



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

Midwest Region
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, Nebraska 68102-4226



H22(MWR-CR/UR)

September 9, 2010

Mr. Nathan Montague
University of Buffalo, Department of Anthropology
380 MFAC, Ellicott Complex
Buffalo, New York 14621-0026

Dear Mr. Montague:

Congratulations! The National Park Service (NPS) evaluated the application for the Black Rock Ferry to be included in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (Network to Freedom). We found that it makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the Underground Railroad in American history and that it meets the requirements for inclusion as a site. We commend you on your dedication to this important aspect of our history and expect that you will join with us in continuing to exemplify the values expressed in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act.

We notified the owner or manager of the site and are sending them a Certificate of Acceptance that they may display. As a site included in the Network to Freedom, they may use the Network to Freedom logo under certain conditions, such as in plaques or publications. The NPS Regional Program Manager will be pleased to share further information and guidelines on the use of the logo. We will also include the site on the NPS Network to Freedom Web site at www.nps.gov/ugrr.

Please know that we are aware of your commitment to be stewards of all that the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act embraces. To ensure accurate interpretation of the Underground Railroad to the public, we wish to emphasize that the association with the Network to Freedom may only be represented as it has been approved in the application. We know that you are as committed to quality and high standards as we are and will realize the need for periodic review. Any site in the Network to Freedom is subject to periodic review and may be removed from the Network to Freedom if there is evidence that it no longer meets the criteria for inclusion or if the steward's activities are inconsistent with the goals of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act. In order to help us stay up-to-date, we rely on you to send us news and examples of flyers, newsletters, programs, brochures, etc. Additionally, you may post news of your upcoming events on the NPS Network to Freedom Web site.

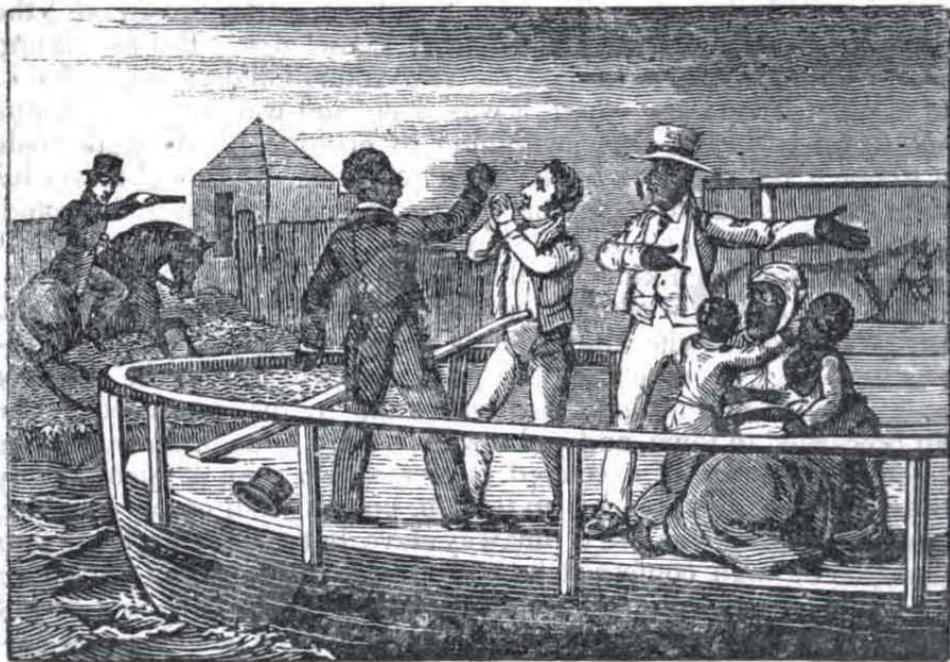
Congratulations again on your extraordinary site, which we welcome into the Network to Freedom. We wish you continued success. Please do not hesitate to contact your Regional Program Manager at any time to seek assistance, advice, information, or to let them know about your current activities. For your Regional Program Manager's contact information, please visit <http://www.nps.gov/history/ugrr/contact.htm>.

Sincerely,

Ernest Quintana
Regional Director



**APPLICATION
TO
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NETWORK TO FREEDOM
FOR
BRODERICK PARK, BUFFALO, NY**



THE RUNAWAY.

by

Nathan Montague, M.A.

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NETWORK TO FREEDOM**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Type (pick one): Site Facility Program

Name (of what you are nominating): **Broderick Park**

Address: **1170 Niagara Street**

City, State, Zip: **Buffalo, NY 14213**

County: **Erie County**

Congressional District: **26th District of New York**

Physical Location of Site/facility (if different):
(same)

Address not for publication?

Date Submitted:

Summary: Tell us in 200 words or less what is being nominated and how it is connected to the Underground Railroad.

Broderick Park was the location of the Black Rock ferry, a major transportation link across the Niagara River between Buffalo, New York and Fort Erie, Canada. The ferry operated continuously from the Broderick Park location from 1825 until the service was discontinued in the middle of the 20th century. Buffalo's destiny as important national transportation hub was sealed when it was chosen for the terminus of the Erie Canal in the 1820s. Through the 19th century Buffalo grew to become a busy inland port and a railroad center. The area around Black Rock ferry contained the busy Erie Canal, Black Rock Harbor, and other waterfront activities. The dock where the ferry landed and departed for nearby Canada was used as an Underground Railroad station from at least the 1830s until the Civil War. Fugitive slaves took the ferry and other boats from the Broderick Park location across the river to Canada and freedom. Many historians have pointed to the ferry location as a vital link in the Underground Railroad and numerous well-documented fugitive slave accounts describing the ferry location attest to its importance. As a result, Broderick Park is eligible for designation to the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE USE ONLY

I hereby certify that this site facility program is included in the Network to Freedom.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date



Owner/Manager (Share contact information ___Y ___X_ N)
Name: City of Buffalo Parks and Recreation Department

Address: 65 Niagara Square, City Hall Room 505

City, State, Zip: Buffalo, NY 14202

Phone: 716-851-9670 **Fax:** 716-851-5200 **E-mail:**

Owner/Manager (Share contact information ___Y ___ N)
Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone: **Fax:** **E-mail:**

Owner/Manager (Share contact information ___Y ___ N)
Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone: **Fax:** **E-mail:**

Application Preparer (Enter only if different from contact above.) (Share contact information ___Y ___ N)
Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone: **Fax:** **E-mail:**

Privacy Information: The Network to Freedom was established, in part, to facilitate sharing of information among those interested in the Underground Railroad. Putting people in contact with others who are researching related topics, historic events, or individuals or who may have technical expertise or resources to assist with projects is one of the most effective means of advancing Underground Railroad commemoration and preservation. Privacy laws designed to protect individual contact information (i.e., home or personal addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, or e-mail addresses), may prevent NPS from making these connections. If you are willing to be contacted by others working on Underground Railroad activities and to receive mailings about Underground Railroad-related events, please add a statement to your letter of consent indicating what information you are willing to share.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom to nominate properties, facilities, and programs to the Network to Freedom. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Response to this request is required for inclusion in the Network to Freedom in accordance with the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act (P.L. 105-203).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 25 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Coordinator, National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, NPS, 601 Riverfront Drive, Omaha, Nebraska 68102.



SITES:

In addition to the responses to each question, applications must also include the following attachments:

- 1) Letters of consent from all property owners for inclusion in the Network to Freedom (see sample in instructions)
- 2) Text and photographs of all site markers
- 3) Original photographs illustrating the current appearance and condition of the site being nominated
- 4) Maps showing the location of the site

S1. Type:

Building Object District (neighborhood)
 Structure Landscape/natural feature Archeological site

Other (describe): Historically, Broderick Park started out as a pier. Over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, it was filled in and built up. Today it is a park.

S2. Is the site listed in the National Register of Historic Places? Y N
What is the listing name:

S3. Ownership of site:

Private Private, non-profit (501c3) Multiple ownership
 Public, local government Public, state government Public, federal government

S4a. Type(s) of Underground Railroad Association (select the one(s) that fit best)

Station Assoc. w/ prominent person Rebellion site Legal challenge
 Escape Rescue Kidnapping Maroon community
 Destination Church w/active congregation Cemetery Transportation route
 Military site Commemorative site/monument historic district/neighborhood
 Archeological site Other (*describe*)



S4. Describe the site's association and significance to the Underground Railroad. Provide citations. Timelines are encouraged.

Broderick Park is located on the Niagara River in the west side of Buffalo, New York. For about 150 years, starting in 1825, the Black Rock ferry carried people and cargo from this spot across the river to the Village of Fort Erie, Canada, less than half a mile away. The ferry transported thousands of emigrants and tons of freight into Canada and through Canada to Michigan (Norton 1879: 91). Previous to 1825 the ferry dock was about half a mile south of Broderick Park, at a spot just north of the Peace Bridge.

Even before 1825, when the ferry made its return trip from Canada it landed at the Broderick Park location and was then rowed upstream to its original launching point, a huge black limestone rock that gave the neighborhood around it the name "Black Rock". The black rock was a triangular limestone outcropping that jutted about 300 feet into the river. It had a level surface about four feet above the Niagara River and offered a natural harbor and eddy. In 1825 the black rock was removed during the construction of the Erie Canal and the ferry was moved to the foot of Ferry Street, where Broderick Park is today (Smith, Vol 1. 1884: 23; Smith, Vol 2. 1884: 54; Atkins 1898: 45).

Early lessees of the ferry included Alexander Rea, Major Frederick Miller, Asa Stannard, and Orange Brace (Norton 1879: 100-107). In 1825, the ferry operators were Lester Brace and Donald Fraser. They built a horse-powered boat that replaced a scow rowed by a group of men. Passengers entered Ferry Street from Niagara Street, walked down a steep hill, and crossed over the Erie Canal and Black Rock Harbor on bridges. The ferry dock was on top of the Bird Island Pier. The pier was a narrow line of huge stones stretching south from Squaw Island, past Ferry Street, to downtown Buffalo's waterfront.

