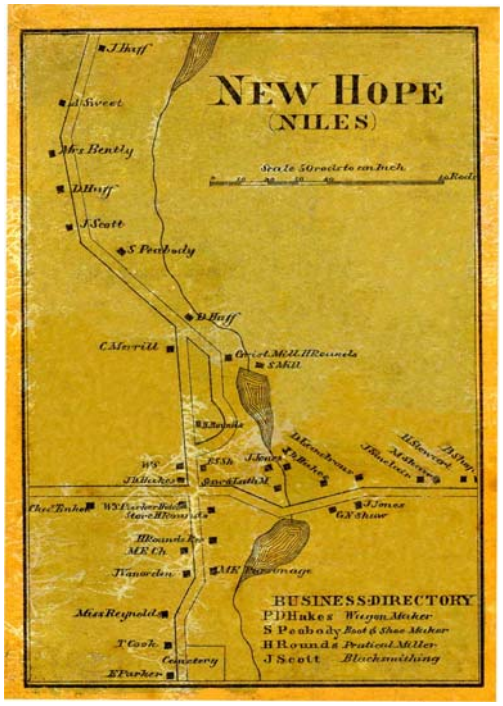
[2] Obituary, Sampson Eddy, *Moravia Republican-Register*, January 7, 1910, reprinted in Leslie L. Luther, *Moravia and Its Past* (Moravia: F. Luther and Co., 1966).

[3] *Moravia Republican-Register*, February 28, 1936, quoted in Leslie L. Luther, *Moravia and Its Past* (Moravia: F. Luther and Co., 1966).



New Hope (Niles)
Map of Cayuga County, New York, 1859.
Rounds Grist Mill is at north end of large pond at right of crossroads.
Methodist Episcopal Church is second building south of crossroads on the left.

Mid-Lakes United Methodist Church of New Hope
New York 41A
Niles, New York

Significance: Church of freedom seeker after the Civil War

New Hope Mills Methodist Church
March 2005, Looking southwest

Sampson Eddy, born in slavery in Goldsboro, North Carolina, worked at Rounds Mills in New Hope, New York, for almost thirty-five years. He was "a preacher of power and one fervent in prayer. He conducted evangelistic and worship services in local churches and school houses, private homes and camp meetings." He died in 1909 and was buried in the New Hope cemetery. In 1936, the local Methodist Church, to which his widow and son still belonged, installed a window in Eddy's memory.[4]

See description for Rounds Mills, New Hope, for more details about Eddy's life.
Research by Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian.

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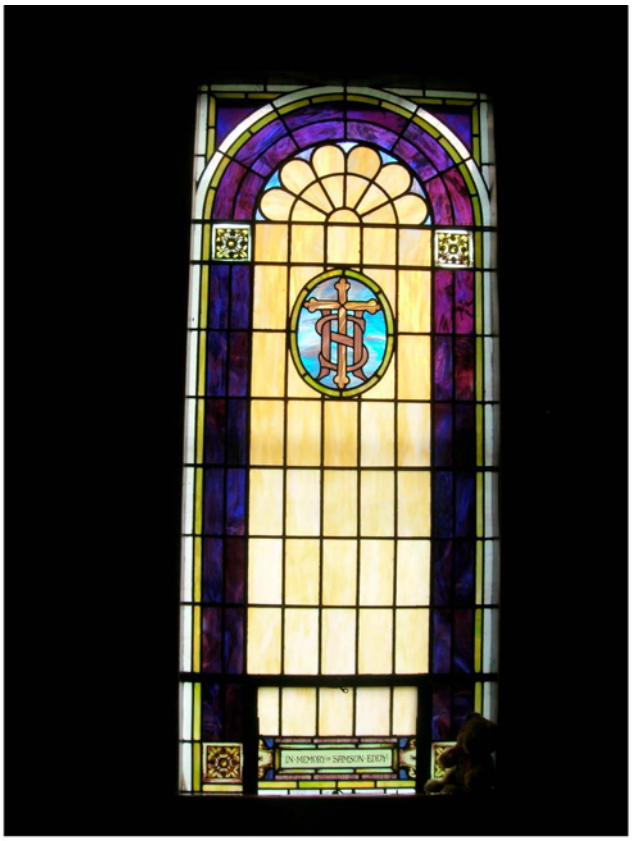
[4] *Moravia Republican-Register*, February 28, 1936, quoted in Leslie L. Luther, *Moravia and Its Past* (Moravia: F. Luther and Co., 1966).



Memorial window to Sampson Eddy installed 1936.

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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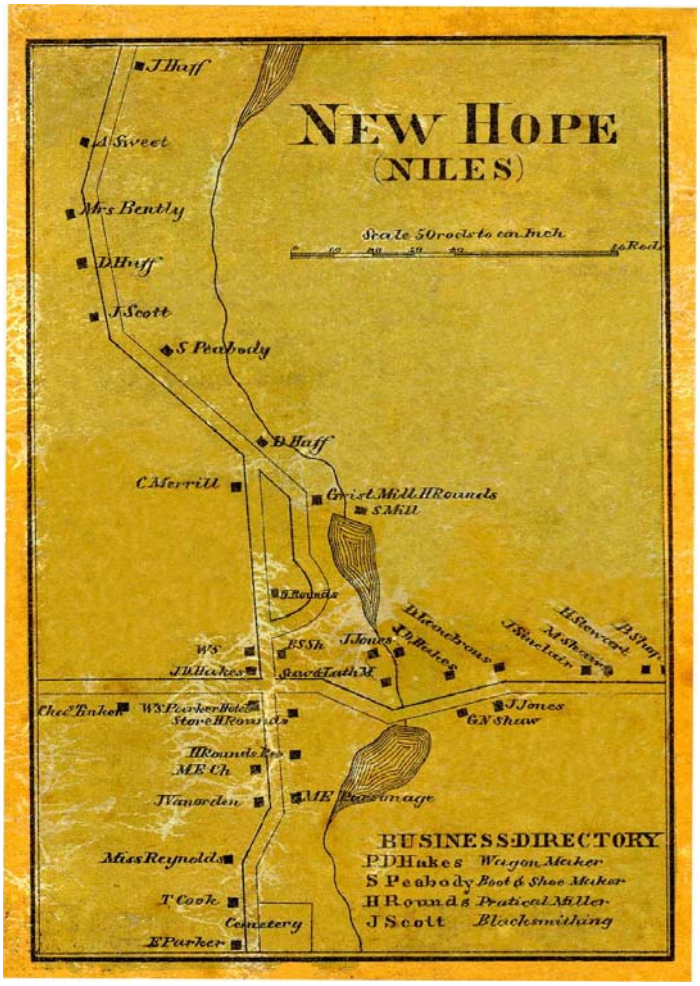
2004-05



New Hope (Niles)
Map of Cayuga County, New York, 1859.
Rounds Grist Mill is at north end of large pond at right of crossroads.
Methodist Episcopal Church is second building south of crossroads on the left.

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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Emily Howland House
34B
Sherwood, New York

Significance: Home of abolitionists, Underground Railroad supporters, and woman's rights activist

Looking northeast
November 2004

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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Doorway, Looking east
February 2005

Description: Built about 1808 by Seth Sherwood, founder of the hamlet of Sherwood, this house was a simple frame gable-and-wing when the Slocum and Hannah Howland family purchased it in 1857. It still retains much of its original character, with six-over-six window sashes, a portico with Ionic columns, a doorway with ornate lights and a square block over the center. Sometime later in the century, however, probably after her father's death in 1881, Emily Howland added Queen Anne window sashes with colored glass, rounded-topped bay windows, and other features that reflected 1880s and later renovations.

Significance: Born in 1827, Emily Howland was an important figure in both abolitionism and woman's rights from the mid-nineteenth century until her death in 1929. Beginning in 1857, she worked in schools for free people of color in Washington, D.C., and Virginia, and she (and her father Slocum Howland until he died) continued to support these schools until her death. When she returned to Sherwood, she began her own school, which later became part of the local public school system and is still called the Emily Howland School. With her niece, Isabel Howland, she played an active role in the woman's rights and woman's suffrage movement. One of the largest celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Seneca Falls woman's rights convention anywhere in the country took place in Sherwood, New York, and Susan B. Anthony and other national

leaders visited Emily and Isabel Howland in Sherwood. Today, the Howland Stone Store Museum has an exceptional collection of woman's rights posters and other memorabilia, the direct result of the work of Emily and Isabel Howland.

For more on the work of Emily Howland, see Judith Colucci Breault, *The World of Emily Howland* (Milbrae, California: LesFemmes, 1976).

Mildred D. Myers, *Miss Emily: Emily Howland, Teacher of Freed Slaves, Suffragist, and Friend of Susan B. Anthony and Harriet Tubman* (Charlotte Harbor, Florida: Tabby House,1998).

Carol Faulkner, *Women's Radical Reconstruction: The Freedmen's Aid Movement* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

Howland papers are available at Cornell University, Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore, and the University of Rochester. A thorough biography of Emily Howland and the Slocum Howland family remains to be written.

Slocum and Hannah Howland House, c. 1830 (National Register)
Sherwood, Town of Scipio

Significance: Center of Underground Railroad in central Cayuga County

Looking northeast
November 2004

Photo courtesy of Hazard Library
Poplar Ridge, New York

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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11-69

Howland House, 1969
Courtesy Fay and Louie Rood

Slocum and Hannah Howland House, looking toward hotel and store

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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2004-05

November 2004, Looking NE

On the road to Aurora, just west of Route 34B and the four corners in Sherwood, New York, Slocum and Hannah Howland's simple frame house stands, faded red paint still visible under the eaves, flanked by a huge old maple tree. Its modest appearance belies its importance as the center—along with the Howland Store—as one of the most important Underground Railroad nodes in Cayuga County.

Sustained by his commitment to the Light within all people, part of the core worldview of the Society of Friends to which he belonged, and by a national network of radical abolitionists centered in the American Antislavery Society, Slocum Howland used his economic resources (including his store, his tenant houses, and his port facilities at Levanna, on Cayuga Lake) to help freedom seekers move to Canada and to find homes and jobs for those who wanted to settle in Cayuga County. These included Thomas Hart, Jerome Grieger. Herman and Hannah Phillips, and perhaps Richard and Mary Gaskin.

Howland's local allies included other family members (son-in-law Josiah Letchworth and son and daughter-in-law, William and Hannah Howland) and Quakers Matthias and Hannah Hutchinson at King Ferry and David and Edna Thomas of Scipio. Quite likely, local African American families, (including the Hart, Phillips, and Griger families, who escaped from slavery in the South, and the Armwood, Cooper, Tate, and Cromwell families, who had been manumitted in New York State) were also part of this network.

Slocum Howland was the youngest of six children of Benjamin and Mary Howland, Quakers who had migrated from Dartmouth, Massachusetts, to Saratoga County, New York, where Slocum was born September 20, 1794. When Slocum was about three years old, the family moved once more, this time to Scipio, Cayuga County, where they purchased 85 acres of land. As a mason, Benjamin Howland found steady work constructing many early houses, including his own, in 1797-98, a simple two-story saltbox which still stands on the road west of Poplar Ridge, on land now occupied by the Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station.[5]

[5] "Biography of Slocum Howland," *1894 Biographical Review* (Boston: Biographical Review Publishing Company, 1894), online through Cayuga County Historian's Office; Emily Howland, "Early History of Friends in Cayuga County, N.Y., Read before the Cayuga County Historical Society, April 8th, 1880," *Collections of Cayuga County Historical Society*, 2 (1882): 49-90, online through Cayuga County Historian's Office.

Benjamin and Mary Howland House, 1797-98
Looking West
November 2004
Boyhood home of Slocum Howland

In 1821, Slocum Howland married Hannah Tallcott, who in 1807 had settled with her parents, Joseph and Sarah Tallcott on a farm one-quarter mile north of the Howlands. The Tallcotts, too, were an abolitionist family. In 1836, Joseph Tallcott visited African American settlements in Canada. Joseph Tallcott also gained considerable renown as an educator.[6]

When he married, Slocum Howland became clerk in the store of his brother-in-law, Richard Tallcott, at Tallcott's Corners. When Richard Tallcott moved to Skaneateles in 1821, Slocum went into partnership with another brother-in-law, Thomas Alsop (his sister Mary's husband) in Sherwood. This partnership dissolved, and in 1831 Howland took a nephew, Ledra Heazlet, as partner. After Heazlet's death, Howland made his son William his partner, and the firm was known as Howland and Son until Slocum Howland died in 1881.[7]

Howland's Underground Railroad work was rooted in two major aspects of his life: his Quaker worldview and his economic position at the center of a farflung network of trade.

