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## Harriet Tubman: A Special Resource Study of an American Icon

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Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Historic Preservation 2004.

Advisor: David Hollenberg

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# Harriet Tubman: A Special Resource Study of an American Icon

## Disciplines

Historic Preservation and Conservation

## Comments

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Advisor: David Hollenberg

HARRIET TUBMAN:  
A SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY OF AN AMERICAN ICON

Erin Marie McGinn

A THESIS

in

Historic Preservation

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

2004

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# I. Introduction

In the fall of 2000, in Public Law 106-516, the “Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act,” the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress authorized a Special Resource Study of the sites associated with Harriet Tubman, with the intent of identifying an appropriate site or sites to recognize Harriet Tubman. This study is being carried out by the National Park Service. At the completion of the Study the National Park Service will make recommendations ranging from a unit in the National Park System to a National Heritage Corridor for Congress to consider.

This thesis has taken on aspects of the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study. It looks into the life of Harriet Tubman, summarizing the broad themes that make her an important figure in the history of the United States. The current sites designated for their connection with Harriet Tubman are examined, in addition to the other sites listed in the legislation authorizing the Study. Also, further research was conducted to describe and evaluate other sites associated with Harriet Tubman that have a documented connection to her.

The purpose of this thesis is to find a site or a combination of sites that tells the story of Harriet Tubman, and serves her legacy. To do this, different approaches in interpretation are consulted through viewing how related sites have interpreted the themes that span Tubman’s life. In addition, various forms of National Park Service designations and protection are weighed. Once these steps are carried out a recommendation is made.

This thesis concludes by proposing to designate a site to serve as a tangible resource to Harriet Tubman, where the American public can learn about her life and her many contributions to United States history.

## II. Special Resource Study

A Special Resource Study is a formal evaluation process to help determine whether a proposed site should be added by Congress to the National Park System. Such studies are authorized by Congress and conducted by the National Park Service, under the oversight of the Department of the Interior. These studies conclude with recommendations, weighing options of management and possible inclusion of a resource into the National Park System. Upon completion of the study, a report is given to Congress. Congress then relies on the suggestions of the National Park Service to help decide whether to create and add a National Park Unit to the National Park System or not.

Special Resource Studies typically must address three issues: national significance, suitability and feasibility. A resource is nationally significant if it is an outstanding example of a particular type, illustrates cultural themes of national heritage, offers opportunity for public enjoyment, and retains integrity. Suitability concerns representation of a cultural theme not already thoroughly represented in the System. To be feasible for inclusion in the National Park System a resource's physical dimensions and characteristics must be adequate for public enjoyment. In this case, Congress charged the National Park Service with evaluating **all** the sites associated with Harriet Tubman throughout the country; and determining their significance, suitability and feasibility.

In November of 2000, the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress passed legislation, requiring the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a Special Resource Study for Harriet Tubman related sites. (The legislation can be found in Appendix A.) The Act states, "The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a special resource study of the national significance, feasibility of

long-term preservation, and public use of the...sites associated with Harriet Tubman.”<sup>1</sup>

These sites are listed in the legislation as (1) Harriet Tubman's birthplace, located in Dorchester County, Maryland, (2) Bazel Church in Cambridge, Maryland, (3) Harriet Tubman's residence in Auburn, New York, (4) The Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged in Auburn, New York, (5) The Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, also in Auburn, New York, (6) Harriet Tubman's grave in Auburn, New York, and lastly (7) William Henry Seward's home in Auburn, New York.<sup>2</sup> Harriet Tubman was born and grew up in Dorchester County, Maryland, while Auburn, NY is where she settled in the last forty plus years of her life. In addition to the specified sites the National Park Service was directed to locate and evaluate others sites, that have a connection with Harriet Tubman.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this Special Resource Study is to gain a better understanding of Harriet Tubman; to investigate alternatives in management options, and to determine if and how the National Park Service should preserve any site or sites associated with Harriet Tubman in order to recognize her life and her contributions on a national level. The law further mandates that the National Park Service formulate a proposal recommending designation of one or a combination of the sites identified in the Act as a unit of the National Park System, and/or to establish a National Heritage Corridor that integrates the same identified sites and any other sites associated with Harriet Tubman.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act. Public Law 106-516 [s.2345]