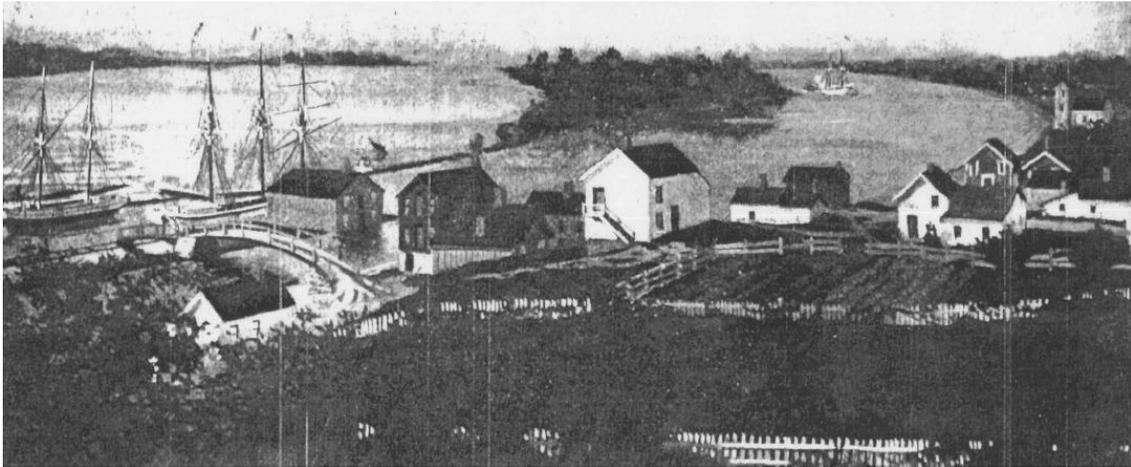


Figure 1. An 1825 view of Black Rock, facing north. The ferry dock was to the far left, just left of the bridge over the Erie Canal (Buffalo & Erie County Public Library).



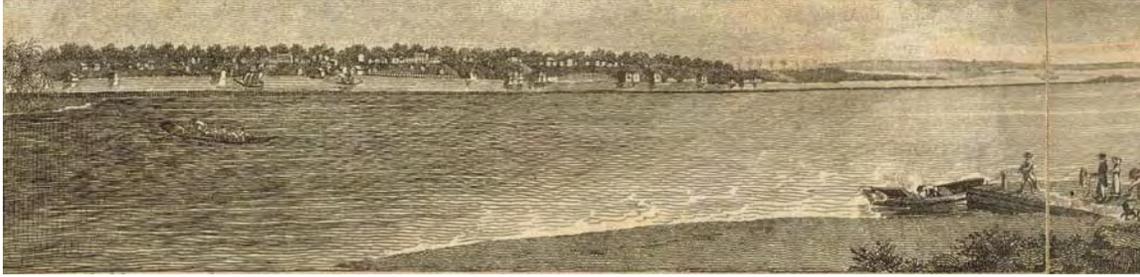


Figure 2. 1825 view of Black Rock from the Canadian shore, facing southeast (Dey and Vance).

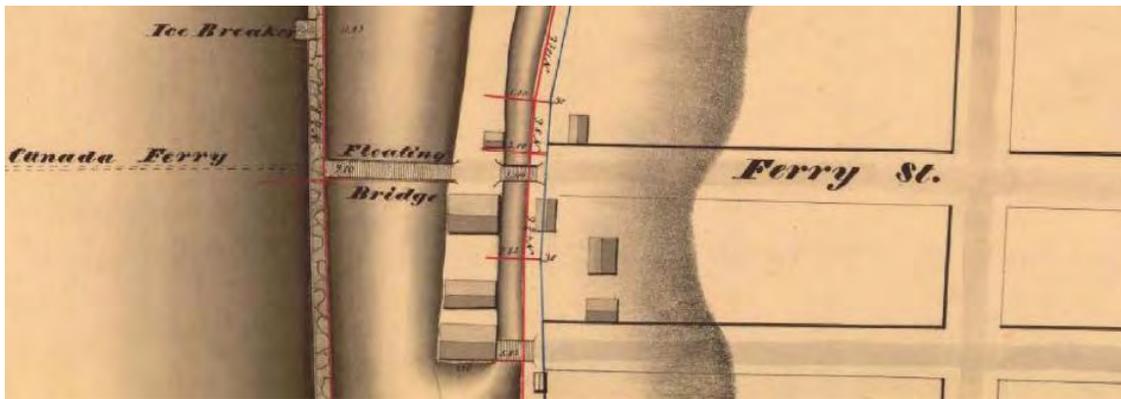


Figure 3. The 1834 Erie Canal Map E1-6 shows the location of the Black Rock ferry and the general level of development in the vicinity of the canal. Niagara Street is the street shown intersecting Ferry Street to the right in the image (New York State Archives).

In 1840, James Haggart took over the ferry and utilized a steam-powered boat. A man named Judge Bull was a part-owner of the operation (Atkins 1898: 45-46). The neighborhood around the ferry dock emerged as the commercial and social center of Black Rock. Black Rock was a village and then town until 1853, when it was absorbed into the City of Buffalo (Spear 1977: 12-21).

The Black Rock ferry dock became a busy station on the Underground Railroad by the 1830s for a number of reasons. The idea of escaping to Canada via the ferry may have had its genesis in the War of 1812. Many Southern officers served in western New York State, an active front in the war. Throughout the war, armies and raiding parties from both sides of the conflict crossed the river at Black Rock and Fort Erie to attack the other side. Slaves may have travelled with their masters and if they were anywhere along the waterfront, they could have seen that Canada was less than half a mile away on the other side of the Niagara River. Others may have heard stories about the ferry and Canada when the Southern officers returned to their plantations (Severance 1899: 187; Graf 1939: 73).

Niagara Falls lies about 15 miles north of Broderick Park. It was a popular national tourist destination as far back as the 18th century. Slaves travelling with their masters on vacation would have seen the Niagara River and Canada on the other side and would have brought information back with them (Tobin and Jones 2008: 151). Among the most useful information would have been the knowledge that Black Rock's ferry boat captains were often willing to convey fugitives across without question and sometimes at no charge (Tobin and Jones 2008: 151).



The terminus of the Erie Canal, completed in 1825, was at Buffalo's downtown waterfront. The canal was the spark that launched Buffalo's rapid 19th century development as a busy inland port and as a railroad center. The area around the Black Rock ferry, just north of downtown Buffalo, contained the last section of the Erie Canal, Black Rock Harbor, and other waterfront activities. With so many boats coming and going and so many workers of all nationalities employed on the docks, it was not unusual for African Americans to be around the ferry dock. Buffalo had a relatively large population of African Americans as well. This made it somewhat easier for fugitive slaves to blend in and gain passage on the ferry to Canada, even though slave catchers patrolled the waterfront (Farrisson 1954: 298; Pettit 1879: 58).

Runaway slaves started appearing regularly at Black Rock in the 1830s, especially after slavery was abolished in Canada in 1834. However, even before 1834, runaway slaves from the United States were considered free in Canada (Russell 2009: 47).

Escaping slaves often started their journey with only the North Star to guide them to freedom in Canada. Along the way, many of these fugitives received help from free blacks and sympathetic whites who made sure the fugitives were on the right track. They were directed along relatively safe routes through western Pennsylvania and Ohio and into the western counties of New York State. Buffalo's close proximity to Canada made it an obvious last stop en route to a fugitive's ultimate goal, Canada and freedom (Severance 1899: 187-188; Merrill 1963: 98; Wixom 1903: Document 8).

During the earliest days of the Underground Railroad, when Buffalo and Black Rock were still small towns, many of the fugitives came directly from the "country stations" in western New York to the river ferry. By the 1850s, as the neighborhood developed, some slaves were hidden close by until an opportune time came for the trip down the hill to the ferry dock (Severance 1899: 195; Graf 1939: 74).

Frank Severance was a prolific author of Buffalo histories and an editor of volumes produced by the Buffalo Historical Society from the late 19th through the early 20th centuries. His book *Old Trails on the Niagara Frontier* describes the Black Rock ferry as it related to the transfer of fugitive slaves through Buffalo to Canada. He wrote, "The most vital part of the Underground Railroad was the over-water ferry" (Severance 1899: 186). A number of other historians have described the ferry at Black Rock as an important link in the Underground Railroad (Merrill 1963: 98; Wilner 1931: 428).

Numerous and well-documented accounts testify to the importance of the Black Rock ferry, today's Broderick Park, as a last American stop on the Underground Railroad. One of the most reliable accounts involved William Wells Brown, a former slave who settled in Buffalo, worked on vessels in Lake Erie, and was heavily involved in the Underground Railroad. Many of his "riders" were hidden on the boat that he worked on and were dropped off on the Canadian side (Farrisson 1954: 298, 300). In his autobiography, he related a story of a struggle between slave catchers and townspeople at the ferry over the fate of a fugitive slave family fighting for freedom, for the second time (Brown 1847: Ch. 12; See also S11. Additional data or comments).

The same account is briefly described in an article entitled "Buffalo Fugitive Slave Case and Riot", printed in the *Daily Commercial Advertiser*, a Buffalo newspaper Daily Commercial Advertiser [DCA] 13 July 1835):

Yesterday afternoon our streets were thronged by a mob under considerable excitement, produced by the arrest of a slave family and their subsequent rescue. As far as we can learn the facts, they are briefly these. One Tait, a slave agent from the south, having learned a family of slaves, consisting of a man, his wife, and a child, were living at St. Catharines, U.C., went over and brought them away in the night. They were followed to this city, when a party of Blacks organized and pursued the kidnappers as far as Hamburg, where they effected a rescue, and bore the liberated individuals off in triumph with the intention of placing them again on the Canadian side, but when at the ferry, at Black Rock, a reencounter took place between them and several citizens, who had been



called by the police to assist in arresting them, which resulted in some severe injuries on both sides. One young gentleman named Freemont, attached to Mr. Duffy's Theatre, received a dangerous contusion on the temple from an iron ball in the hand on one of the Blacks during the melee. The slaves succeeded in making good their escape. Eight or ten of the Blacks engaged in the riot have been committed by Justice Grosvenor, for trial.

An escape via the Black Rock ferry is recounted in an 1836 issue of *The Anti-Slavery Record* (American Anti-Slavery Society 1836, See also S11. Additional data or comments). Samuel Ringgold Ward was an escaped slave, a newspaper editor, and an abolitionist. He wrote about the same escape in his autobiography (Ward 1855: 177-179):

"I heard of one who, like the man just spoken of, reached the Erie River at Black Rock, near Buffalo, and in sight of that Canada which had been the object of his fondest desires, and had actually gone upon the ferryboat to be conveyed to his much-wished-for free home. The ferryman was loosing the boat from the shore, when, to his utter dismay, up rode his master upon a foaming steed, and with a look "Like the sunshine when it flashes on steel," drew his loaded pistol, and plainly told the ferryman--"If you loose that boat to convey my Negro to the opposite bank, I'll *blow* your brains out!"

The Negro in an instant seized a handspike, and, holding it menacingly over the ferryman's head, said, "If you don't loose the boat and ferry me across, I'll *beat* your brains out!"

The ferryman, one of the best of his class, a Yankee, friendly to the Negro, looked a moment, first at the one and then at the other, seeing both equally determined and decided, and expressed his decision. He said coolly, "Wall! I can't die but *once*; and if I die, I guess I would rather die doing right. So here goes the boat."