As a Quaker, Howland had been raised with the core belief that, as George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends, had suggested, people should "walk cheerfully over the earth, answering that of God in everyone." Judging by his life's work, Howland took that admonition to heart. In the splits among Quakers beginning in 1828, the Howlands continued to attend meeting at the Brick Meetinghouse, an Orthodox Quaker

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[6]Joseph Tallcott, *Memoirs and Letters of Joseph Tallcott* (Auburn: Miller, Orton, and Mulligan, Printers, 1855). Thanks to Pat White for transcribing selections relating to slavery. Joseph Bowne to Joseph Tallcott, December 3, 1836, Howland Family Papers, Cornell University. Thanks to James Driscoll, Queens Historical Society, for finding this. Joseph Tallcott was born in 1768 and lived in Sherwood from at least the 1830s, where he died August 20, 1853.

[7] "Biography of Slocum Howland," 1894.

meeting (although, as Emily Howland suggested, they did not themselves use that term) that invited radical abolitionists such as the Garrisonian Abby Kelley to speak.[8]

Slocum Howland's business dealings need much further, detailed study. Broadly, however, Slocum Howland's store in Sherwood seems to have been the anchor for a farflung trading network that involved the collection, transportation, and sale to both regional and national markets not only of Cayuga County agricultural goods but also the new iron plow invented by Howland's brother-in-law Jethro Wood. The early 1830s were a period of economic expansion for the country as a whole, and Slocum Howland seems to have shared in the general well-being.

Although a massive depression hit the nation in 1837, Howland was still doing well enough to complete a new stone store that year. Howland probably built his house about the same time. With its pedimented gable facing the street, it reflects Greek Revival influences, consistent with this period.

Most likely, farmers from all over central Cayuga County brought produce such as wheat, wool, and pork to Howland's store, where Howland barreled it and sent it in wagons to his port at Levanna. There, with the help of African Americans such as Alfred Tate (whose parents, James? and Dinah Tate, had been born in slavery in New York State), Rome (or Jerome) Grieger (who was almost certainly a freedom seeker), and Grieger's son, Sherburne Grieger, Howland loaded these agricultural goods onto lake boats and sent them north to Cayuga Village, where he transferred them once more to wagons for transport along the Seneca Turnpike to the Seneca and Cayuga Canal at Seneca Falls or, in the case of raw wool, to factories at Seneca Falls, Waterloo, or Auburn. In 1868, 40,000 to 60,000 bushels of grain were shipped out of Levanna.[9]

One other product accounted for much of Howland's extraordinary commercial success. That was the iron plow designed by his oldest sister, Sylvia's husband, Jethro Wood. Patented in 1819?, this plow proved far superior to the wooden plows with iron tips that farmers had used earlier. As European American farm families settled the western U.S., markets for Jethro Wood's plows expanded. Manufactured in Moravia in the southern part of Cayuga County, these plows were assembled in Sherwood and sent to market through Howland's store and port facilities. [Check this whole sentence.] Howland's store, then, did not serve simply a small local or even regional rural clientele. It was part of an emerging national market economy, tied to a transportation network that involved local roads, lakes, turnpikes, and canals.

This transportation network sustained more than Howland's prosperous business interests, however. Human beings also traveled these routes for reasons other than business. Some of them were escaping from slavery. The long length of Cayuga County, with Cayuga Lake on the west side, running north and south from Ithaca to Lake Ontario, bisected by the Seneca Turnpike and the Erie Canal, acted like a funnel for freedom seekers. And Slocum Howland's house and store--with wagons going constantly south to Moravia, west to Levanna on Cayuga Lake, and north to Auburn and Skaneateles—was right in the middle of this network.

Slocum Howland's Underground Railroad activism was sustained by his abolitionist connections. In 1835, he (along with Susannah Marriott, William King, David Thomas, James C. Fuller, Martha Heazlit, Samuel Savage, Charles Gifford, and Asa M. Underhill from Scipio Monthly Meeting and other Friends from Farmington Monthly Meeting) signed an antislavery petition printed in *The Friend*. "We feel it to be our duty as Christians, to endeavour, according to our ability, to disseminate more widely, and to impress more deeply, the doctrine that slavery, as it exists in this country, is utterly repugnant both to the letter and to the spirit of the Bible, and that the only proper and safe course is to abandon it immediately and altogether. . . .though we desire to make due allowance for the difficulties of the *slaveholder*, we view the *system of*

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[8] Emily Howland, "Early History of Friends," online; Emily Howland to

[9] Carol Sisler, *Cayuga Lake: Past, Present, and Future* (Ithaca: Enterprise Publishing, 1989), 49.

slavery with uncompromising disapprobation."[10] In 1852, Slocum Howland was president of a meeting of the "friends of freedom of the 27th Congressional District," held in Port Byron. This meeting affirmed slavery as the pressing issue of the day, deemed freedom of speech and of the press as "the great weapon of defence of civil liberty," hoped that "honest men, of all shades of opinion, will rally upon the common ground of opposition to slavery," and appointed William R. Smith of Wayne County and Abijah Fitch and James Cox of Cayuga County to represent the group at a convention in Pittsburgh of the friends of freedom.[11]

We do not know how many people came through Cayuga County on their way to Canada before the end of the Civil War. It is reasonable to assume that there were many hundreds and perhaps thousands.

Just as many Quakers from Scipio Monthly Meeting had come from Pennsylvania, so Quaker connections in Pennsylvania sent many freedom seekers to central Cayuga County. In 1928, Emily Howland, Slocum's daughter, noted in a letter to Leonard Searing, Cayuga County historian, that

my father's house was a station for those who fled from slavery. I can remember several arrivals from what was called the patriarchal institution. There was Herman Phillips, his wife and four children, comgin about 1843. At another time two young men, all from Maryland. Another man came from West Virginia. Footsore and weary they reached here, having walked all the way. They were usually sent forward from a station in Pennsylvania, by John Mann, a Friend who was head of a school. Some came from another station farther south, the home of Dr. Fussell. All of these stations were the homes of Friends. The fugitives whom I have mentioned felt so safe that they made their home here.[12]

Many freedom seekers chose to stay in Cayuga County, rather than travel on to Canada. The Town of Ledyard, just south of Sherwood, had more African Americans listed in the census than any other town in Cayuga County. [Check #]. Some of these had been born in New York State, either in slavery or freedom. Others, however, had been born in the South. At least three of these families were directly associated with Slocum Howland during the period that the Howland family lived in this house. Probably others were, too, but we lack documentation for them.

1. Thomas and James Hart, 1840. On April 9, 1840, John Mann, a Friend who kept a school somewhere in Pennsylvania, addressed the following on a small piece of paper to "Slocum Howland, Sherwood's Corner, Scipio, N.Y., Owego, Ithica,":

I have mailed two passengers to thee, in the "shank's horse diligence": baggage free, and at the risk of the owners. 9th of 4th mo. 1840. John Mann

This is a remarkable and rare extant example of a pass for two freedom seekers. A note in shaky handwriting at the bottom, probably Slocum Howland's own hand, adds details:

This note introduced two fugitives from Slavery in Maryland Thomas and James Hart, stalwart vigorous and young.

Emily Howland implied later that both Thomas and James remained in the area, but only Thomas Hart's name appeared in the Cayuga County census. He married Sarah Jane Cromwell, daughter of William and

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[10] *The Friend* 9:11 (Twelfth Month 19, 1835). Thanks to Christopher Densmore, Curator, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore, for finding this.

[11] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, August 13, 1852.

[12] Emily Howland to Leonard Searing, October 8, 1928. See also March 19, 1929. Copies on Cayuga County Historian's Office. Originals probably from Howland Collection, Swarthmore.

Zilpah Cromwell of Aurora, and, Sarah Jane's name, the owned a home next to the African American Cromwell-Cooper family on the shore of Cayuga Lake in Aurora, just west of Sherwood, where they lived at least until the 1880s.[Check all this.]

2. Hannah and Herman Phillips. This family arrived from Maryland in 1843 with four children, the youngest an infant. Discovered by a neighbor from Maryland, who visited Sherwood, they fled to Canada, where their son James was born in 1849. Canada, however, was too cold for them, reported Emily Howland, and they returned to the U.S., only to be confronted with the Fugitive Slkave Law of 1850. Again fearing for their lives, they once more contemplated flight. Slocum Howland, however, apparently purchased their freedom, and in 1856, the family bought a small plot of land just north of the village. They most likely moved a couple of older houses from the corner near Howland's store and created a two-story frame house, which has recently been listed on the Network to Freedom. Three sons served in the Civil War, and Hannah, Herman, son James, and daughter-in-law Rose Gaskin Phillips are all buried in the Sherwood village cemetery, across the street from their house.[13]

3. Rome Grieger. We know very little about Rome (Jerome) Grieger (Griger, Grigor), except what he told various census takers. Consistently, he reported his occupation as carpenter. He was ? years old in 1850. . . . From one census year to another, however, he variously reported his place of birth as Spain, unknown, the West Indies, and ? [Check]. It is reasonable to assume that Griegor was a freedom seeker, and that to protect his identity, he did not tell the census takers (or us) his real place of birth. We do know that he and his son, Sherburne, both owned small pieces of property directly across from Slocum Howland's docks, right next to Howland's warehouse at Levanna Square, so we can surmise that he was an integral part of the operations of that port.

4. Richard and Mary Gaskin. Emily Howland mentioned another man who settled in the area "from West Virginia." Since West Virginia did not separate from Virginia until Virginia seceded from the Union at the start of the Civil War, it is a puzzle as to who this might be. Richard and Mary Gaskin and their four children, all born in Virginia, did arrive in Cayuga County in 1864, however, and purchased land on Dixon Road in Ledyard in 1869, next to the home of John and Susan King, Friends from England who had taken care of the famous Quaker teachers, Susannah Marriott, in her old age. Richard Gaskin may have been the West Virginia man that Emily Howland referred to.

Slocum and Hannah Howland had three children—William, Emily, and Benjamin. Benjamin died when a young man, but Slocumn's reform legacy lived on through his other two children, especially his daughter, Emily.

William married Hannah Letchworth, daughter of Josiah and ? Letchworth, who lived in Sherwood on the east side of Route 34B, in a house that still stands just two houses north of the corner. Josiah Letchworth, too, was associated with the Underground Railroad. In a eulogy for Letchworth, ...

William also reputedly aided his father in his work on the Underground Railroad. In 1910, William's daughter, Isabel, remodeled their home and renamed it Opendore. Isabel made her home a center of community activity for the people of Sherwood and a major woman's rights center for New York State. She retained a close relationship with the last remaining local member of the Phillips family, Rose Phillips, until Isabel's death in 1941.

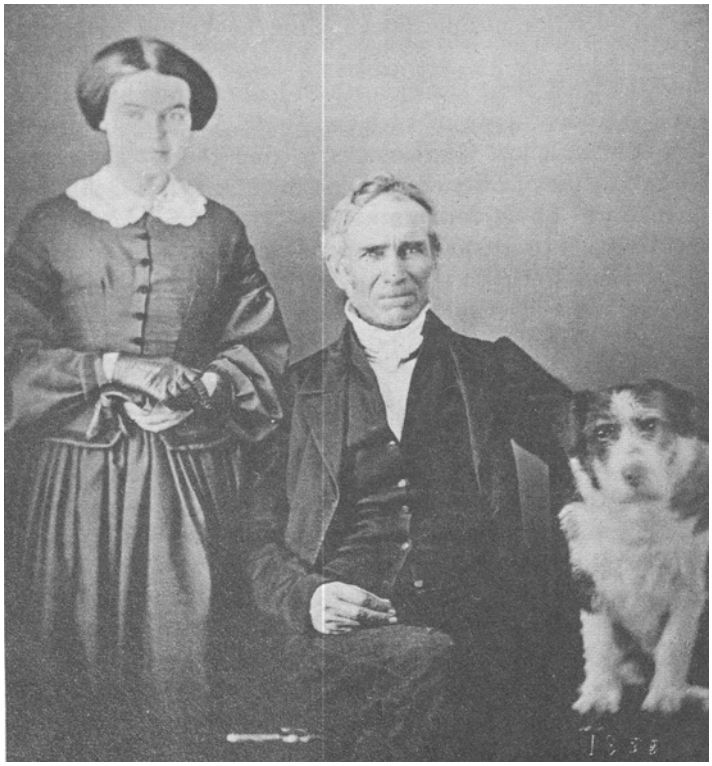
In 1857, the Howland family moved to a house just south of the four corners in Sherwood, built in 1806 by Seth Sherwood, founder of the village. That same year, Emily Howland left to teach at a school in

[13] Wellman, Network to Freedom Nomination, January 2005.