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Senators Charles Schumer (D-NY), Paul Sarbanes (D- MD), and Congressman Amo Houghton (R-NY) supported the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study bill through to enactment. National Park Service testimony on its behalf was made by then Deputy Director Denis P. Galvin. The Act builds on information and resources contained in the Underground Railroad Special Resource study, which looked at many sites around the United States connected to the Underground Railroad. Conducted in the 1990s, it identified thirteen sites that necessitated more research to evaluate their possible inclusion in the National Park System. Two of these sites were the Harriet Tubman Home in Auburn, New York, and her believed birthplace in Dorchester County, Maryland.<sup>5</sup>

Currently the National Park Service is in the midst of the Special Resource Study, exploring the elements of Harriet Tubman's legacy in conjunction with the places where she lived and worked. It is also investigating management options of park service units and/or affiliated programs for application to Harriet Tubman connected sites. The law requires that the final study report is to be completed by the fall of 2005. The study might propose designation of National Park Units, or related areas, or recommend a National Park Service partnership program. The final study report will suggest the best management option to honor Harriet Tubman, as defined by the resources, interpretive potential, public access and ownership.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study website, [www.harriettubmanstudy.org](http://www.harriettubmanstudy.org), sponsored by the National Park Service.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

### III. Harriet Tubman



Harriet Tubman (Larson)

Why did Congress pass this act to research Harriet Tubman related sites? Why her? Harriet Tubman is an American icon. The Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act says she “is an important figure in the history of the United States.”<sup>7</sup> Her place in history has been the subject of three recently published biographies by Jean M. Humez, Catherine Clinton, and Kate Clifford Larson. Larson’s *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* is considered the most solid scholarship

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<sup>7</sup> Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act. Public Law 106-516 [s.2345]

and is the product of a rigorous professional process. Her work was relied on more so than the others in the following brief sketch of Tubman's life.

Harriet Tubman overcame many adversities and is a woman of several accomplishments. As an enslaved person she sought her own freedom. As a conductor on the Underground Railroad she led close to seventy enslaved persons to freedom, instructed fifty more in their own escape, and inspired untold numbers more. During the Civil War she was a cook, nurse, scout and spy for the Union Army. In the later years of her life she was an avid and prominent speaker for the suffragist movement, and set up a home for elderly former slaves.

### ***Enslaved 1822-1849***

Harriet Tubman was born into enslavement in 1822.<sup>8</sup> Her parents, Harriet "Rit" Green and Benjamin Ross, were owned by two different white planter families in Dorchester County, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. With the marriage of Mary Pattison Brodess and Anthony Thompson, members of the two respective slaveholding families, in 1808, Tubman's parents became members of the same household and began a family of their own.<sup>9</sup> Araminta, Harriet Tubman's birth name ("Minty," as she was called) was one of eleven children born to Rit.<sup>10</sup>

In 1810, Thompson's wife, Mary, died, making him the legal guardian of his stepson Edward Brodess and his estate until he came of age in 1822. Brodess' estate was comprised of land in Bucktown, some miles away from the Thompson plantation in

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<sup>8</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 18.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p.10.

<sup>10</sup> Catherine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman, The Road to Freedom*, New York: Little, Brown and Co. 2004. p.4.

Peter's Neck, slaves including Rit and her offspring, cash, and investments.<sup>11</sup> Between late 1823 and early 1824, Edward Brodess had moved to his property in Bucktown to establish a farm, bringing his slaves, Rit, Minty and her siblings, with him. Ben remained on the plantation, as he was the property of Thompson.<sup>12</sup>

The Brodess farm was small but the family was growing large. Brodess often hired out his slaves or sold them off completely to make ends meet. Two of Harriet Tubman's sisters were sold into the Deep South. She remembered this event in later years and reported it to her biographer Sarah Bradford. "[She] had watched them from the top of the fence, as they went off weeping and lamenting till they were hidden from her sight forever."<sup>13</sup> Harriet herself was hired out. At the age of about six or seven she went to work for James Cook, who made her set and check muskrat traps in the Eastern Shore marshes in the middle of the winter. This was detrimental to her health, rendering her weak.<sup>14</sup> She also went to work for a mistress by the name of Miss Susan, who whipped Tubman. She would dust too soon after sweeping, allowing the dust to resettle on the furniture. Harriet was unaware of this mistake and Miss Susan was unwilling to teach slaves.<sup>15</sup>

When Harriet Tubman was a teenager she was hired out as a field hand to a local plantation owner. On one occasion she was sent on an errand to a dry goods store at the crossroads in Bucktown. An overseer was tracking down a missing slave and found the

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<sup>11</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 17.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p.18

<sup>13</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Harriet, The Moses of Her People*. New York: J.J.Little and Co. 1901. p 15.