He loosed it and shoved it off. While this was being done, the slaveholder, seeing his slave, who had always "Fanned him while he slept, and trembled when he woke," defy him, with a threatening gesture at a white man, was thunderstruck. He sate in mute astonishment. His countenance reflected the state of his surprised mind. He was transfixed, as it were, to his saddle. He gazed with a stupid glare, as if he saw not, while the boat sped her way Canada-wards. The Negro, on the other hand, watched every inch of progress which widened the distance betwixt the two shores, until, not waiting for the boat to touch, he ran back to the stern, and then, with a full bound like a nimble deer, sprang from the boat to the shore in advance of the boat, and, rising, took off his poor old hat, and gave three cheers for the British sovereign."

Mrs. Betsy "Aunt Betsy" Robinson was among a family of nine that took the Black Rock ferry to Canada in 1837. They escaped from a plantation in Rockingham County, Virginia, and probably crossed the north fork of the Shenandoah River. According to her, the family was assisted by many people, both black and white, in the South as well as the North. They walked through Pittsburgh and Erie, Pennsylvania, and southwestern New York to the Village of Black Rock. The family was brought across the Niagara River to Fort Erie on the Black Rock ferry. She was still living in Fort Erie in 1899 (Severance 1899: 196-197).

Samuel Murray is described as an active local participant in the Underground Railroad. Murray was a "free-born negro" who came to Buffalo in 1852 and worked as a porter at the American Hotel, located on Ferry Street, near the ferry dock (Figure 4). He started work early in the morning and often encountered runaways at the back door asking for help in their efforts to get across to Canada (Priebe 1991: 53, Appendix GG; Wilner 1931: 429; Graf 1939: 79). Murray was quoted as saying "Many a time I have gone into the hotel and taken food for them. Then I would walk out Niagara Street to the ferry and see them on the boat bound for Canada" (Severance 1899: 197).





Figure 4. A circa 1900 image of the American Hotel. Samuel Murray worked as a porter here in the 1850s (Collection of Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society, used by permission).

It cannot be conclusively ascertained that the ferry was the runaway's destination in the following account. However, it does show Underground Railroad activity in the immediate vicinity. A letter-writer to the *Buffalo Courier* newspaper wrote about it in 1887 (Severance 1899: 199-200):

I remember one attempt that was made to capture a runaway slave. It was right up here on Niagara Street. The negro ventured out in daytime and was seized by a couple of men who had been on watch for him. The slave was a muscular fellow, and fought desperately for his liberty; but his captors began beating him over the head with their whips, and he would have been overpowered and carried off if his cries had not attracted the attention of two Abolitionists, who ran up and joined in the scuffle. It was just above Ferry Street, and they pulled and hauled at that slave and pounded him and each other until it looked as though somebody would be killed. At last, however, the slave, with the help of his friends, got away and ran for his life, and the slave-chasers and the Abolitionists dropped from blows to high words, the former threatening prosecutions and vengeance, but I presume nothing came of it.

An account from *Bound for Canaan: the Underground Railroad and the War for the Soul of America* describes another narrow escape via the ferry at Black Rock (Bordewich 2005: 256):

The *Mayflower* was the venue of a memorable incident in August 1854, when, as it was nearing the dock at Buffalo, the ship's barber, a fugitive slave named Hoover, recognized his former master in the company of several police officers; Hoover ran to the bow of the *Mayflower*, and leaped from it onto the stern of the nearest ship-named the *Plymouth Rock*, no less-and then climbed up from it onto the ferry bound across the Niagara River to Canada, thus making his escape.



The same account was detailed in a Buffalo newspaper entitled *Buffalo Democrat*. It was reprinted in *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, edited by Frederick Douglass in Rochester, New York (Frederick Douglass' Paper [FDP], 15 September 1854):

AN ESCAPE. As the steamboat Mayflower was nearing her dock, yesterday afternoon the barer, a negro man, named Hoover, saw standing upon the deck, in company with several police officers a person whom he recognized as his former master, from whose custody. Hoover had escaped many years since. Suspecting that he was in danger if he remained there, Hoover ran forward and as the bow of the Mayflower approached the stern of the Plymouth Rock, he jumped upon the deck of the latter vessel then dropped down into a small boat lying alongside, worked her round under the dock, crawled along until he reached the *ferry* boat International, which runs to Fort Erie, and was just ready for leaving, ascended quietly to her deck, and, in a few moments, was in Canadian waters, and safe. Hoover is a man of some thirty years of age, has resided in *Buffalo* for many years, and has a family here. It is remarkable that he should recognize his master, from whom he ran away when only ten years old. *Buffalo Democrat*

Eber M. Pettit was an active Underground Railroad agent living in nearby Fredonia, New York. He wrote *Sketches in the History of the Underground Railroad*, a well-known book among Underground Railroad scholars. In it, he describes his and others' experiences helping fugitive slaves escape to Canada. A number of accounts describe fugitives making use of the ferry and docks at the Broderick Park location.

Around 1859, upon hearing that he was to be sold away from his mother, Charley, a house slave from Loudon County, Virginia, stole his master's horse and ran away. He headed towards Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia) and with the help of a local hotel owner and a farmer, he got across the Ohio River. He was helped north by Underground Railroad station agents through Ohio, Westfield, New York, and Buffalo while other abolitionists convinced the slave catchers that he was headed toward Detroit. Charley eventually crossed the Niagara River at Black Rock (Pettit 1879: 18-23).

In January of 1858, a slave named Dan was escorted from Corning, New York to Dunkirk, New York with his master close behind. A number of Underground Railroad conductors helped him on his way to Buffalo and Black Rock harbor despite the high risk to themselves of getting caught. Dan's owner employed a number of men to watch out for Dan at Black Rock because it was a known station on the Underground Railroad. Even though the harbor was watched closely by slave catchers, agents managed to get him into a skiff and across the Niagara River just as the slave catchers arrived at the dock. Dan later returned to the Fredonia area of Western New York and worked for a time on a merchant vessel captained by an Underground Railroad agent (Pettit 1879: 24-26).

Tom Stowe was a slave who worked on a plantation near Vicksburg, Mississippi. Tom's master owned racing horses, fighting dogs and cocks and Tom was in charge of their upkeep. He was so good at his job that his owner repeatedly refused very high monetary offers for him. On one trip with his master, Tom was left alone in Morgantown, Virginia (now West Virginia) to manage the animals. A local grocer advised Tom that the nearby state of Pennsylvania was a free state, and that Canada was not much farther. Tom was distrustful of this grocer but that information, and other knowledge he gained from his travels through the north with his master, made him more interested in freedom. After Tom's son was sold and his wife died shortly thereafter, he made the decision to leave. His opportunity came after two years. His route led him through Pittsburgh, up the Alleghany River, to an Underground Railroad station in Franklin, Pennsylvania, mostly on foot. He then passed through Warren, Pennsylvania, Jamestown, New York, and to Fredonia, New York. After a few days, he was driven to Buffalo and, in the early morning, Tom Stowe was put on a boat at Black Rock and rowed across to Canada (Pettit 1879: 27-33).



A slave named Jim and others in his party escaped from a plantation in Virginia at Christmas time, using passes they received from their master. They were supposed to see relatives on another plantation. Instead, they changed directions and headed north. Jim had enough knowledge of the neighborhood around the plantation to convince the others to make an escape attempt. The party was able to get food from other slaves and they eventually crossed over the frozen Ohio River. When they reached Lake Erie, they were assisted by Underground Railroad agents on the road along Lake Erie, across Cattaraugus Creek, north to Buffalo. They were helped across the Niagara River to Canada at Black Rock (Pettit 1879: 89-96).

Benjamin Drew was an American abolitionist who travelled to Canada to interview former slaves who had made their way to Canada by the 1850s. His book, *The Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada*, documents their escape accounts. At least one of his interviewees crossed into Canada by way of the Black Rock Harbor and the Black Rock ferry.

James Adams was a slave from Virginia. When he was 17 years old he decided to escape slavery with several others. They set out on foot on the road north on August 12, 1824. They crossed a nearby river and hid in the woods for four days. They were aided by white sympathizers who hid them on their properties at night. James and his fellow fugitives walked for many days through wilderness, aided by a compass. They travelled through Ohio to Cleveland. At Cleveland, with a steamboat captain's permission, they boarded the ship and sailed to Buffalo. The captain walked the fugitives to the Black Rock ferry which they took to Canada. In 1856, James Adams resided in St. Catharines and owned his own house (Drew 1856: 19-28).

A letter-writer to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, described a close call for a group of fugitive slaves (Frederick Douglass' Paper [FDP], 4 January 1855):

Buffalo, Dec. 11, 1854

MR. EDITOR: - A few mornings since, I was awakened at an early hour by an immense noise and confusion at my door. Being suddenly awakened, I sprang up, and ran down stairs to ascertain the cause of such strange excitement. When, to my surprise, I found notwithstanding the "immense heavy snow drifts" that a train of cars belonging to the Underground Railroad had just arrived, bringing eight passengers, six men and two women, all direct from "Old Kentuck." Of course the doors of the depot were thrown open, and in they marched, rank and file, led by T.R. Esq., one of the conductors on the road. After a few moment's conversation, we conducted them to a public house kept by one of our people. When they had an opportunity of thoroughly warming and refreshing themselves the inner as well as outer man they were allowed to remain with us until one o'clock, when a sleigh was provided, and the eight happy souls, in charge of Phoenix Lansing, esq., one of our active and energetic townsmen, were driven to Black Rock, and in a few moment's more were safely landed on the other side of Jordan when one universal shout of joy ascended to Him who had been their guide and guardian from a land of slavery and despotism to a land of liberty and light. But the most singular circumstance in connection with this matter is, that just as they had landed on the Canada side, the cars on the Great Western Railroad arrived from the West, and to the surprise and astonishment of our friends, the first man that stepped from the cars, was a Kentuckian, the next door neighbor to the *owner* of three of our party. You may imagine the feelings of our friends at so strange and unexpected a meeting. "But," says they to their neighbor, "WE are all here."

Yours, I hopes of another arrival,

GEORGE WEIR, JR.