Washington, D.C., operated by Myrtilla Miner for African American girls. After the Civil War began, Emily continued her teaching career in a Freedmen's School in Virginia. With her father's help, she established a new school in Heathsville, Virginia, which she supported through the nineteenth century. She also brought African American students to Cayuga County, to study both at the school she established in Sherwood and at the girls' school set up in Union Springs through the estate of her uncle George Howland.[14]

Emily Howland was also a lifelong and unwavering supporter of woman's rights. In her youth, she had known Lucretia Mott, AbbyKelley, and Frederick Douglass. In her maturity, she counted Susan B. Anthony as a friend. Slocum Howland would have been proud.

Though the small Howland house now stands empty, it is filled with a powerful legacy of respect for all people—not preached but lived.



Emily Howland, Slocum Howland, and dog (Grant?0
Late 1850s
Courtesy of Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College

[14]Carol Faulkner, *Women's Radical Reconstruction; The Freedmen's Aid Movement* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

William and Hannah and Isabel Howland House (Opendore), mid-nineteenth century, 1910
34B, Sherwood, New York

Significance: Home of abolitionists, Underground Railroad supporters, and woman's rights advocate

Looking west\
February 2005

Opendore, c. early twentieth century
Courtesy Sheila Tucker

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Originally a small frame gable-and-wing house, the home of Slocum Howland's son William and daughter-in-law Hannah Letchworth Howland, this building was vastly expanded about 1910 by Isabel Howland, who hired an unknown Syracuse architect to create this many-gabled small mansion where "Miss Isabel," as she is still locally known, entertained the community and organized extensive programs for the woman's suffrage movement with the help of Stella Phillips, granddaughter of freedom seekers Herman and Hannah Phillips (whose house still remains next door) until Miss Isabel's death in 1941. The house has been abandoned since the 1970s.

Howland Stone Store, 1837
Route 34B
Sherwood, New York

Significance: Center of business operations for Slocum Howland, major Underground Railroad supporter in central Cayuga County

Howland Stone Store Museum
Photo by Paul Malo, May 2005
Looking southeast

Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
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Photo by Paul Malo
Looking northwest, toward 1881 William Howland Store

Description: On Route 34B, just north of the four corners in the hamlet of Sherwood, New York, stands the Howland store, a small gable-end-to-the-street cobblestone structure, built in 1837 by Slocum Howland, as the commercial center of his large trading network, a network that encompassed farmers, lake ships, and wool factories. The 1850 census listed his property valued as $18,700.

Significance: This small store anchored one of the most important Underground Railroad nodes in Cayuga County. Sustained by his commitment to the Light within all people and by a national network of radical abolitionists centered in the American Antislavery Society, Slocum Howland, Quaker abolitionist and Underground Railroad supporter, used his economic resources (including this store, his tenant houses, and his port facilities at Levanna, on Cayuga Lake) to help freedom seekers move to Canada and to find homes and jobs for those who wanted to settle in Cayuga County. These included Thomas Hart, Jerome Grieger. Herman and Hannah Phillips, and perhaps Richard and Mary Gaskin.

Howland's local allies included other family members (son-in-law Josiah Letchworth and son and daughter-in-law, William and Hannah Letchworth Howland) and Quakers Matthias and Hannah Hutchinson at King Ferry and David and Edna Thomas of Scipio. Quite likely, local African American families, (including the Hart, Phillips, and Grieger families, who escaped from slavery in the South, and the Armwood, Cooper, Tate, and Cromwell families, who had been manumitted in New York State) were also part of this network.

For more information on Howland's importance to the Underground Railroad, see the description for the Howland House.

Howland Tenant Houses
Route 34B
Sherwood, New York

Significance: Used to house freedom seekers

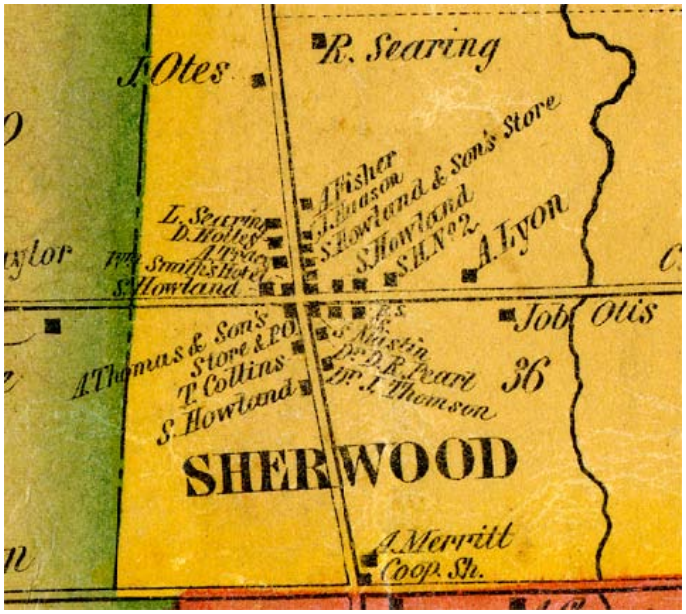
Looking west
February 2005

Description: This small gable-and-wing frame house looks today very much as it did in the nineteenth century, with the exception of a twentieth century picture window added on the first-floor façade.

Tenant House
Sherwood-Aurora Road
Sherwood, New York

Description: This tenant house is just west of the schoolhouse on the Sherwood-Aurora Road, two doors east of the Howland stone store.

Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County* (Philadelphia: Samuel Geil, 1853).

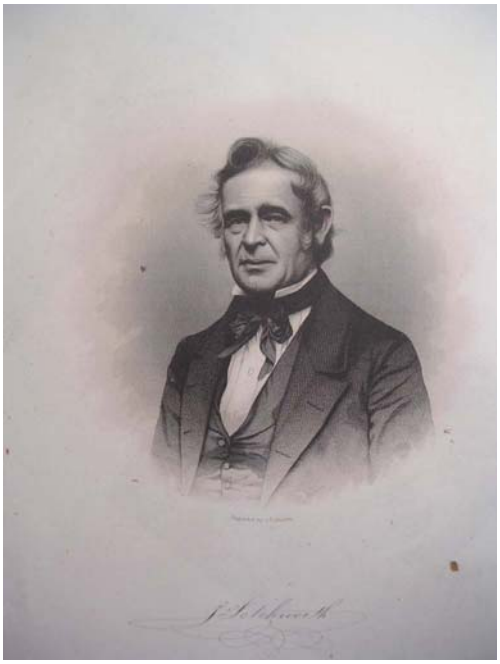


Significance: Emily Howland recalled that, when the Phillips family first arrived in Sherwood in 1843, they stayed in one of her father's tenant houses "on the post road." The 1853 Cayuga County map shows this to have been one of the two Howland tenant houses in Sherwood. Because of high taxes and little contemporary use for tenant houses, they have often been town down. Extant tenant houses are increasingly rare.

Josiah and Hannah Letchworth Home
Route 34B
Sherwood, New York

Significance: Home of Underground Railroad Activists

November 2004, Looking east



Elliott Storke, *History of Cayuga County* (1877)

Description: As it currently stands, the Letchworth house is a gable-and-wing with Greek Revival trim. The original house was much simpler, broad side to the street, three-bay settlement house, probably the wing of this house. Letchworth moved to Auburn in 1852, and this house may have been built in its current form after that date.

Significance: Josiah Letchworth, son-in-law of Slocum Howland, was involved with the abolitionism and the Underground Railroad both in Sherwood and after his move to Auburn in 1852. He was born in Philadelphia on November 22, 1791. In 1815, he married Ann Hause and moved to Burlington, New Jersey, where he trained as a saddler. They moved to Jefferson County, New York, and then to Moravia, before moving to Sherwood in 1819. In the 1850 census, Josiah listed his occupation as a harnessmaker. He was 58 years old. Ann was 54. They had three children living at home, Hannah (age 20), Charlotte (16), and Micah? (14), as well as Abigail Cazewell (age 24) and Hannah Cazewell (6). He owned property worth $800.

When Letchworth died in April 1857, his obituary in the local newspaper noted that “"Mr. Letchworth had long been known as a genuine reformer and philanthropist, and was accounted among the staunch friends of freedom, temperance and education .The oppressed had in him a true friend, and the fugitive slave was never refused aid and comfort at his hand.” [15]

William Henry Seward gave a eulogy, recalling Letchworth’s words of comfort at local reception to a speech Seward had given in Auburn in 1847 on human rights.

[15] Research by Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian.

> Prejudices intense, and passions strong, ruled the hour. I spoke, as you may perhaps remember, with sorrow aggravated to the verge of impatience. When I descended from the platform, a fellow citizen, venerable in years, and beloved by us all, gently asked me whether I was not becoming disheartened and despondent. He added that there was no occasion for dejection, and what I had seen was but the caprice of a day. "Go on and do your duty, and we, your neighbors, will come around you again right soon, and sustain you throughout." Do you ask who it was that administered that just, though mild rebuke? Who else could it be but Josiah Letchworth, a man whose patience was equal to his enthusiastic zeal in every good cause, and to his benevolence in every good work.

Seward gave eulogy at funeral. Frederick Douglass Paper, 27 Oct 1854 and 3 Nov 1854

A lengthy biography in Elliott Storke's *History of Cayuga County* noted that Letchworth was "was a strong anti-slavery man at a time when those sentiments were not so popular as they became at a later period, when to be known as holding such views well nigh amounted to ostracism from the friendship and good will of considerable and very respectable portion of community."

Herman and Hannah Phillips House
Router 34B
Sherwood, New York

State Route 34B, Sherwood, New York, looking SE
February 2003

Description: The Herman and Hannah Phillips House stands today just north of the hamlet of Sherwood, New York.
The Phillips' family, born in slavery in Maryland, came to Sherwood in 1843. After a brief sojourn in Canada, they returned to Sherwood. Local tradition suggests that Slocum Howland may have purchased their freedom. In any case, the Phillips family settled permanently in Sherwood. They purchased this one-half acre of land from Slocum and Hannah Howland, abolitionists and Underground Railroad supporters, on October 10, 1854.

Shortly thereafter, they built a house on this lot. Samuel Geil's1853 map of Cayuga County shows no house on this land, but Ormando Willis Gray, *Map of Cauga and Seneca Counties, New York* (Philadelphia: A.R.Z. Dawson, 1859) clearly shows a building at this location.

Whether they built the house themselves or someone build it for them, we do not know. Dorothy Wiggans, in *Historic Homes of Sherwood*, attributed its construction to John Lapham. There is no record that John Lapham ever owned this land, but it is possible that the house was an older house, moved to this lot from another site.[16]

This theory gains some support from a note by Austin Comstock in his 1940 *Early History of the Town of Scipio*, in which he noted that in 1837, "the only habitations on the northeast corner were the old tavern, the house just built by Lapham, and an old house later owned and rebuilt by Herman Phillips, now (1938) occupied by LaMar Lane, principal of Emily Howland High School." LaMar Lane was renting the house at that time. Two small structures appear on the northeast corner of the crossroads in Geil's 1853 map of Cayuga south of the Stone Store. These do not appear on the 1859 Gray map. Could one of these have been the Phillips house, moved to its current location about 1855? Perhaps the Aurora-Sherwood Road was widened about this time, and the houses were moved to make room for the larger road.[17]
A barn on the Phillips' site, according to Dorothy Wiggans, once housed a blacksmith shop.[18]

The Phillips family was probably living in this house by 1856, when Emily Howland visited with her friend, Caroline Putnam, on Christmas Day. In an article for the *Liberator*, Caroline Putnam reported that

> On entering the house, I was struck with the air of contentment within, and the cheerful demeanor of the inmates. Their Christmas supper stood in bountiful readiness on the table—two nicely roasted chickens, and other dishes suitable for the occasion. The father seemed of the hopeful, good-feeling African temperament, while the mother, a quiet, sensitive woman. . .they now live in a snug little house built with their own earnings and the older children's, enjoying confidence and respect, and finding employment in the community. . . . A little baby, a few weeks old, was in the arms of its eldest sister, while the mother was intent on the arrangements for the supper. The neat and tidy housekeeping, the holiday happiness, and, above all, the sacred endearments of the family relation, touched my heart with the effect of a sweet and eloquent picture.[19]

The Phillips house has always remained a residence. Its unusual shape suggests that it may indeed have been constructed from two older houses, put together to make one building.