A correspondence to the *Provincial Freeman* describes a fugitive slave making an escape into Canada from Black Rock (Provincial Freeman [PF] 6 October 1855):

Not long since a colored man, living in the State of New York, named Isaac Parker, became involved in a quarrel and fight with a white neighbor, and was imprisoned. Meantime his opponent sent intelligence to his master, in Hardy County, Virginia, and immediately his young masters, Henry and William Harness came North, with all speed, to secure him, when he would leave prison; but being on the alert, he reached Canada, at *Black Rock*, near Buffalo, and was there accosted by them, who, in company with the Constable in that vicinity, sought to arrest him; they proceeded on board the cars of the Buffalo and Brantford railway, and again attempted an arrest, without specifying a charge, declaring, however, that they had a warrant for him. Nothing daunted, he refused to go with them; left the cars, followed by them, and proceeded by the towpath towards this place; then a conference was held by all the parties. The slaveholders and their ally, the Canada Constable, drew weapons and threatened. Parker, who is a large, muscular black man, *told them not to touch him, and walked on*, determined to slay the first one who attempted to interfere with him. So the chivalry knowing their man, thought better of it, and left him alone in his glory. Parker left Virginia several years ago, and came to Canada, but returned to New York, where the above imprisonment for assault, &c., took place. Two weeks ago, he returned to Canada, and after the contest on this soil, with the three cowards, two Yankees and one Canadian, he has determined to stay at home.

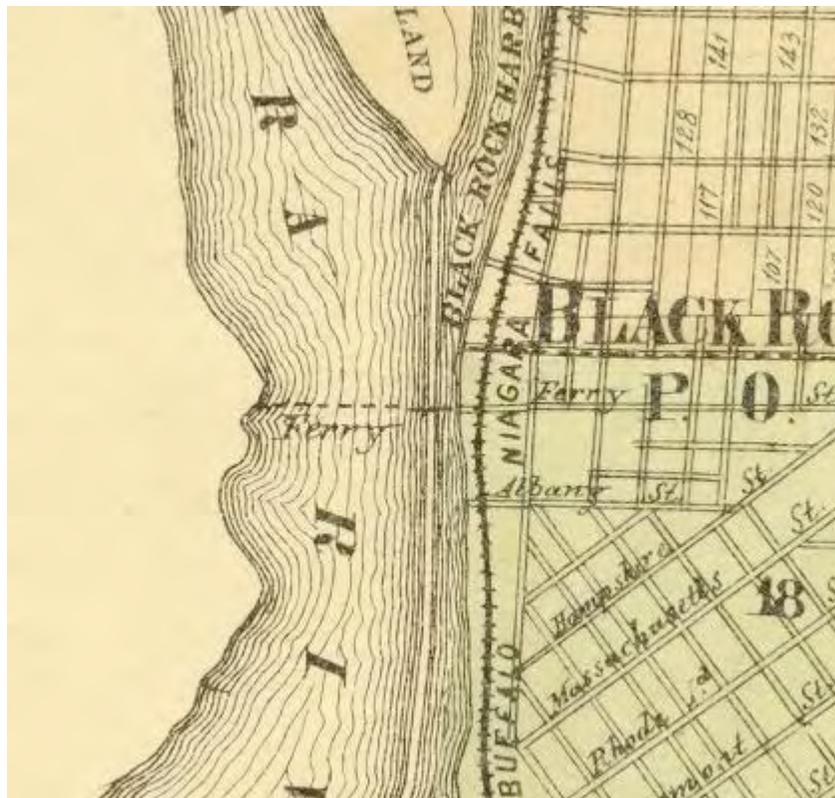


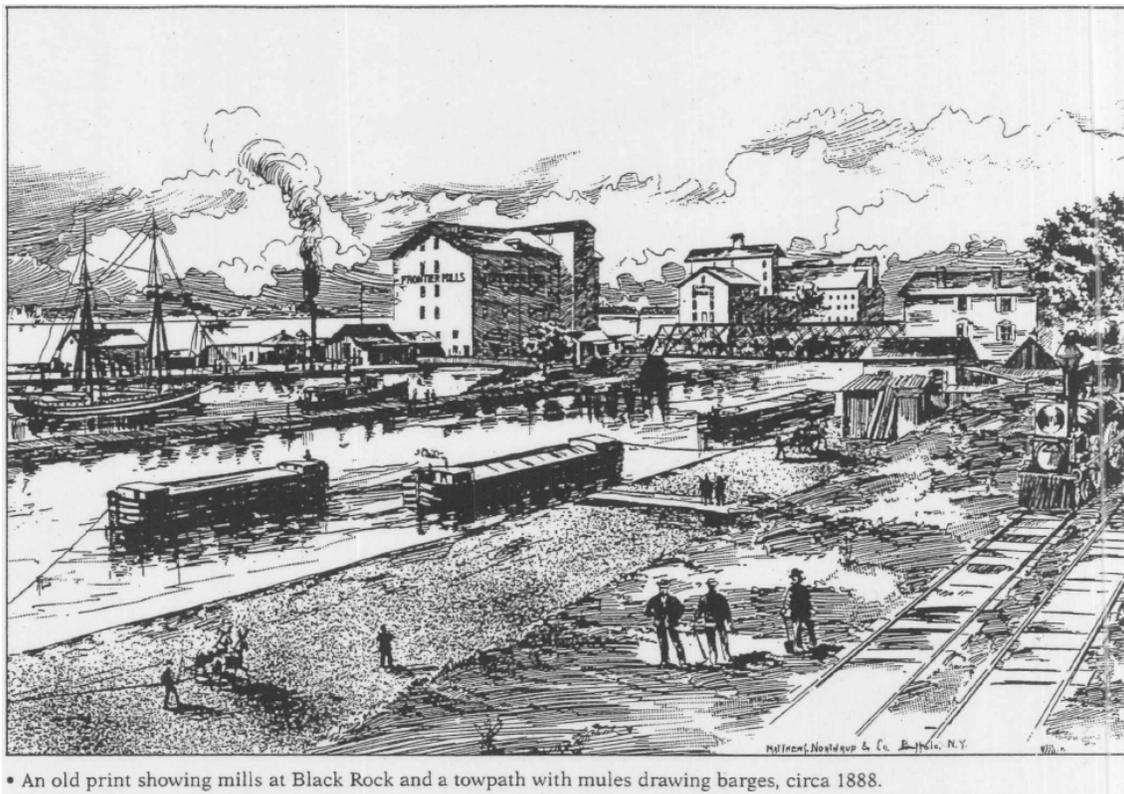
Figure 5. An 1866 map of the area around the Black Rock Ferry (Stone and Stewart).



S5. Provide a history of the site since its time of significance to the Underground Railroad, including physical changes, changes in ownership or use.

The Black Rock ferry continued to operate from the same dock until the middle of the 20th century; competition from the Peace Bridge forced the owners of the ferry to discontinue service. The Frontier Mills was built on the Bird Island pier in the 1830s within the Broderick Park boundaries. It was vacant by 1900 and was torn down by 1916. The section of the Bird Island pier associated with Broderick Park was being built up by the 1920s and the Buffalo Sewer Authority built the sewage treatment plant at the north end of the park in 1938. In the 1950s, the New York State Thruway was constructed on and along the alignment of the old Erie Canal.

Today, the park is utilized by fishermen, sight-seers, and other park goers. Broderick Park currently covers about 4.5 acres. The property containing the ferry dock and its associated buildings was probably about one acre in size.



• An old print showing mills at Black Rock and a towpath with mules drawing barges, circa 1888.

Figure 6. Circa 1888 view of the foot of Ferry Street, facing north. The ferry dock was just to the left of the Frontier Mills building. The ferry house is the small building in front of the mill (Buffalo & Erie County Public Library).



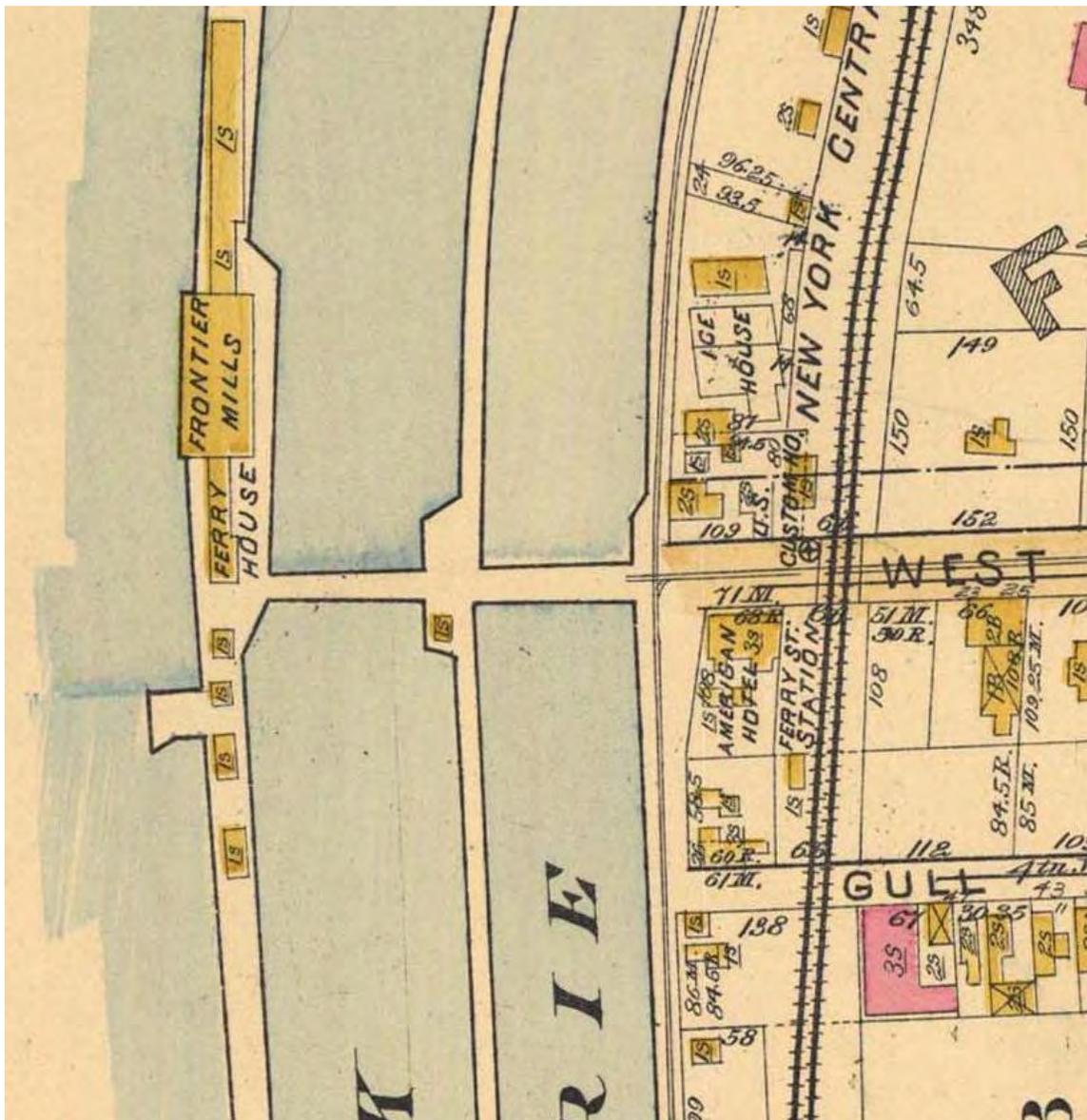


Figure 7. An 1894 Map showing the location of the ferry. The American Hotel lies just below West Ferry Street and adjacent to the Erie Canal. The ferry dock is to the far left on the Bird Island Pier, jutting out into the Niagara River. The I-190 highway currently lies on the old alignment of the Erie Canal in this area. The Black Rock Harbor lies between the Erie Canal and the Bird Island Pier (American Atlas Company).



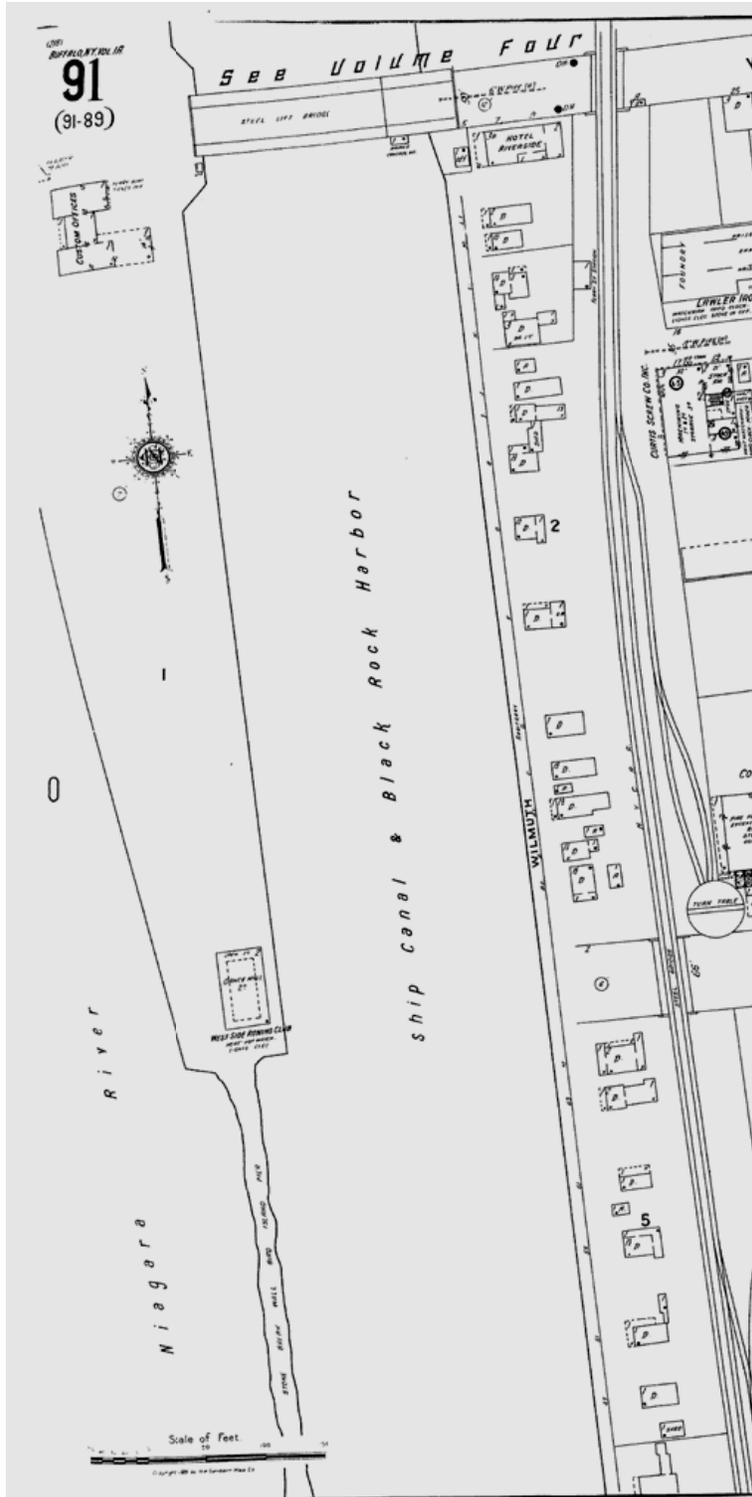


Figure 8. By 1925, the Bird Island Pier at this location was enlarged (Sanborn Map Company). The ferry dock was just outside the scope of this map, to the left and near the customs house. The old walls separating the Erie Canal from Black Rock Harbor were gone by 1925.





Figure 9. Recent aerial view of, from left to right, the location of the ferry dock, Broderick Park, Black Rock Harbor, I-190 highway, West Ferry Street (Robert Rich Way), and Niagara Street. Photo angles are marked in red for the June 11, 2010 photos that follow.





Photo 1. View of Broderick Park near the entrance, facing west. A plaque describing the park as an Underground Railroad station lies in the foreground. Canada lies in the background, across the Niagara River.



Photo 2. The former location of the Black Rock ferry dock, facing west. This is the view that many fugitive slaves would have seen as they prepared to embark on the ferry or other boats from here to Canada, in the background.





Photo 3. The former location of the Black Rock ferry, facing south. The Peace Bridge lies in the background.



Photo 4. Broderick Park, facing north.



Photo 5. Broderick Park, facing south. Bird Island Pier extends south from here into Lake Erie. Black Rock harbor lies to the left and the Peace Bridge and Lake Erie lie in the background.



- S6. Describe current educational programs, tours, markers, signs, brochures, site bulletins, or plaques at the site. Include text and photographs of markers.



Photo 6. A plaque is located at the entrance to Broderick Park. It describes the site as an Underground Railroad station, erected by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.

A plaque was erected at the entrance of Broderick Park by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society. The text reads “UNDERGROUND RAILROAD RIVER CROSSING From this site and from other places along the Niagara River escaping slaves were conducted across the boundary from the United States to freedom in Canada”.

The Motherland Connexions (www.motherlandconnexions.com) conducts tours to Broderick Park every year in collaboration with the Juneteenth Festival. The Underground Railroad tours hosted by Motherland Connexions also includes the Michigan Street Baptist Church, and Harriet Tubman’s documented crossing route into Canada. The tour also takes a trip to the site of Tubman’s first home in Canada after she escaped slavery, as well as her church of worship, the British Methodist Episcopal Church (BME) "Salem Chapel”.

In 1990 Ms. Lillion Batchelor, founder of The Buffalo Quarters Historical Society, hosted the first annual educational slave crossing re-enactment. The re-enactments went on for ten consecutive years, until Border Patrol closed access to the Niagara River, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Media accounts show that the re-enactments attracted spectators from all over the world, including World News film crews. Although these re-enactments are not currently taking place, they have played a significant role in the awareness of Broderick Parks’ rich history in The Underground Railroad.



S7. Include a bibliography. Discuss historical sources of information and how you used them.

Historical sources of information were gathered from the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, and reputable internet websites. A particularly useful tool was the Google Books website (books.google.com). Several of the fugitive narratives used in this document are located on that site and are searchable. A large number of fugitive accounts were included in the document in order to demonstrate the importance of the location to the Underground Railroad. Historic maps and images were used to develop the location's context, especially during its period of significance.

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1847 *Narrative of William W. Brown, a fugitive slave. Anti-slavery Office, Boston.*

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S8. Describe any local, state, or federal historic designation, records, signage, or plaques at the site.

A local historic plaque was erected at the entrance of Broderick Park by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society (See Photo 6). The text reads “UNDERGROUND RAILROAD RIVER CROSSING From this site and from other places along the Niagara River escaping slaves were conducted across the boundary from the United States to freedom in Canada”.

Three National Register eligible structures associated with Broderick Park have New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Unique Site Numbers (USN): Bird Island Pier (USN 02940.000072), Black Rock Canal (USN 02940.006767), and the West Ferry Street bridge (USN 02940.000080). Broderick Park was built on the Bird Island Pier and lies adjacent to the Black Rock Canal. The West Ferry Street bridge conveys traffic over the Black Rock Canal from West Ferry Street into the park.

Broderick Park currently does not have federal historic designation.

S9. Is the site open to the public? Describe accessibility conditions.

The site is open to the public. It is easily accessible by car and on foot from West Ferry Street and Niagara Street. Public visitors cross a draw bridge over Black Rock Canal in order to reach the park. There is ample parking. Most of the park and its facilities are handicapped accessible.

S10. Describe the nature and objectives of any partnerships that have contributed to the documentation, preservation, commemoration, or interpretation of the site.

Over the years many groups have formed and have contributed to the acknowledgment of the park’s history and significance. The Broderick Park Historic College has been developed from The Broderick Park Stakeholders. The group was formed from individuals with diverse backgrounds and expertise. However, each member of The Broderick Park Historic College has a common interest in the preservation, commemoration, and interpretation of the park’s history. This group consists of historians, educators, community leaders, activist, authors, archeologist, architects, artist and photographers, among others. The primary objective of this particular group is to complete the Freedom Memorial, which was designed in 1999 by Parson’s Engineering in collaboration with Lillion Batchelor. The Freedom Memorial master plans feature the following:

- A dramatic “gateway” arrival feature after crossing the Ferry Street lift bridge - - to include beautiful plantings, benches, a buried time capsule and a potential sculptural element.
 - Plantings at the entrance were intended to be naturalistic and “wild” looking to be reminiscent of the park from an earlier time when escaped slaves were be escorted across the river to freedom.
- A defining (and unifying) feature of the plan was going to be a meandering walkway (Freedom Walk) which would lead visitors through a series of spaces and “experiences” throughout the park – all of which would be focused on the history of the site as a crossing point during the height of the Underground Railroad. This was intended to represent the perilous journey to freedom from the south to the north.
 - Note that a portion of this walkway was constructed during the first phase of park development - - a crushed stone base with a stone dust surface was installed as a short-term fix until the final decorative pavers could be installed under future phases.
 - The final walkway surface was intended to be rustic, tumbled concrete pavers (or stone cobbles) which could be engraved as part of the park’s fundraising efforts for further improvements. A combination of inspirational sayings and famous quotations, as well as “donor” recognitions would dot the walkway.