Significance: In 1888, Emily Howland--abolitionist, teacher, woman's rights advocate and daughter of Quaker abolitionist and storekeeper Slocum Howland of Sherwood, New York, wrote

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[16] Dorothy Wiggans, *Historic Homes of Sherwood* (Auburn: Cayuga County Arts Council, 1989), 13.
[17] Austin Comstock, Early History of the Town of Scipio, Cayuga County, Mimeographed typescript (1940), 8.
[18] Dorothy Wiggans, *History of Sherwood*. *New York (*Auburn: Cayuga County Arts Council, 1989), 13.
[19] Caroline Putnam, *The Liberator*, XXVII:3 (January 16, 1857), as noted in Joseph McCaffery, "Slocum Howland, Herman Phillips, and the Underground Railroad," paper completed for Milton Sernett, Syracuse University, [2002].

a brief essay about her life for Indian woman's rights activist Pandita Ramabai. In it, she recalled scenes from her abolitionist childhood, including the story of one family of freedom seekers from Maryland:

> Once a man and his wife and four children, the youngest being an infant, carried in a bag slung on its father's back, who escaped from Maryland, settled under my father's protection for some time. But one hapless day a lady came to visit in the neighborhood who recognized them at once, having visited at their master's house. She promised not to betray them to the slave holder, but they could not thus risk the liberty for which they had dared and suffered, to an uncertainty, and fled in terror to the Queens' dominions where they suffered so much from the more rigorous climate and from other causes that they returned, and the parents ended their days where they began their life of freedom. They were both worthy and industrious, and earned a comfortable home, as well as the respect of those who knew them.[20]

On October 8, 1928, Emily Howland wrote to Leonard Searing, President of the Cayuga County Historical Society, giving more clues about this family, including their name, date of arrival, and possible routes of travel, as well as indicating her own family's work on the Underground Railroad:

> My father's house was the station for those who fled from slavery. I can remember several arrivals from what was called the patriarchal institution. There was Herman Phillips, his wife and four children, coming about 1843. At another time two young men, all from Maryland. Another man came from West Virginia. Footsore and weary they reached here, having walked all the way. They were usually sent forward from a station in Pennsylvania, by John Mann, a Friend who was head of a school. Some came from another station farther south, the home of Dr. Fussell. All of these stations were the homes of Friends. The fugitives whom I have mentioned felt so safe that they made their home here. The family of one of them went to Canada but suffered so from cold that they returned. Just after their return the Fugitive Slave law was passed but they decided to take the risk of remaining here, which they did unimpeded [?] to the end of their lives. Two of their sons served in the Civil War. Later Harriet Tubman had a station and was the leader of many of her people to freedom. This was a very important station on the road, which was traveled without line or compass.[21]

In a second letter to Searing, March 19, 1929, when she was 102 years old but still of sound mind, she amplified her story about the Phillips' family. Most refugees "came, rested, and then passed on to Canada," she recalled, "with the exception of one family having four small children, the parents settled down here, and were contented in their new estate of freedom, until a Lady from the South on a visit to friends here recognized them. Tho' she promised not to reveal here knowledge to their former master—they felt their freedom so uncertain that they sought refuge in

[20] Emily Howland to "My dear Ramabai," Bermuda, April 1888, typescript in collections of Howland Stone Store Museum, Sherwood, New York; original in Phebe King Papers, Emily Howland Collection, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore.

[21] Emily Howland to Leonard Searing, October 8, 1928. Copy in Cayuga County Historian's Office.

Canada—They found their lot there so hard that they returned here. Not long after[,] the fugitive slave law was passed making their freedom more perilous but they decided to take the risk and were unmolested, passing their lives in this place."[22]

If this family did indeed come to Sherwood, flee to Canada, return to Sherwood before the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, and live the rest of their lives in this small county, would their lives then be documented in local records, beginning with the U.S. census for 1850? Such indeed is the case.

By 1850, Herman (or Harmon) Phillips, laborer, listed wrongly in the census as aged 26 (he was actually 44); his wife, Hannah Phillips, listed wrongly as aged 28 (she was actually 49); and five children (Martha, William, John, Harriett, and James, aged 19, 14, 12, 9, and 1) lived in the Town of Scipio (where the village of Sherwood is located). All listed their birthplaces as Maryland, except James, the youngest, who had been born in Canada, confirming Emily Howland's story about the family's flight to and return from the "Queen's dominions" just prior to the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act.[23]

But when did this family first arrive in Sherwood? The 1855 New York State census included a question about length of residence in the town. The family noted they had arrived nine years earlier, which would date their arrival as 1846. But Emily Howland had reported that "four children, the youngest being an infant, carried in a bag slung on its father's back" had walked from Maryland in 1843. Unless one child had died, that "infant" would have been Harriett, somewhere between four and six years old, at the time of their escape, More likely, however, the 1855 census date is wrong. The image of an infant carried in a bag on her father's back is a powerful one, unlikely to be confused with that of a four-year-old, riding on her father's shoulders.[24]

When this family first arrived in Sherwood, they most likely worked on one of Slocum Howland's farms and lived in one of his tenant houses. Two such houses are noted on Samuel Geil's 1853 Cayuga County map, one on the Sherwood-Aurora Road, the third house east of the corner on the north side of the road, and one on what is now Route 34B, the third house south of the intersection on the west side of the road.[25]

We do not know where the Phillips' family actually lived, but it was quite likely in one of these two houses. Both houses are still standing. This is the house on the Sherwood-Aurora Road, two doors east of Howland's stone store.

Austin Comstock, who knew the Phillips family in their later years, remembered that "Herman was unable to read and so he decided to attend school and learn to read his Bible. He went to school with his own children in the 50s, he in the primer and they in the 3rd and 4th grade

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[22] Emily Howland to Leonard Searing, March 19, 1929. Photocopy in Cayuga County Historian's Office.
[23] For more information, see chart See chart of census data from 1850, 1855, 1860, 1865, and 1870 census records. Many thanks to Mary Loe and Tanya Warren for preparing this data.
[24] The 1850 census noted Harriett's age as nine; the 1855 census identified her as 15.
[25] Samuel Geil, *Map of Cayuga County* (Philadelphia: Samuel Geil, 1853).

reader."[26] If so, Herman probably attended this school house No. 2. Though the 1865 census listed Hannah as able to read but not write, none of the census records suggested that Herman Phillips was illiterate, so his quest for learning must have been successful.[27]

Although the Phillips family returned to Sherwood before 1850, passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 surely made them uneasy. In October 1851, just after the rescue of William "Jerry" Henry in Syracuse, New York, when African Americans in central New York, especially those born in slavery, feared capture, both Slocum and Emily Howland made inquiries with Underground Railroad contacts farther north about possibilities for employment and safe living conditions for a fugitive family. As Joseph McCaffery has argued in his careful study, these letters may relate to efforts by the Phillips family to find alternative places to live, in case they needed to leave Sherwood quickly.

One letter was to William O. Duvall, whose father (also named W.O. Duvall) had been an antislavery agent in the 1830s. Duvall lived on a swampy point, almost an island, in the Seneca River near the village of Port Byron, Town of Mentz. Locals called his place "Hayti," a spelling still retained today, pronounced with a long "I," because Duvall hired African Americans rather than European Americans on his farm. Duvall replied, somewhat brashly, since he was writing to a Quaker,

Respected Friend Howland

[26] Austin Comstock, "Some of the Early History of the Town of Scipio, Cayuga County, New York," Typescript, Mimeographed, 1940, 10.
[27] Howland Stone Store Museum, "Sherwood and the Underground Railroad: What Do We Know???" Typescript available through the Howland Stone Store Museum.

> Morning of the 14th, just received and hasten to answer it. It strikes me I would not go to Canada. The winter will soon be upon us. And doubly there are more there now that can maintain themselves with any degree of comfort. If he were to come to my place I would protect him to the last drop of blood in my veins, and I think that our location is such that it would be hard to get him. My own opinion is that he and his family will b safe here and I will give him employment.
>
> If he is a fugitive slave, of course, he is not without a good, loaded revolver and ? constantly in his pocket. If he has not these weapons let him sell his coat and get them forthwith, and then in case of an arrest let him defend himself like a man who loves freedom better than life even though the blood flows to the horse bits.
>
> Friend Slocum, you know my location and its facilities for escape if necessary, and the pretty healthy sentiment here about on the subject if you and him think it is a good plan, fetch him out and I will do the best I can.
>
> Ever and Truly Yours,
> W.O. Duvall.[28]

About the same time, Emily Howland wrote to Samuel C. Cuyler, then living in Pultneyville, New York. Cuyler had been a leading abolitionist in Scipio in the late 1830s, hosting a meeting with Samuel R. Ward in Aurora in 1837, acting as Secretary and Treasurer of the Scipio Antislavery meeting in September 1839 and also as a delegate to the New York State Antislavery Society meeting that fall, and promoting a Cayuga County abolitionist meeting in 1841.[29] He kept a very active Underground Railroad station in Pultneyville, and on October 31, 1851, he described his situation to Emily Howland:

> I rec'd yours making enquiries in reference to the facilities for the escape of Fugitives to Canada from this place. In Answer, I would say, that the opportunities at this season of the year are not good at all but in the Summer pretty good. . . .
>
> As to the situation for a man to labor, it is the same with us probably as with you, not much needed at present, and I do not now know of a house. As to the AntiSlavery Sentiment it is as good as the average of this thrice guilty people. As to advising the Fugitive to remain or go, it is difficult to determine. I do not <u>think however</u> there is much danger in your community or ours. They will not come in the country for fugitives. . . .
>
> Yours for Freedom
> S.C. Cuyler

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[28] W.O. Duvall to Slocum Howland, October 16, 1851, Howland Papers, Cornell University. I am indebted to Jim Driscoll of the Queens Historical for finding and transcribing this letter. Many thanks to Penny Hevell and Michael Riley of Port Byron and the Town of Mentz for locating W.O. Duvall's house and for historical information about the Duvall family.

[29] Charles T. Porter to John and Abigail Porter, [October 18, 1841], Village of Aurora Archives, Transcribed by Sheila Edmunds. Many thanks to Sheila Edmunds, Historian, Village of Aurora, for sharing this reference. *Friend of Man*, September 25, 1839; August 17, 1841.

By the mid-1850s, freedom seekers in central New York were much more confident about their safety. In Syracuse, Rev. Jermain Loguen, himself once enslaved in Tennessee, advertised in the newspapers that his home was available to help others escaping from slavery. In this more open atmosphere, Herman and Hannah Phillips decided to stay in Sherwood permanently. Beginning in 1852, they celebrated their new-found stability by having three more children, Hannah, born in 1852; Octavia (or Octavius), born in 1853; and Mary, born in 1857. By 1855, Herman was working as a farmer. He was 49 years old, and Hannah was 48. They had six children, all living at home, ranging in age from 21-year old William to Martha (18), John (17), Harriet (15), Canadian-born James (6), and little Hannah (Jeremiah?) (4).