- A “Freedom Escape Scene” would simulate an actual crossing of the river by escaping slaves. This was to include life-size bronze statues of slaves going over the stone seawall (which exists in the park) and into a boat waiting at the river’s edge (a reflecting pool) - - with other bronze statues located in other spots in the park as “lookout.” (Computer simulations are included highlighting this feature)
- An central outdoor lawn amphitheater would serve as an outdoor classroom and performance space. The stage was to include a Freedom sculpture or another fitting focal feature. *(This potential feature stimulated much debate, with no particular conclusion. One option proved to be a very powerful and meaningful as an abstract representation of the struggles and successes of the Underground Railroad. It included 3 major boulders joined together representing the various abolitionist movements – one red stone representing the Native Americans, one white stone representing the white abolitionists and Quakers, and one black stone representing the black abolitionists and freed slaves - pushing up out of the ground in a unified fashion, breaking the chains of slavery, and reaching upwards towards the sky and freedom. Many tears were shed by the entire group when discussing the various meanings and options for this feature.)*
 - It is also important to point out that this stage area and amphitheater was designed to line up perfectly with a Canadian flag flying on the opposite shoreline - - which obviously was a beacon of freedom for those escaping slaves.
 - As you can see, the master plan image left this space blank due to the many options for this feature, which also considered placing the Harriet Tubman memorial or statue in this spot, a series of flags, or a more traditional carved statue or sculpture, etc.
- The next feature was my favorite - - it was a spot in the walkway where many obstacles entered the route. Obviously the journey to freedom was full of obstacles and roadblocks. The path would widen out and become littered with large boulders, many of which could become seats for resting, and each boulder would have a word engraved in the top of them describing the many emotions that escaping slaves might have felt, i.e. STRUGGLE, HOPE, DANGER, PERSISTENCE, SURVIVAL, etc., etc.
- A Harriet Tubman memorial would include a life-size bronze statue of Harriet, looking towards the river and Canadian Shore. This feature would also be a gateway feature to those entering from the parking lot.
- Coming around the south end of the curve, there would be dead-end pathway spurs that lead to nowhere, similar to the many dead-ends and set-backs that slaves would encounter on their journey northward. Thick plantings would give a wilderness appearance and act as a visual barrier to the adjacent parking lot.
- Another area nearby would include tightly spaced trees close to the pathway edge, representing the thick forests traveled through on the way northward.
- The existing picnic shelter would be upgraded to give visitors a place to relax under cover.
- A peaceful and serene garden was included as a respite along the path and a place of reflection and tranquility. This was being dedicated to Lillion Batchelor for her tireless effort to establish the Freedom Memorial in Broderick Park. This spot sits up a bit higher and has a great view across the river. This is also representing the hope that the escaping slaves felt as they entered Buffalo and moved closer to their destination.
- The existing building was intended to be completely retrofitted and sided with a “period” style siding to look like an old barn or warehouse - - more fitting for the Freedom Memorial theme. It could serve as a Comfort Station, snack stand, gift shop and education center. A large outdoor terrace/café would overlook the outdoor amphitheater and allow people to sit beneath the trees, have a lunch, watch a performance and overlook the river setting.
- A bus drop-off was included for the school buses and tour buses that were expected to visit the park.
- Provisions are made for the Riverwalk Bicycle trail to travel through the site and across the bridge.
- Fishing access is maintained and promoted.
- The Boat Dock and Launch is reconstructed/rehabilitated.



- A new entrance feature with signage is introduced to the corner of Niagara Street and Ferry Street, giving people a much clearer direction of how to get to the park/
 - Landscape improvements need to be made to the Ferry Street corridor between Niagara Street and the bridge.

Freedom Memorial will serve as a platform in the implementation of educational programming and activities that encourage family gathering and positive interaction. Below are photos and digital imaging of the Freedom Memorial design plans and marketing content/design.



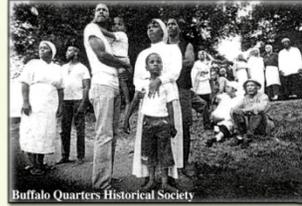
The Underground Railroad

Buffalo Quarters Historical Society "Freedom Memorial"

Buffalo, New York proudly holds a special place in the pages of American History as a last stop on the Underground Railroad to freedom.

Broderick Park is nationally recognized by historians as the sacred site of refuge for thousands of courageous runaway slaves; who by foot, wagon and boat fled the south to the banks of the Niagara River and what is now called Broderick Park.

Broderick Park, Buffalo, New York



Buffalo Quarters Historical Society
Founded - 1995
Founder - Lillion Batchelor
An organization dedicated to the re-enactment of the freedom struggle and the preservation of its rich history.

"God bless you has been your only reward.
The midnight sky and the silent stars have
been witness to your devotion to freedom."
Frederick Douglas

Harriet Tubman
1821-1913
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Harriet Tubman, the most famous and successful conductor of the Underground Railroad, was a slave who yearned to be free. She was known to friends and runaways as "Moses" and to abolitionist John Brown as "General" Tubman. Evading capture, she personally infiltrated the South 19 times and led countless slaves to Canada without losing a single passenger. Slavecatchers never collected the \$40,000 bounty offered for her... dead or alive.



Computer Simulation of proposed stage area and memorial features



As most Underground Railroad activity occurred during nighttime hours, the Big Dipper & North Star became the travelers' beacon of freedom. Slaves followed the stars until they reached the Canadian border.

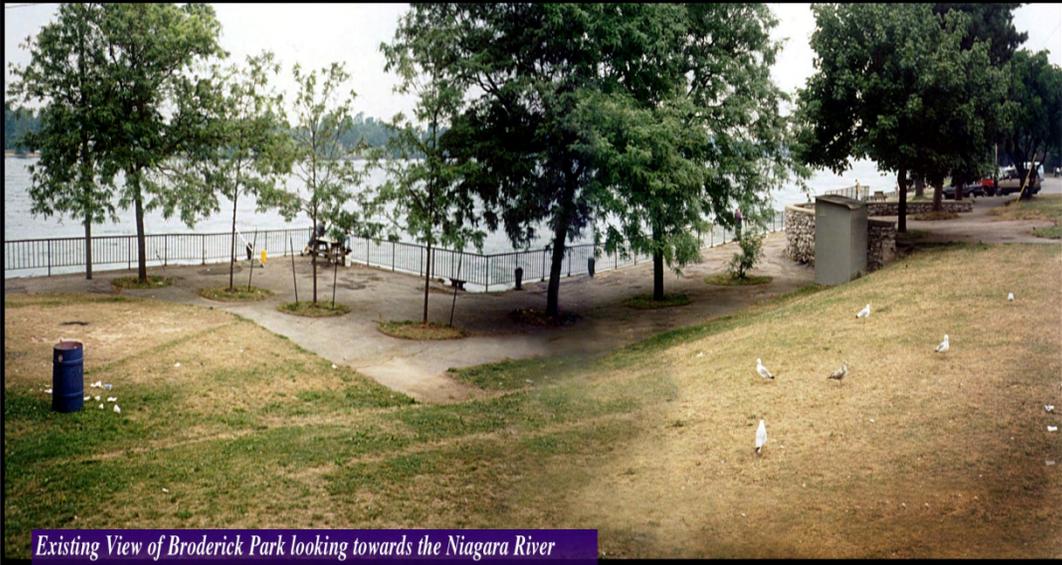
"Let Freedom Ring..." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



Prepared by: DE LEUW, CATHER
In association with: Sandy White,
Virginia, Tonnalee & Lillion Batchelor
May 1998



The Underground Railroad



Existing View of Broderick Park looking towards the Niagara River



Computer Simulation of the Proposed Underground Railroad Memorial

Prepared by: **DE LEUW, CATHER**
In Association with: Sandy White,
Virginia, Tonnalee & Lilion Bachelor



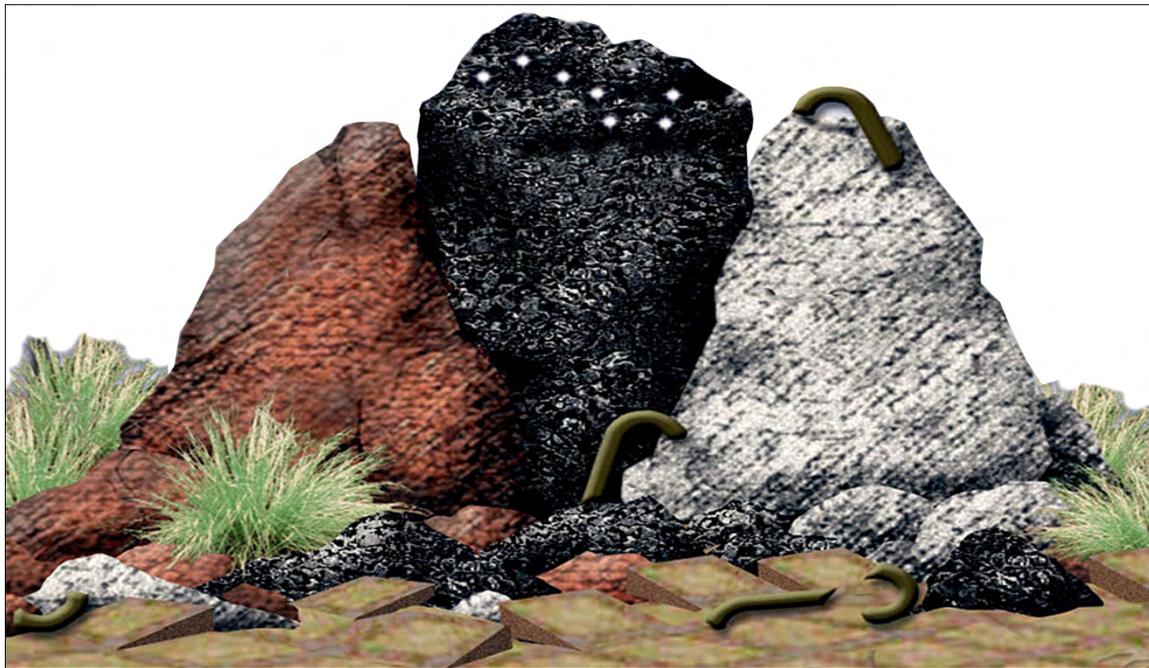
The Underground Railroad "Freedom Memorial"

Broderick Park, Buffalo, NY



Detail View of "Escape Scene"





The Underground Railroad "Freedom Memorial"

Broderick Park, Buffalo, NY



Three colored boulders represent the spirit of the Underground Railroad that broke the chains on the journey towards freedom. The Native American in local red medina stone, the Black Abolitionist in African black granite, and the White abolitionist (including the Quaker) in white granite. The center stone illustrates the north star and big dipper; the guiding lights of the northern sky.

Detail View of Freedom Memorial



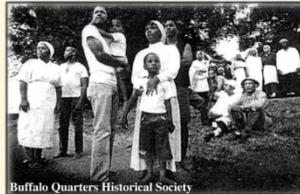
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"God bless you has been your only reward. The midnight sky and the silent stars have been witness to your devotion to freedom."
Frederick Douglass

Existing condition of Broderick Park



"before"

Looking south along the Niagara River with the Peace Bridge in the background.



Harriet Tubman
1821-1913
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harriet Tubman, the most famous and successful conductor of the Underground Railroad, was a slave who yearned to be free. She was known to friends and runaways as "Moses" and to abolitionist John Brown as "General" Tubman. Evading capture, she personally infiltrated the South 19 times and led countless slaves to Canada without losing a single passenger. Slavecatchers never collected the \$40,000 bounty offered for her... dead or alive.

Computer simulation of proposed memorial



"after"

Life sized bronze figures representing anxious escaped slaves and abolitionists only moments away from freedom in Canada.



As most Underground Railroad activity occurred during nighttime hours, the Big Dipper & North Star became the travelers' beacon of freedom. Slaves followed the stars until they reached the Canadian border.

"Let Freedom Ring..." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



Prepared by: DE LEUW, CATHER
In association with: Sandy White,
Virginia, Tonnalee & Lillian Batchelor
May 1998



The Underground Railroad



© 1997 Photo Courtesy of Melody Carter-Neal for Buffalo Quarters Historical Society

The origin of the Underground Railroad dates back into the early eighteenth century; for decades thousands of slaves seeking freedom fled their captors. Sheltered initially by Indian tribes and free blacks, these men, women and children quietly melted into the wilderness or friendly populated areas. Some fled to Mexico, but Canada beckoned as the safest haven of all.

By the 1830's, sympathetic whites and free blacks aided the mounting exodus with money and resources of their own, despite the harsh penalties. Although there are several versions as to how the movement got the name "Underground Railroad", one historian notes the widespread usage of the term around 1831 when steam railroads became popular. The conductors carried human cargo in covered wagons, closed carriages, and farm wagons equipped with closed compartments. Some of the runaway slaves escaped in boxes shipped as freight by rail or by boat. All Underground Railroad lines led North; travel took place almost exclusively at night. The North Star, moss on trees and a quiet network of "safe" houses led many runaways through the Southern Tier to Buffalo, New York and finally Broderick Park (one of the many stops on the Underground Railroad).

*Prepared by: DE LEUW, CATHER
In association with: Sandy White,
Virginia, Tonnalee & Lillian Batchelor
May 1998*



S11. Additional data or comments. (Optional)

Below is a chapter from William Wells Brown's autobiography. In it, he details a struggle between abolitionists and slave catchers over the fate of a fugitive slave family. Some of the events took place at the Black Rock ferry (Brown 1847: Ch. 12).

CHAPTER XII.

During the autumn of 1836, a slaveholder by the name of Bacon Tate, from the State of Tennessee, came to the north in search of fugitives from slavery. On his arrival at Buffalo he heard of two of the most valuable of the slaves that he was in pursuit of. They were residing in St. Catharine's, in Upper Canada, some twenty-five miles from Buffalo. After hearing that they were in Canada, one would have supposed that Tate would have given up all hope of getting them. But not so. Bacon Tate was a man who had long been engaged in the slave-trade, and previous to that had been employed as a negro-driver. In these two situations he had gained the name of being the most complete "negro-breaker" in that part of Tennessee where he resided. He was as unfeeling and as devoid of principle as a man could possibly be. This made him the person, above all others, to be selected to be put on the track of the fugitive slave. He had not only been commissioned to catch Stanford and his wife, the two valuable slaves already alluded to, but he had the names of some twenty others.

Many slaves had made their escape from the vicinity of Nashville, and the slaveholders were anxious to have some caught, that they might make an example of them. And Tate, anxious to sustain his high reputation as a negro-catcher, left no stone unturned to carry out his nefarious objects.

Stanford and his little family were as happily situated as fugitives can be, who make their escape to Canada in the cold season of the year. Tate, on his arrival at Buffalo, took lodgings at the Eagle Tavern, the best house at that time in the city. And here he began to lay his plans to catch and carry back into slavery those men and women who had undergone so much to get their freedom. He soon became acquainted with a profligate colored woman, who was a servant in the hotel, and who was as unprincipled as himself. This woman was sent to St. Catharine's, to spy out the situation of Stanford's family. Under the pretence of wishing to get board in the family, and at the same time offering to pay a week's board in advance, she was taken in. After remaining with them three or four days, the spy returned to Buffalo, and informed Tate how they were situated. By the liberal use of money, Tate soon found those who were willing to do his bidding. A carriage was hired, and four men employed to go with it to St. Catharine's, and to secure their victims during the night.

The carriage, with the kidnappers, crossed the Niagara river at Black Rock, on Saturday evening, about seven o'clock, and went on its way towards St. Catharine's; no one suspecting in the least that they were after fugitive slaves. About twelve o'clock that night they attacked Stanford's dwelling by breaking in the door. They found the family asleep, and of course met with no obstacle whatever in tying, gagging, and forcing them into the carriage.

The family had one child about six weeks old. That was kept at its mother's breast, to keep it quiet. The carriage re-crossed the river, at the same place, the next morning at sunrise, and proceeded to Buffalo, where it remained a short time, and after changing horses and leaving some of its company, it proceeded on its journey. The carriage being closely covered, no one had



made the least discovery as to its contents. But some time during the morning, a man, who was neighbor to Stanford, and who resided but a short distance from him, came on an errand; and finding the house deserted, and seeing the most of the family's clothes lying on the floor, and seeing here and there stains of blood, soon gave the alarm, and the neighbors started in every direction, to see if they could find the kidnappers. One man got on the track of the carriage, and followed it to the ferry at Black Rock, where he heard that it had crossed some three hours before. He went on to Buffalo, and gave the alarm to the colored people of that place. The colored people of Buffalo are noted for their promptness in giving aid to the fugitive slave. The alarm was given just as the bells were ringing for church. I was in company with five or six others, when I heard that a brother slave with his family had been seized and dragged from his home during the night previous. We started on a run for the livery-stable, where we found as many more of our own color trying to hire horses to go in search of the fugitives. There were two roads which the kidnappers could take, and we were at some loss to know which to take ourselves. But we soon determined to be on the right track, and so divided our company, -- one half taking the road to Erie, the other taking the road leading to Hamburg. I was among those who took the latter.

We travelled on at a rapid rate, until we came within half a mile of Hamburg Corners, when we met a man on the side of the road on foot, who made signs to us to stop. We halted for a moment, when he informed us that the carriage that we were in pursuit of was at the public house, and that he was then in search of some of his neighbors, to assemble and to demand of the kidnappers the authority by which they were taking these people into slavery.

We proceeded to the tavern, where we found the carriage standing in front of the door, with a pair of fresh horses ready to proceed on their journey. The kidnappers, seeing us coming, took their victims into a room, and locked the door and fastened down the windows. We all dismounted, fastened our horses, and entered the house. We found four or five persons in the bar-room, who seemed to rejoice as we entered.

One of our company demanded the opening of the door, while others went out and surrounded the house. The kidnappers stationed one of their number at the door, and another at the window. They refused to let us enter the room, and the tavern-keeper, who was more favorable to us than we had anticipated, said to us, "Boys, get into the room in any way that you can; the house is mine, and I give you the liberty to break in through the door or window." This was all that we wanted, and we were soon making preparations to enter the room at all hazards. Those within had warned us that if we should attempt to enter, they would "shoot the first one." One of our company, who had obtained a crow-bar, went to the window, and succeeded in getting it under the sash, and soon we had the window up, and the kidnappers, together with their victims, in full view.

One of the kidnappers, while we were raising the window, kept crying at the top of his voice, "I'll shoot, I'll shoot!" but no one seemed to mind him. As soon as they saw that we were determined to rescue the slaves at all hazards, they gave up, one of their number telling us that we might "come in."

The door was thrown open, and we entered, and there found Stanford seated in one corner of the room, with his hands tied behind him, and his clothing, what little he had on, much stained with blood. Near him was his wife, with her child, but a few weeks old, in her arms. Neither of them had anything on except their night-clothes. They had both been gagged, to keep them from



alarming the people, and had been much beaten and bruised when first attacked by the kidnappers. Their countenances lighted up the moment we entered the room.

The most of those who made up our company were persons who had made their escape from slavery, and who knew its horrors from personal experience, and who had left near and dear relatives behind them. And we knew how to "feel for those in bonds as bound with them."

The woman who had betrayed them, and who was in the house at the time they were taken, had been persuaded by Tate to go on with him to Tennessee. She had accompanied them from Canada, and we found her in the same room with Stanford and his wife. As soon as she found that we were about to enter the room, she ran under the bed. We knew nothing of her being in the room until Stanford pointed to the bed and said, "Under there is our betrayer." She was soon hauled out, and it was as much as some of us could do to keep the others from lynching her upon the spot. The curses came thick and fast from a majority of the company. But nothing attracted my attention at the time more than the look of Mrs. Stanford at the betrayer, as she sat before her. She did not say a word to her, but her countenance told the feelings of her inmost soul, and we could but think, that had she spoken to her, she would have said, "May the world deny thee a shelter! earth a home! the dust a grave! the sun his light! and Heaven her God!"

The betrayer begged us to let her go. I was somewhat disposed to comply with her request, but I found many to oppose me; in fact, I was entirely alone. My main reason for wishing to let her escape was that I was afraid that her life would be in danger. I knew that, if she was taken back to Buffalo or Canada, she would fall into the hands of an excited people, the most of whom had themselves been slaves. And they, being comparatively ignorant of the laws, would be likely to take the law into their own hands.

However, the woman was not allowed to escape, but was put into the coach, together with Stanford and his wife; and after an hour and a half's drive, we found ourselves in the city of Buffalo. The excitement which the alarm had created in the morning had broken up the meetings of the colored people for that day; and on our arrival in the city we were met by some forty or fifty colored persons. The kidnappers had not been inactive; for, on our arrival in the city, we learned that the man who had charge of the carriage and fugitives when we caught up with them, returned to the city immediately after giving the slaves up to us, and had informed Tate, who had remained behind, of what had occurred. Tate immediately employed the sheriff and his posse to re-take the slaves. So, on our arrival in Buffalo, we found that the main battle had yet to be fought. Stanford and his wife and child were soon provided with clothing and some refreshment, while we were preparing ourselves with clubs, pistols, knives, and other weapons of defence. News soon come to us that the sheriff, with his under officers, together with some sixty or seventy men who were at work on the canal, were on the road between Buffalo and Black Rock, and that they intended to re-take the slaves when we should attempt to take them to the ferry to convey them to Canada. This news was anything but pleasant to us, but we prepared for the worst.

We returned to the city about two o'clock in the afternoon, and about four we started for Black Rock ferry, which is about three miles below Buffalo. We had in our company some fifty or more able-bodied, resolute men, who were determined to stand by the slaves, and who had resolved, before they left the city, that if the sheriff and his men took the slaves, they should first pass over their dead bodies.