To celebrate their new-found freedom, the Phillips family also acquired a house. In 1854, they purchased one-half acre of land from Slocum and Hannah Howland on the east side of what is now State Route 34B, half mile north of the center of the village.[30] The Phillips family was probably living in this house by 1856, when Emily Howland visited with her friend, Caroline Putnam, on Christmas Day. In an article for the *Liberator*, Caroline Putnam reported that

> On entering the house, I was struck with the air of contentment within, and the cheerful demeanor of the inmates. Their Christmas supper stood in bountiful readiness on the table—two nicely roasted chickens, and other dishes suitable for the occasion. The father seemed of the hopeful, good-feeling African temperament, while the mother, a quiet, sensitive woman. . .they now live in a snug little house built with their own earnings and the older children's, enjoying confidence and respect, and finding employment in the community. . . . A little baby, a few weeks old, was in the arms of its eldest sister, while the mother was intent on the arrangements for the supper. The neat and tidy housekeeping, the holiday happiness, and, above all, the sacred endearments of the family relation, touched my heart with the effect of a sweet and eloquent picture.[31]

Certainly this house was standing by 1859, when a structure appeared on this site in Ormando Willis Gray's *Map of Cayuga and Seneca Counties, New York* (Philadelphia: A.R.Z. Dawson, 1859).

In 1860, the federal census listed the Phillips family as Herman Phillips, farmer, aged 48, with real property worth $500 and personal property worth $30, living with his wife Hannah, aged 50, housekeeper, living with all eight of their children aged 24 to 3. Interestingly, none of the family was listed as black or mulatto.

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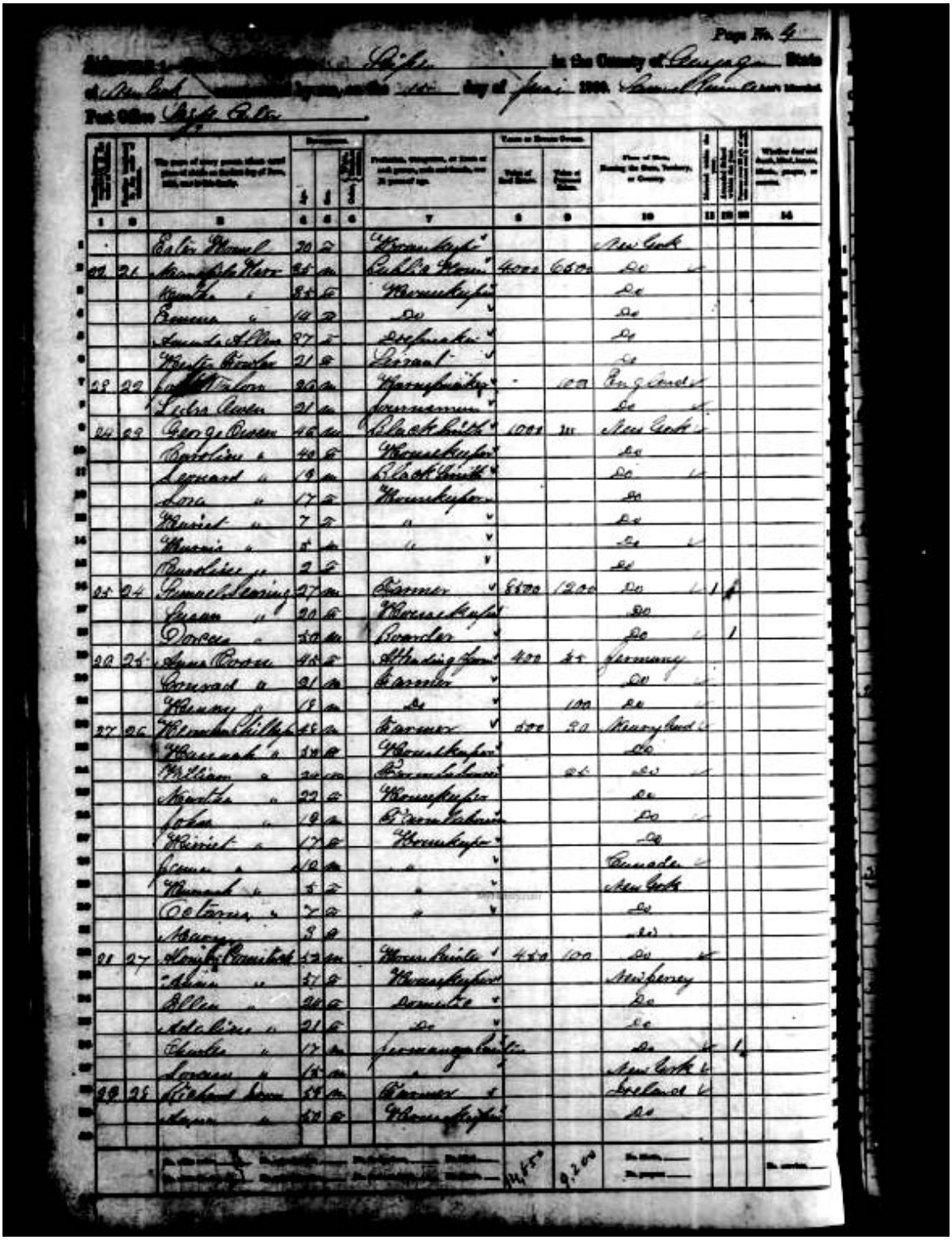
[30] Slocum and Hannah Howland to Herman Phillips, October 10, 1854, Deeds, Liber 95, page 105, Cayuga County Clerk's Office. Samuel Geil's1853 map of Cayuga County shows no house on this land, but Ormando Willis Gray, *Map of Cauga and Seneca Counties, New York* (Philadelphia: A.R.Z. Dawson, 1859) clearly shows a building at this location.

[31] Caroline Putnam, *The Liberator*, XXVII:3 (January 16, 1857), vertical files, Hazard Library, Poplar Ridge.



Page No. 4

Township, Village, or Precinct of Sipio in the County of Cayuga State of New York enumerated by me on the 10th day of June, 1860. Samuel Newman Marshal.

Post Office Sipio Center.

Dwelling-houses numbered in the order of visitation	Families numbered in the order of visitation	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	Age	Sex	Color	Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate	Place of Birth, including the State, Territory, or Country	Married within the year	Attended School within the year	Persons over 20 years of age who can read and write	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		Eaton Manuel	20	m		Farmer			New York				
20	21	Manuel Hiram	35	m		Farmer	4000	6600	do				
		Amanda "	35	f		Housekeeper			do				
		Emma "	14	f		do			do				
		Lucinda Allen	27	f		Dressmaker			do				
		Martha Brooks	21	f		Servant			do				
22	22	[illegible] Wilson	26	m		Farmer		100	England				
		Lydia Ann	21	m		Journeyman			do				
24	23	George Owen	46	m		Blacksmith	1000	300	New York				
		Caroline "	40	f		Housekeeper			do				
		Leonard "	19	m		Blacksmith			do				
		Lora "	17	f		Housekeeper			do				
		Harriet "	7	f		"			do				
		Morris "	5	m		"			do				
		Caroline "	2	f					do				
25	24	Samuel Leering	27	m		Farmer	6800	1200	do	1			
		Susan "	20	f		Housekeeper			do				
		Dorcas "	20	m		Boarder			do	1			
26	25	Anna Rosa	45	f		At home	400	50	Germany				
		Conrad "	21	m		Farmer			do				
		Henry "	18	m		do		100	do				
27	26	Thomas Philips	45	m		Farmer	800	20	Maryland				
		Hannah "	40	f		Housekeeper			do				
		William "	20	m		Farm laborer		25	do				
		Martha "	22	f		Housekeeper			do				
		John "	19	m		Farm laborer			do				
		Harriet "	17	f		Housekeeper			do				
		James "	10	m		"			Canada				
		Hannah "	5	f		"			New York				
		Catharine "	7	f		"			do				
		Mary "	3	f					do				
28	27	Henry Demitt	52	m		Farmer	400	100	do				
		Adam "	27	f		Housekeeper			Germany				
		Ellen "	20	f		Domestic			do				
		Adeline "	21	f		do			do				
		Charles "	17	m		Farm laborer			do		1		
		Lorenzo "	15	m		"			New York				
29	28	Richard Dunn	58	m		Farmer			Ireland				
		Mary "	50	f		Housekeeper			do				
							14,500	9,200	No. slaves ___ No. paupers ___				No. convicts ___

Austin Comstock, a Sherwood resident who knew the Phillips family when he was growing up. When the Civil War began, the Phillips sons all joined the Union army. According to one local resident, Herman said that, "if they failed "he would go down and do his duty."[32] William and John, both born in slavery, and James, born in freedom in Canada--all served. All are listed in the 1865 New York State census as "now in army." James Phillips' regiment is listed on his gravestone: "Co. F 39 Reg. N.[U.] S. Colored Vol. Inft., 1845-1896.[33]

By 1870, the family had begun to scatter, leaving only James, Mary, and perhaps daughter Hannah still at home to care for their aging parents. On June 1, 1873, Hannah Phillips died. aged 72. Her husband followed her two years later, on September 2, 1875, aged 69. They are buried together under one stone in the Sherwood community cemetery, across the road from their home.

[32] Austin Comstock, "Some of the Early History of the Town of Scipio, Cayuga County, New York," Typescript, Mimeographed, 1940, 10.
[33] Manuscript New York State Census, 1865, noted that William, John, and James were "now in army."

Austin Comstock, a Sherwood resident who knew the Phillips family personally, recalled the Herman "was one of the most highly respected citizens in the community and a true Christian gentleman."[34]

We do not know what happened to most of the Phillips children, once so close, after their parents' death. Harriet A. Phillips died January 30, 1886, and is buried in the Sherwood Cemetery. At least one child remained in Sherwood. James Phillips married Rose E. Gaskin (1858-1915), daughter of Richard Gaskin, another freedom seeker from Maryland. They probably continued to live in their parents' home, since title to the home in 1910 went to Rose E. Gaskin and Estella Phillips, probably a daughter of James and Rose Phillips.

Estella Phillips, known locally as Stella, became a friend, confidant, and employee of Emily Howland's niece, Isabel Howland (Miss Isabel) who lived next door to the Phillips family and who continued Miss Emily's tradition of community service, abolitionism, education, and woman's rights. Local historian Dorothy Wiggans suggested that she worked in Isabel Howland's home "from 1909 until Isabel's death, except for the years Isabel was in France"[35] Pauline Copes Johnson, descendent of four families of freedom seekers, remembered coming to help Cousin Estelle at the Howland house when Isabel Howland died in 1942. "My cousin Estelle Phillips came from the Howland house," Mrs. Johnson recalled in October 2004. "She lived on Fitch Avenue [in Auburn]. I helped Cousin Estelle out in the kitchen at Isabel Howland's funeral. I have a book at my house Miss Howland gave to Estelle."[36] Estelle Phillips is buried near her parents in the Sherwood cemetery.

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[34] Austin Comstock, "Some of the Early History of the Town of Scipio, Cayuga County, New York," Typescript, Mimeographed, 1940, 10.

[35] Dorothy Wiggans, *History of Sherwood. New York (*Auburn: Cayuga County Arts Council, 1989), 13.

[36]Notes on Isabel Howland taken by Mildred Myers, in Howland Stone Store collections. n.d., mention Estelle Phillips employment by Isabel Howland; Recollections by Pauline Copes Johnson at a meeting of

Schoolhouse No. 2
Sherwood, New York

Significance: School probably attended by freedom seeker Herman Phillips

Looking northeast
November 2004

Description: A typical frame gable-end-to-the street schoolhouse, with a small twentieth centurty addition on the west side, new siding, and some changed windows.

Signficance: Herman and Hannah Phillips and their four children arrived in Sherwood from Maryland in 1843. Austin Comstock, who knew the Phillips family in their later years, remembered that "Herman was unable to read and so he decided to attend school and learn to read his Bible. He went to school with his own children in the 50s, he in the primer and they in the 3rd and 4th grade reader."[37] If so, Herman probably attended this schoolhouse No. 2. Though the 1865 census listed Hannah as able to read but not write, none of the census records suggested that Herman Phillips was illiterate, so his quest for learning must have been successful.[38] For more on the Phillips family, see the description for the Phillips house.

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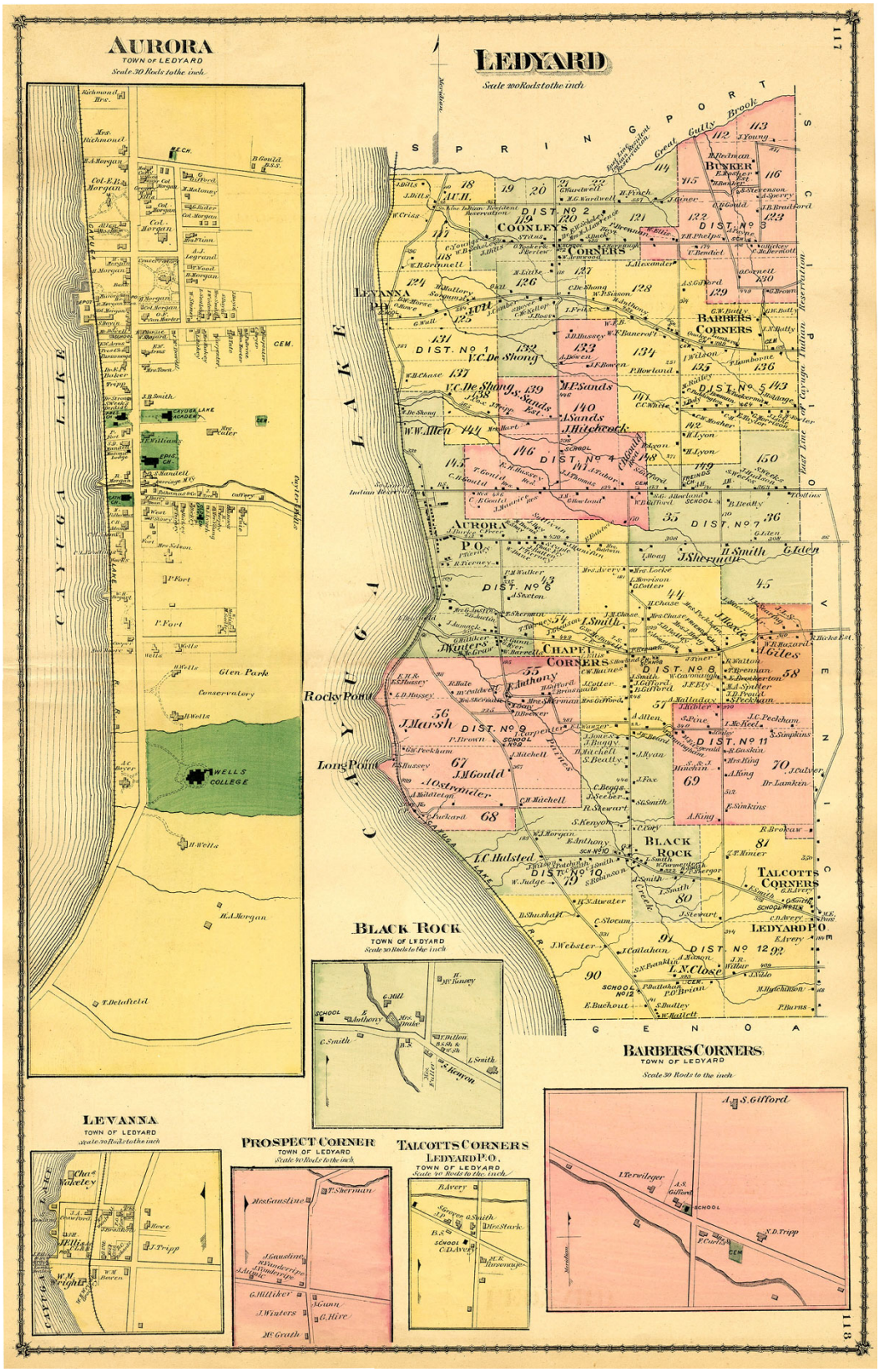
the Advisory Council for the Survey of Historic Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Auburn and Cayuga County, October 2004. Notes taken by Sheila Tucker.

[37] Austin Comstock, "Some of the Early History of the Town of Scipio, Cayuga County, New York," Typescript, Mimeographed, 1940, 10.

[38] Howland Stone Store Museum, "Sherwood and the Underground Railroad: What Do We Know???" Typescript available through the Howland Stone Store Museum.



Sites Relating to the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, African American Life
Sponsored by Auburn Historic Resources Review Board
Cayuga County Historian's Office
Funded by Preserve New York (Preservation League of NYS and NYS Council on the Arts)
Coordinated by Historical New York Research Associates
2004-05

Cayuga County: South

Locke
- Fillmore Birthplace

Moravia
- Cady House
- Dubois House, Site of
- Congregational (Methodist) Church
- Stoyell House

Sempronius
- Glen Haven

Millard Fillmore Log Cabin—Purported Birthplace Building
(actual birthplace is in Town of Locke, off Route 90)
Fillmore Glen
Moravia, New York

Significance: Millard Fillmore, President of the U.S., 1849-52, signed the Fugitive Slave Law, September 17, 1850. Represents anti-abolitionist sentiment in central New York and the nation

February 2005
Looking east
Even in central New York, many people opposed the abolitionist movement, fearing it would lead to Civil War. President Millard Fillmore was one of these. Born nearby in Locke, New York, Fillmore married Abigail Powers from Moravia; moved to Buffalo, New York, to practice law; and in 1848 was elected Vice-president of the United States. When President Zachary Taylor died shortly after taking office, Millard Fillmore became President.

On September 18, 1850, as part of the Compromise of 1850, President Fillmore signed into law the Fugitive Slave Act. By the terms of this Act, Congress used the power of the federal government to maintain slavery wherever it existed. Those who helped people escape from slavery faced heavy fines—up to $1000 for each offense plus six months in jail. Federal marshals

must assist slave-catchers to capture accused runaways wherever they were found. Federal commissioners would hear each case, but an accused person could not testify in his or her own behalf. If the marshal found in favor of the slave catcher, he would receive $10.00. If he ruled in favor of the accused, he would receive only $5.00. Abolitionists called this a bribe. And it was.

As a result of the Fugitive Slave Act, African Americans throughout the North, whether officially free or not, feared for their safety. Many fled to Canada. Only after the successful rescue of William "Jerry" Henry in Syracuse in October 1851, and the subsequent trials of his accused rescuers—the first of which were held in the Cayuga County courthouse in Auburn—did many African Americans feel comfortable about returning to their homes in central New York.

Fillmore's Birthplace
Town of Locke
Looking northeast

Isaac Cady Tavern, c. 1807
33Main Street
Moravia, New York
Moravia Historic District—National Register

Significance: Underground Railroad safe house

February 2005
Looking NE

Description: This tavern was built by Isaac Cady's father, Zadoc Cady, in place of the original log cabin, built in 1801. It was originally a five-bay central hallway Federal building, with twelve-over-eight windows and chimneys at either end of the building.

Significance: With John Stoyell, Isaac Cady represents the core of the Underground Railroad and abolitionist movement in Moravia, centered in the Congregational Church. Cady kept a tavern here, which was headquarters for a stage line between Ithaca and Auburn. From here, according to James A. Wright, *Moravia, 1791-1918*, James Stoyell and Isaac Cady took freedom seekers to

Skaneateles.[1] They may have taken people to the home of James Canning Fuller and Lydia Fuller, noted Underground Railroad agents in Skaneateles. [2]

In 1908, Sophia Wright Cady, Isaac Cady's widow, celebrated her 94th birthday. A report of the party in the *Auburn Citizen* noted that "many an evening a wagon left this place in the darkness with a negro hidden [?] beneath the blankets, bound for Skaneateles, whence the trip to Canada was made in safety. The punishment for aiding the colored man was very severe, but the work was regularly carried on and more than one colored man received his liberty." [3]

Both Sophia and Isaac Cady were members of the Congregational Church, where Isaac Cady was a leader of the choir and "stood side by side with Deacon John Stoyell on questions of church polity." Church members erected a memorial window to his memory.

In 1840, the tavern was the headquarters for the Whig Party's local campaign for "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too." After Zadoc's death in 1846, Isaac Cady took over the business and ran the tavern as a temperance hotel.[4]

Research by Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian.

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[1] James A. Wright, *Moravia, 1791-1918*, 54-55; Robert Scarry, "Cady Tavern: Building Inventory Structure Form," Copy in Cayuga County Historian's Office.
[2] The Fuller home is on the National Register as part of the Historic Resources Related to the Underground Railroad, Abolitonism, and African American Life in Central New York.
[3] *Auburn Citizen*, March 7, 1908.
[4] [*Auburn Citizen*], June 8, 1872. Copy in Cayuga County Historian's Office; Richard Palmer, "Taverns Dotted the Road West," and "History on tap at old tavern," May 7, 1978, [newspaper articles, unknown newspaper], in vertical file, Cayuga County Historian's Office

Site of Store of Caesar Dubois
Corner Church and Main Streets
Moravia, New York

Significance: Family born in slavery who became independent free people of color and property owners

February 2005
Looking SE

Caeser Dubois of Sempronius (later Moravia) was most likely born in slavery. In deeds dated April 15, 1826, and August 13, 1832, he purchased part of Lot 83 in the Town of Sempronius (later Moravia), and then bought a second lot in 1833, valued at $300 in the 1850 census.[5] When his will was recorded in 1857, he left his real and personal estate to Leonard Aiken of Moravia and listed the following heirs: Hannah Taylor of Auburn, Diana Prime of Owasco, Susan Van

[5] Deed, Dudley Loomis to Caeser Dubois of Sempronius, 15 April 1826: Part of Lot # 83, in actual possession (of Dubois), beg at SW corner of Aspah Leonards west to Asa Little's, N to creek, SE along creek bank to West line of Asaph Leonard's to beginning., 32 rods; Deed, Caeser Dubois to Lorenzo Little, 13 August 1832: Same 32 rods as above described. Signed by Caeser's mark. 1850 U.S. census.

Schaik of Skaneateles, and two nieces, with no surviving widow.[6] He was buried at Moravia Dry Creek Cemetery.

Caesar Dubois's daughter Diana Dubois married Richard Prime of Auburn. His daughter, Hannah, married James Taylor, and also moved to Auburn.[7] Diana Prime listed herself as "Washerwoman" in 1859-60 city directory, living on Miller St. near the mill dam.[8]

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[6] Will recorded in County Records Book 32, p. 254, 29 Dec 1857.

[7] Dubois Will.

[8] *Boyd's Directory*, 1859-60.

Deed: Dudley Loomis to **Caeser Dubois**, both of Sempronius
Book P P, p. 345

15 April 1826
$16.00

In the actual possession of Caeser Dubois, part of Lot # 83. Beginning at the southwest corner of Asaph Leonards (John Leonard), west 1 chain, 79 links to Asa Little's west along Little's land 6 ½ rods to the creek, southeast along the creek bank to the west line of Asaph Leonard's land then southwest along Leonard's land to place of beginning.

Recorded 19 September 1832

Deed: **Caeser Dubois** to Lorenzo Little
Book P P, p. 346

13 August 1832
$35.00

Part of Lot # 83. Beginning at the southwest corner of Asaph Leonards (John Leonard), west 1 chain, 79 links to Asa Little's west along Little's land 6 ½ rods to the creek, southeast along the creek bank to the west line of Asaph Leonard's land then southwest along Leonard's land to place of beginning.

Witness: Ebenezer Smith
Signed Caeser X Dubois-his mark
Recorded 19 September 1832

Deed: Elias Branch to **Caeser Dubois,** both of Moravia
Book V V, p. 356

14 September 1833
$150.00

In the Town of Moravia, part of Lot #83 of Sempronius, now Moravia, it being a village lot. Beginning at the northeast corner of the village lot of Rowland Day on the south side of the highway and then running east to Henry Cutler's village lot, to the south to Isaac Cady's land thence west to the village lot of Rowland Day, then north on Day's east line to the place of beginning, being 59 rods of land, with appurtenances.

Witness: Ebenezer Smith
Recorded 11 May 1835

Will: Caeser Duboise of Moravia

Petitioner: Leonard Aiken of Moravia, executor
Heirs:
1. Hannah Taylor of Auburn*
2. Diana Prime of Owasco*
3. Susan Van Schaik of Skaneateles*
4. Isabel Thorn & Catherine (illegible) of Oswego-nieces of the deceased.

He left no widow.

Will, dated 29 December 1857:
Proved, 5 February 1858

"I, Caeser Duboise of Moravia…being of sound mind and memory…do make this my last will and testimony.
1. I give all my real and personal estate to Leonard Aiken, executor, with full power to sell and dispose of same at private or public sale.
2. I direct my executor to purchase and erect at my grave, suitable grave stones.
3. Lastly, I direct him to pay over to Mrs. Sarah Wright*, wife of Justus Wright, the rest and residue of my estate.