We started, and when about a mile below the city, the sheriff and his men came upon us, and surrounded us. The slaves were in a carriage, and the horses were soon stopped, and we found it advisable to take them out of the carriage, and we did so. The sheriff came forward, and read something purporting to be a "Riot Act," and at the same time called upon all good citizens to aid him in keeping the "peace." This was a trick of his, to get possession of the slaves. His men rushed upon us with their clubs and stones and a general fight ensued. Our company had surrounded the slaves, and had succeeded in keeping the sheriff and his men off. We fought, and at the same time kept pushing on towards the ferry.

In the midst of the fight, a little white man made his appearance among us, and proved to be a valuable friend. His name was Pepper; and he proved himself a pepper to the sheriff and his posse that day. He was a lawyer; and as the officers would arrest any of our company, he would step up and ask the officer if he had a "warrant to take that man;" and as none of them had warrants, and could not answer affirmatively, he would say to the colored man, "He has no right to take you; knock him down." The command was no sooner given than the man would fall. If the one who had been arrested was not able to knock him down, some who were close by, and who were armed with a club or other weapon, would come to his assistance.

After it became generally known in our company that the "little man" was a lawyer, he had a tremendous influence with them. You could hear them cry out occasionally, "That's right, knock him down; the little man told you to do it, and he is a lawyer; he knows all about the law; that's right, -- hit him again! he is a white man, and he has done our color enough."

Such is but a poor representation of what was said by those who were engaged in the fight. After a hard-fought battle, of nearly two hours, we arrived at the ferry, the slaves still in our possession. On arriving at the ferry, we found that some of the sheriff's gang had taken possession of the ferry-boat. Here another battle was to be fought, before the slaves could reach Canada. The boat was fastened at each end by a chain, and in the scuffle for the ascendancy, one party took charge of one end of the boat, while the other took the other end. The blacks were commanding the ferryman to carry them over, while the whites were commanding him not to. While each party was contending for power, the slaves were pushed on board, and the boat shoved from the wharf. Many of the blacks jumped on board of the boat, while the whites jumped on shore. And the swift current of the Niagara soon carried them off, amid the shouts of the blacks, and the oaths and imprecations of the whites. We on shore swung our hats and gave three cheers, just as a reinforcement came to the whites. Seeing the odds entirely against us in numbers, and having gained the great victory, we gave up without resistance, and suffered ourselves to be arrested by the sheriff's posse. However, we all remained on the shore until the ferry-boat had landed on the Canada side. As the boat landed, Stanford leaped on shore, and rolled over in the sand, and even rubbed it into his hair.

I did not accompany the boat over, but those who did informed us that Mrs. Stanford, as she stepped on the shore, with her child in her arms, exclaimed, "I thank God that I am again in Canada!" We returned to the city, and some forty of our company were lodged in jail, to await their trial the next morning.

And now I will return to the betrayer. On our return to Buffalo, she was given over to a committee of women, who put her in a room, and put a guard over her. Tate, who had been very active from the time that he heard that we had recaptured the carriage with the slaves, was still in the city. He was not with the slaves when we caught up with them at Hamburg, nor was he to



be found in the fight. He sent his hirelings, while he remained at the hotel drinking champagne. As soon as he found the slaves were out of his reach, he then made an offer of fifty dollars to any person who would find the betrayer. He pretended that he wished to save her from the indignation of the colored people. But the fact is, he had promised her that if she would accompany him to the south, that he would put her in a situation where she would be a lady. Poor woman! She was foolish enough to believe him; and now that the people had lost all sympathy for her, on account of her traitorous act, he still thought that, by pretending to be her friend, he could induce her to go to the south, that he might sell her. But those who had her in charge were determined that she should be punished for being engaged in this villanous transaction.

Several meetings were held to determine what should be done with her. Some were in favor of hanging her, others for burning her, but a majority were for taking her to the Niagara river, tying a fifty-six pound weight to her, and throwing her in. There seemed to be no way in which she could be reached by the civil law. She was kept in confinement three days, being removed to different places each night.

So conflicting were the views of those who had her in charge, that they could not decide upon what should be done with her. However, there seemed to be such a vast majority in favor of throwing her into the Niagara river, that some of us, who were opposed to taking life, succeeded in having her given over to another committee, who, after reprimanding her, let her go.

Tate, in the mean time, hearing that the colored people had resolved to take vengeance on him, thought it best to leave the city. On Monday, at ten o'clock, we were all carried before Justice Grosvenor; and of the forty who had been committed the evening before, twenty-five were held to bail to answer to a higher court. When the trials came on, we were fined more or less, from five to fifty dollars each.

During the fight no one was killed, though there were many broken noses and black eyes; one young man, who was attached to a theatrical corps, was so badly injured in the conflict that he died some three months after.

Thus ended one of the most fearful fights for human freedom that I ever witnessed. The reader will observe that this conflict took place on the Sabbath, and that those who were foremost in getting it up were officers of justice. The plea of the sheriff and his posse was, that we were breaking the Sabbath by assembling in such large numbers to protect a brother slave and his wife and child from being dragged back into slavery, which is far worse than death itself.

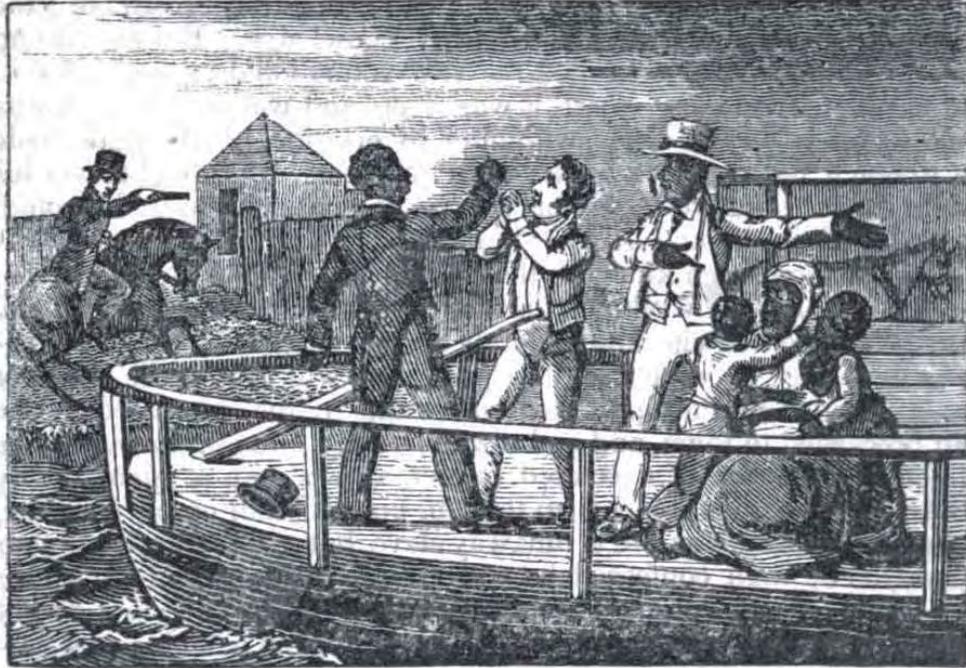


THE
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WHOLE No. 18.



THE RUNAWAY.

At the late interesting Anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, Alvan Stewart, Esq., of Utica, rose just as the meeting was about to separate, and related the following anecdote, which may be relied upon as authentic. The sympathy of the audience was decidedly with the fugitive.

"In Georgia," said Mr. S., "about three years ago, there lived a man, black but noble, a giant in strength, and in form an Apollo Belvidere, about 35 years of age, a slave, with a wife and four children, also slaves. The love of liberty burned irrepresible in his bosom, and he determined to escape, and free his wife and children, at every hazard. He had heard of Canada, as a place where the laws made every man free, and protected him in his freedom. But of its situation, or the road thither, or the geography of the intermediate country, he knew nothing. A Quaker who resided near him, being privy to his design, resolved to aid him in its accomplishment; and accordingly carried the slave and his family fifty miles in a wagon by night. In the day time they lay concealed in the woods; and on the second night the same



man carried them fifty miles further. At the end of the second night he told the black man that he could do no more for him, having already endangered both his life and property. He told the slave that he must not travel on the highway, nor attempt to cross a ferry, but, taking him by the hand, he committed him to God and the North star. This star he was to take as his guide, and it would lead him at length to the land of British freedom. The poor slave bade adieu to his benefactor, and after skulking in the day and travelling by night, he at length came to an unexpected obstacle. It was a broad river, (the Savannah,) the existence of which he had not the least knowledge. But as nothing remained but to cross it, he tied his two young children on his back, and between swimming where it was deep, and wading where it was shallow, his two elder sons swimming by his side, he at length made out to reach the opposite bank; then returning, he brought over his wife in the same manner. In this way he passed undiscovered through the states of South and North Carolina and Virginia, crossed Pennsylvania without even knowing that it was the land of the Quakers; and finally, after six weeks of toil and hardship, he reached Buffalo. Here he placed his wife and children in the custody of a tribe of Indians in the neighborhood, for the poor man will always be the poor man's friend, and the oppressed will stand by the oppressed. The man proceeded to town, and as he was passing through the streets, he attracted the notice of a colored barber, also a man of great bodily power. The barber stepped up to him, put his hand on his shoulder, and says, 'I know you are a runaway slave, but never fear, I am your friend.' The man confessed he was from Georgia, when the barber said, 'Your master inquired about you to-day, in my shop, but do not fear; I have a friend who keeps a livery stable, and will give us a carriage as soon as night comes, to carry your family beyond the reach of a master.' As the ferry boat does not run across the Niagara river in the night, by day break they were at the ferry house, and rallied the ferryman to carry them to the Canada shore. They hastened to the boat, and just as they were about to let go, the master was seen, on his foaming horse, with pistol in hand, calling out to the ferryman to stop and set those people ashore, or he would blow his brains out. The stout barber, quick as thought, said to the ferryman, 'If you do n't put off this instant, I'll be the death of you.' The ferryman, thus threatened on both sides, lifted up his hands, and cried: 'The Lord have mercy on me! It seems I am to be killed any how. But if I do die, I will die doing right,' and CUT THE ROPE.

The powerful current of the Niagara swept the boat rapidly into deep water, beyond the reach of tyranny. The workmen at work on the steamboat Henry Clay, near by, almost involuntarily gave three cheers for liberty. As the boat darted into the deep and rapid stream, the people on the Canada side, who had seen the occurrence, cheered her course, and in a few moments the broad current was passed, and the man, with his wife and children, were all safe on British soil, protected by British laws!!