Witness: Henry B. Hewitt of Moravia, "I witnessed the deceased making his mark to the will. Deceased requested me to become a subscribing witness to its execution, said deceased being under no restraint that he knew of."
Witness: Samuel E. Day, with similar claim.

Notes:
***Diana Prime** is the wife of Richard Prime of Owasco. They appear in the 1840 (Genoa), 1850, (Owasco) and 1860-1870 census of Auburn.

***Sarah Wright,** wife of Justus Wright of Moravia. Justus Wright, son of Luther and Loraine Gibbs Wright, born 15 May 1798. No further information can be found other than an entry in the 1830 African-American census of Cayuga County showing a white family of Luther Wright possibly having 1 African-American girl under 10 living with them.

***Hannah Taylor** is likely the wife of Henry Taylor, freedom seeker born in Virginia. See the 1850 and 1855 census entry for Auburn in the African American census.

***Susan Van Schaik** is likely the wife of William Van Schaik of Skaneateles, (see 1850 census)

Research: Tanya Warren, Auburn, NY

Congregational Church (now Methodist)
Church Street
Moravia, New York
Moravia Historic District (National Register)

Significance: Strong abolitionist church

February 2005
Looking southwest

Description: This Federal frame church with an octagonal double-tiered bell tower and delicate round-topped windows may have been patterned after a design in Asher Benjamin's *American Builder's Companion* (1827), which has a parapet evocative of the one on the façade of this church. Originally Congregational, this church is now a Methodist Church.

Significance: Like many Congregational churches in upstate New York, this one in Moravia became a center of abolitionist and Underground Railroad activity. According to James A. Wright, *Moravia, 1791-1918,* Deacon John Stoyell and choirmaster Isaac Cady were the most active members of the local Underground Railroad network. Cady kept a temperance tavern in Moravia, which was headquarters for a stage line between Ithaca and Auburn. From here, Stoyell and Cady took freedom seekers to Skaneateles.[9] A memorial window in this church is dedicated to Cady's memory. [10]

The first abolitionist meeting in Moravia may have been held in February 1840 by William O. Duvall of Port Byron, who reported to the *Friend of Man* on March 12, 1840 that

> Our next meeting was at Moravia, in the south-east part of the county, about 15 miles from Auburn. The audience here was large, attentive and respectable and though there are but a very few real, thorough abolitionists (and ours was the first meeting of the kind ever held in the town,) yet there are a good many who begin to "*apologize*" for abolitionism.[11]

In 1853,William Harned, antislavery agent who was collecting bail for William Chaplin, (jailed in Maryland for attempting to free about 50 slaves from Washington, D.C.), reported that he had collected $7.00 from Moravia. William J. Watkins, Assistant Editor of *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, spoke in Moravia, on Mary 14, 1854.[12]

Research in Congregational Church records for Moravia might well reveal more information about abolitionism in Moravia.

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[9] James A. Wright, *Moravia, 1791-1918*, 54-55; Robert Scarry, "Cady Tavern: Building Inventory Structure Form," Copy in Cayuga County Historian's Office.
[10] *Auburn Citizen*, March 7, 1908.
[11] W.O. Duvall to *Friend of Man*, Seneca Falls, March 12, 1840, printed in *Friend of Man*, April 1, 1840.
[12] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, January 25, 1852; January 13, 1854; March 11, 1853; May 5, 1854; *The National Era*, May 5, 1853.

John Stoyell House
North Main Street
Moravia, New York
Part of Moravia Historic District—National Register [?]

Significance: Underground Railroad safe house

February 2005
Looking northeast

Description: The Stoyell house is Federal house with central doorway flanked by two six-over-six windows on each side. It has two large chimneys that appear to serve two rooms on each side.

Significance: John Stoyell and his fellow church member Isaac Cady represent strong Congregationalists who committed their lives to abolitionism and the Underground Railroad. In the case of John Stoyell, his abolitionist commitment led him, at age 61, to join the Union Army and to die in Louisiana.

One clue to the Underground Railroad activity of both John Stoyell and Isaac Cady appeared in James A. Wright, *Moravia, 1791-1918*:

> These were Abolitionist, [wrote Wright], known as John Stoyell and Isaac Cady, both prominent members of the Congregational Church. These men sheltered the slave by day and fed him by night and by private conveyance conveyed him to the next station, Skaneateles. These men drove their own teams. Sometimes concealing the fugitive under hay in the bottom of the wagon, and even the driver hiding his identity in various ways

> from any chance acquaintances who might happen to be on the road. John Stoyell upon one occasion in the night time, near Kelloggsville with a fugitive concealed under hay in the wagon, actually passed a United State marshal and his assistant who were on the watch for this particular slave, and were really close upon his trail, without knowing it, but did not succeed, as the man reached Canada in safety.
>
> These two citizens of Moravia kept their own counsel, were fearless, conscientious and intelligent, and in argument as well as action had few equals in Southern Cayuga. John Stoyell proved himself fearless in time of peril. [13]

They may have taken people to the home of James Canning Fuller and Lydia Fuller, noted Underground Railroad agents in Skaneateles. [14]

Born December 20, 1801, John Stoyell, Jr., was the son of John Stoyell, Sr, and his wife, the first white settlers in the Owasco Valley. Bouth father and son were deacons in the local Congegational Church. Local traditions about his abolitionist and Underground Railroad activity received support from several contemporary sources. Abolitionist agent J.R. Johnson confirmed Stoyall's abolitionist sympathies in newspaper references in 1852, when he noted that "Deacon John Stoyell of Morvaia, may appoint a meeting for me at Milan, Thursday evening, January 29th, and at Morvaia, Friday evening, 30th." In 1854, Frederick Douglass noted that Stoyell sent him a contribution of $3.00. In 1853,William Harned, antislavery agent who was collecting bail for William Chaplin, (jailed in Maryland for attempting to free about 50 slaves from Washington, D.C.), reported that he had collected $7.00 from Moravia. William J. Watkins, Assistant Editor of *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, spoke in Moravia, on Mary 14, 1854.[15]

Athough Stoyell was sixty years old when the Civil War broke out, after McClellan had been driven back from Richmond, Stoyell joined Captain Jewett's Co. F of the 160th Regiment, New York State Volunteers as a common soldier. Supposedly, he walked all the way to Auburn to join his regiment, refusing a ride. His obituary noted that, "when asked by one of his friends if he would like a commission, he very quietly answered, 'I can accomplish more with a gun.'" He was sent with his company to New Orleans, where he died on July 5, 1863, of dysentery, aged sixty-one. "While with the Co." noted his obituary, "was looked upon by his Officers as a father, and loved by the men as a friend."

> For years he was known throughout the country as man of strong anti-slavery sentiments and his house was literally a refuge for the down trodden and oppressed as they journeyed from the bondage of Virginia and farther south to the freedom of Canada. He showered his blessing alike upon the white man and the black, and reaped his reward in the sweet consciousness that he had 'done unto others as he would that they should do unto him.' He had grown up with the country, helped establish its institutions, and had been protected by its laws, and when the attempt was made to destroy it and wipe out

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[13] James A. Wright, *Moravia, 1791-1918*, 54-55.
[14] The Fuller home is on the National Register as part of the Historic Resources Related to the Underground Railroad, Abolitonism, and African American Life in Central New York.
[15] *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, January 25, 1852; January 13, 1854; March 11, 1853; May 5, 1854; *The National Era*, May 5, 1853.

> forever from the earth the liberties established by the fathers, he contributed liberally of his means to aid the cause. [16]

Ultimately, he gave his life. "He was," read his obituary, "one of the last links between the present and the past of our Valley."

Robert Scarry identified this house on North Main Street as the John Stoyell house.[17]

Research by Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian.

[16]"Died."[Obituary, John Stoyell, Auburn Advertiser, 1863]. Found by Sheila Tucker.
[17] Robert Scarry, "Building Structure Inventory Form," Owasco Lake Historical Society, copy in Cayuga County Historian's Office.

Site of Glen Haven Water Cure
North Glen Haven Road
Southwest end of Skaneateles Lake
Town of Sempronius

Significance: Water Cure operated by James C. Jackson, Lucretia Jackson, William C. Chaplin, and Theodosia Gilbert, abolitionists. Chaplin was involved in at least two nationally-publicized Underground Railroad events.

Southwest corner of Skaneateles Lake, looking southwest
Approximate site of Glen Haven Water Cure, south of current sign
Photo by Paul Malo, July 2005

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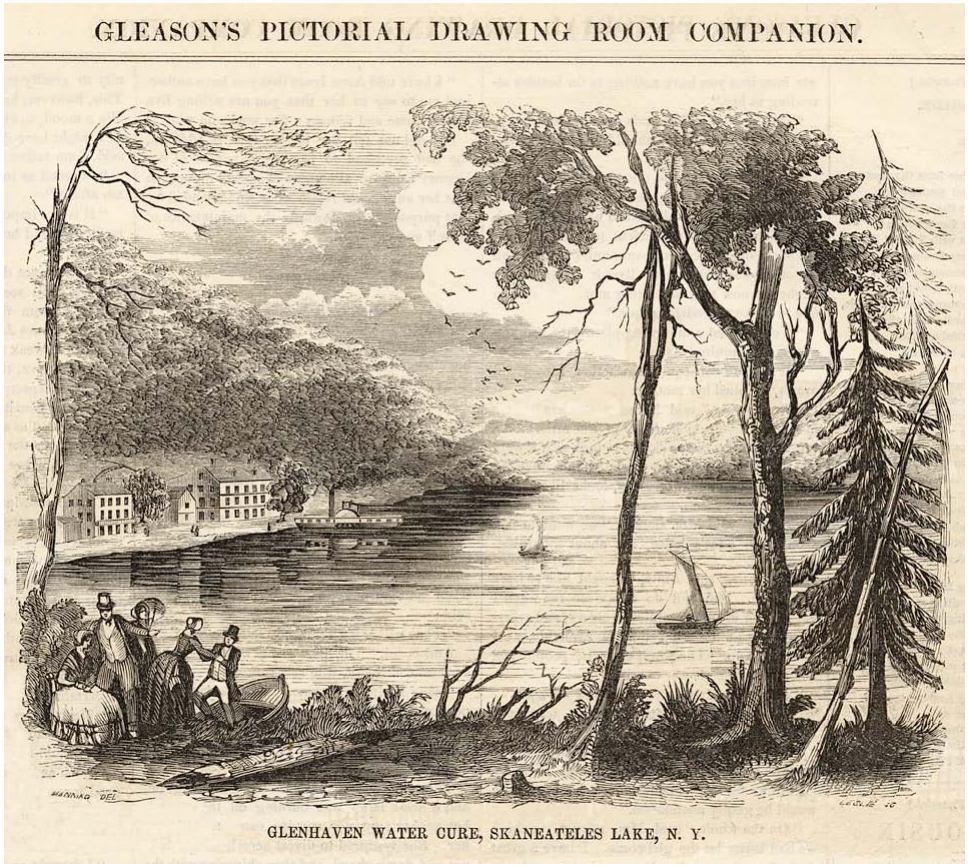
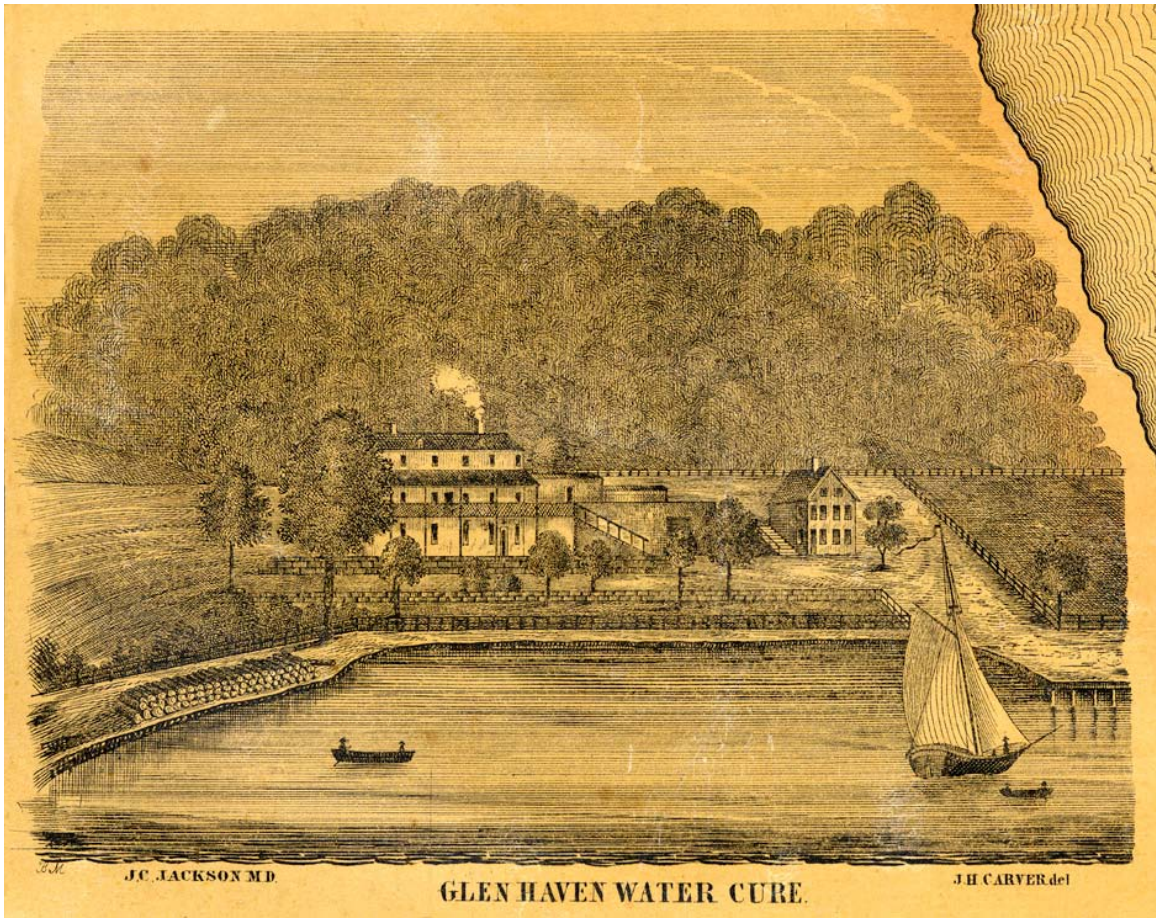
Sign in front of 1822 North Glen Haven Road
Signs reads: “New York. Site of Glen Haven house which in 1945 was converted to Glen Haven Sanitarium. Destroyed to protect Syracuse Water Supply. State Education Department. 19??”





Map of Cayuga County, 1853.

Glen Haven Water Cure, although today only a wooded site along the west shore of Skaneateles Lake, was in the 1850s a major center for alternative medical treatment, frequented by abolitionists, woman's rights activists, and dress reformers, and operated by two noted abolitionist and Underground Railroad families: James C. Jackson was former abolitionist lecturer and editor of the *Liberty Press*, and William Chaplin was lecturer, editor of the *Albany Patriot*, jailed in Maryland for his Underground Railroad activities. They operated Glen Haven as a water cure, the nineteenth century equivalent of a spa, with their wives Lucretia Brewster Jackson and Theodosia Gilbert Chaplin.

James C. Jackson, known as the "farm boy speaker," abolitionized his section of Oswego County before Gerrit Smith brought him to Peterboro as lecturer and editor of the *Liberty Press*. He later became an antislavery lecturer in Massachusetts before turning to medicine, operating first the Glen Haven Water Cure and then the nationally-famous Dansville Water Cure. William Chaplin, also part of Gerrit Smith's circle, became a member of the Albany Vigilance Committee. After Charles Torrey, editor of the *Albany Patriot*, died in a Maryland prison in 1846 for his Underground Railroad work, Chaplin took his place, both as editor and as Underground Railroad operative in the Washington, D.C. area.

In 1848, Chaplin helped organize the famous attempt to free 77 people from slavery in Washington, D.C., on a ship called the *Pearl*. Becalmed by a storm, they were all caught and returned to slavery. Among them were two sisters, Mary and Emily Edmondson, whose plight attracted the attention of abolitionists throughout the North. Freed with the help of their father, Paul Edmondson, and donations from northern abolitionists, especially those from Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, they attended New York Central College before going on to Oberlin in Ohio. Attempting to free two more people from slavery in 1850, Chaplin was caught in an unexpected gun battle and jailed in Maryland with bail set at $20,000.

A convention met in August 1850 in Cazenovia, New York, to protest the Fugitive Slave Act. They heard a report from Theodosia Gilbert, Chaplin's fiancé, and J.C. Hathaway, Quaker abolitionist from Farmington, who had visited Chaplin in jail, and they took steps to raise money for Chaplin's bail. Chair of the committee was James C. Jackson of Glen Haven. Jackson wrote an impassioned plea, printed in the *North Star* the following month:

> Glorious man! faithful Christian! noble representative of freedom! Yours shall be a prophecy that shall have speedy fulfillment, if the spirit of liberty and justice among the abolitionists and in our court of law has not utterly perished. Come, then, men, women, and children! Come Whig, come Democrat, come all, without reference to sect, sex, or party, come to this noble man's defence and deliverance, open your purses and pour out your money. He is the impersonation of this Cause, its most prominent representative. In him, Slavery strikes at all of us. In him it maddens our cause. At the Cazenovia Convention a Committee of twenty-five was chosen, consisting of prominent men over the Free States.
>
> James C. Jackson, of Glen Haven Water Cure is Chairman; Samuel J. May and Charles A. Wheaton, of Syracuse, Secretaries; Gerrit Smith, of Peterboro, Treasurer.
>
> Persons are appointed to visit different sections of the Free States, and collect the sum of $20,000, to protect him. This money must be had in thirty days. Will you not bestow your silver? Oh, you will I know, or freedom is but a name and your love for it a shadow. Small sums, and when the sums are large certificates of deposit may be transmitted either to Gerrit Smith, Peterboro, or to James C. Jackson, Samuel J. May, or Clarke A. Wheaton, Syracuse, N.Y.[18]

Ezra Greenleaf Weld, brother of noted abolitionist Theodore Weld, took a famous daguerreotype, perhaps to send to William Chaplin in his jail cell as a remembrance. Only two copies are known to exist, one in the Madison County Historical Society and one in the Getty Museum. Gerrit Smith stands tall in the center of the photo, flanked by Frederick Douglass and the Edmondson sisters (in plaid dresses), with Theodosia Gilbert sitting in the center. [19]

Sympathizers everywhere across the North collected money for the Chaplin bail fund. In Cayuga County, Wm. R. Smith, E. M. K. Glen, E. W. Clark, Ames Baker, Samuel J. May, George Bradburn and the Edmundson sisters held meetings in Port Byron, Auburn, Ledyard, Northville,

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[18] *North Star*, September 5, 1850.

[19] Hugh Humphreys, *Agitate! Agitate! Agitate!: The Great Fugitive Slave Law Convention and Its Rare Daguerreotype* (Madison County Historical Society: Madison County Heritage, 1994).

Scipio, and Union Springs. Emily Howland remembered that she was in charge of collecting funds in the North Street Meetinghouse in Sherwood, New York. Gerrit Smith donated the last several thousand dollars so that Chaplin could go free.[20]

Everyone expected that Chaplin would quickly raise funds on the lecture circuit to pay back at least his largest contributors, but his health seem broken by his experience. He joined the Jacksons and Theodosia Gilbert at Glen Haven Water Cure, where he and Theodosia were married in 1851. A guest at the hotel, who signed her/his name only "Undine," wrote an account of the ceremony for *Frederick Douglass' Paper*:

> From a conversation which I accidentally overheard, I learned these facts. It was the wish of Mr. Chaplin and Miss Gilbert to have all their friends present on this occasion, especially those whom Mr. Chaplin has been the instrument of delivering from a worse than Egyptian bondage. But their name is Legion, and as the house is full of patients, it was impossible to entertain these and others whose long-tried affections gave them a sort of right to witness a ceremony in which Mr. Chaplin had so deep an interest. It became necessary, therefore, to give no invitations. At two o'clock the large family of Dr. Jackson assembled in the parlor, and in a few moments the groom and bride presented themselves. When they had taken their places, Mr. Chaplin said: "My friends, we have come before you today to celebrate the marriage rite. In all civilized communities, the outward ceremony is recognized, and it is fit and proper that it should be so. but this ceremonial does not of itself constitute true marriage; if there were nothing more, the outward form would be a mere dead letter. There is a marriage of the soul which must be consummated before these vows are publicly assumed. That marriage we have already realized in some degree by anticipation, and we stand before you now, to take upon ourselves these vows, and solemnly to promise, in the presence of God, that we will perform the duties and meet the responsibilities which they impose with unchanging fidelity and love towards each other." When Mr. Chaplin had ended, prayer was offered by Mr. Joy of Ludlowville. Immediately after, Miss Elizabeth J. Smith, on behalf of the "Chaplin Pitcher Committee," presented to Mr. Chaplin a silver pitcher, with these words: "Mr. Chaplin, it gives me great pleasure to have the honor of presenting to you this pitcher, in the name of one thousand of your friends. Accept it with the congratulations and blessings of all who are present, as well as of those who are absent. And let it ever be a memorial of their confidence and their gratitude to your devotions to the cause of God and of humanity. In the accompanying book you will find recorded the names and residences of the donors." - Mr. Chaplin responded very handsomely, though briefly: "He could not but feel unworthy of such a testimonial; but coming as it did from one thousand of his friends, who thereby signified their approval of an act which had left him in a small minority of his countrymen, he could not express the deep gratitude which he felt towards them. He would make no attempt to justify the act, but he would say that were he placed again in the same circumstances, he would not hesitate a moment to repeat it, though life in the Penitentiary, or death itself were to be the consequence."
>
> Mr. and Mrs. Chaplin then received the congratulations of their friends, and the bell of the steamer "Homer," which lay puffing at the wharf, giving the signal for departure, farewells were spoken, and they left the Glen. I have given you but a faint idea of the

[20] *The North Star*, September 5, 1850; Emily Howland to Caroline Putnam, 1908.

> impressiveness and beauty of this marriage scene. Its solemnity affected the hearts of all present, and many afterwards remarked that the simple eloquence of Mr. Chaplin would linger in their memory forever. UNDINE.[21]

Glen Haven Water Cure proved to be a major success. It was advertised widely, particularly in reform newspapers. Typical descriptions included those such as C.W. G.'s in May 1852:

> DEAR FRIEND: - Many of your readers have heard of Glen Haven, the beautiful site of the successful Water Cure Establishment of Dr. J.C. Jackson & Co. The very name is pleasant to the ear, and suggests thoughts of shady walks, cool retreats, and running waters. Nor does the reality in any respect disappoint the anticipation. Nature did her best when she made this delightful retreat for invalids. The forests are so cool and shady, the air so pure, the water so soft, the sunshine so bright, the lake so lovely, the hills so smiling, the "Cure" so comfortable, the "treatment" so agreeable, and Dr. and Mrs. Jackson so kind and attentive, that one might almost be willing to be ill for the sake of being ministered to under such favorable circumstances.
>
> The Cure, this spring has undergone thorough repairs. The rooms are all newly papered, painted and carpeted, and are as neat and inviting in appearance as an invalid could desire to see. Two boats are furnished for the use of the patients upon the lake. - The steamboat, Homer, will, in a week, commence its daily trips from Skaneateles to the Glen.
>
> The reputation of the Glen Haven Water Cure was never higher than now. Patients come from the east and the west, from the north and the south to bathe in its purifying waters and be healed of their diseases, and none come wholly in vain. During the entire winter, there were between twenty and thirty patients, to whom the treatment proved quite as agreeable and beneficial as during the warm season, though the prevalent opinion is that one must necessarily find it disagreeable in cold weather. The prospects for the coming season are very fair, at no time since the cure first opened have they been more so.[22]

Theodosia Gilbert and William Chaplin had two children before Theodosia's death, perhaps in childbirth, in 1855.

The site of the arrest of William Chaplin in 1850 in Montgomery, Maryland, has recently been listed on the NPS's Network to Freedom trail.

For more information on the Jacksons and the Gilberts, see:

Stanley Harrold**.** *Subversives: Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865.* Antislavery, Abolition, and the Atlantic World Series. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003.

Milton Sernett, *North Star Country*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003.

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[21] Undine, *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, Coral Grove, August 13, 1851.

[22] C.W.G., May 5, 1852, F*rederick Douglass' Paper*, May 27, 1852.