<sup>14</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 38.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

boy at the store. Tubman was asked to assist in his capture but refused. The overseer resorted to throwing a two pound weight from off the store counter to stop the evading slave. Tubman was the one, however, to receive a blow to the head. She never fully recovered from the incident. It created, for her, a condition in which she would fall asleep or lose consciousness at any time for short bouts. She would awake continuing her conversation. This “somnolency” continued until the day she died, stirring visions and dreams strengthening Harriet’s already strong faith.<sup>16</sup>

When she got older, Brodess let Harriet Tubman hire herself out, on the grounds that she would pay him a set wage. For five or six years she was rented out to John T. Stewart, a well known merchant and shipbuilder.<sup>17</sup> Stewart put her to work driving oxen, carting, and plowing, “all the work of a man.”<sup>18</sup>

Around 1844, Araminta Ross married John Tubman. When she took on Tubman’s name, she took on the name of Harriet as well. John Tubman was a freeman that lived and worked in Peter’s Neck. However, the newlyweds did not live together.<sup>19</sup> She was hired by Dr. Anthony C. Thompson, the son of Anthony Thompson, and lived with him from 1847 to 1849.<sup>20</sup> It is unknown whether Harriet worked at Thompson’s small farm, Bellefield, in Cambridge or his plantation in Caroline County in 1849.<sup>21</sup>

In that year, Tubman’s master Edward Brodess died, leaving his widow with a massive debt. To alleviate this burden, she resorted to the sale of slaves. Fearing that she

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid. pp. 42-43.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 75.

<sup>19</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 62.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 72.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p. 80.

would be sold away from her family to the Deep South, Harriet Tubman fled.<sup>22</sup> Following the North Star and investing the help of ‘friends’ that were part of a network called the Underground Railroad, she made her way north towards freedom.<sup>23</sup>

She described how it felt to arrive on free land in Pennsylvania to her biographer Sarah Bradford: “When I found that I had crossed that line, I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven.”<sup>24</sup>

### ***Fugitive and ‘Moses of her people’ 1850-1860***

Harriet Tubman arrived safely in Philadelphia. Though free, she was unhappy. She told Bradford, “I was a stranger in a strange land; and my home, after all, was down in Maryland; because my father, my mother, my brothers, and sisters, and friends were there. But I was free and they should be free.”<sup>25</sup> This was her motive that led her back to Maryland. She arranged jobs as a domestic servant and cook in hotels and private homes in Philadelphia. Later, she would do the same in the summer months at Cape May, New Jersey. Saving her money to afford travel costs, she planned to retrieve her beloved family members and bring them north herself.<sup>26</sup>

Using the help of the good people who used their homes as stations on the Underground Railroad, Tubman first brought out her niece Kessiah Bowley and her two

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 77.

<sup>23</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 88.

children by helping them escape in 1850.<sup>27</sup> In 1851 she went back for her husband, only to discover that John Tubman had taken another wife. Though Harriet must have been heartbroken, this did not discourage her rescue efforts. She returned in that same year, bringing a group of eleven enslaved family and friends beyond Philadelphia to Canada. The stakes for such activity had been raised by the Fugitive Slave Act, passed in 1850, which increased the chances of being caught and returned to bondage. The Act required northern authorities to restore fugitive slaves to their southern owners. In addition, those who assisted in the flight of the enslaved were subject to heavy fines and jail time.<sup>28</sup>

In order to acquire more money, Harriet Tubman returned to work in Philadelphia and Cape May. As a result, in the fall of 1852 she was able to bring nine fugitives to freedom from the Eastern Shore to Canada.<sup>29</sup> Around Christmas of 1854 Harriet Tubman secured a safe flight for freedom for her three brothers, leaving her parents for a trip in 1857.<sup>30</sup> She was able to bring them to St. Catherines, Canada, where she placed them until 1859.<sup>31</sup>

On the Underground Railroad, Tubman traveled through Wilmington, Philadelphia, New York City, Albany, Syracuse, Auburn, Rochester, on the way to St. Catherines, Canada.<sup>32</sup> Through her Underground Railroad work she made connections and created relations with well known Abolitionists, such as Thomas Garrett, a Delaware Underground Railroad operator, William Still of the Pennsylvania Antislavery Society, and Lucretia Mott, a Pennsylvania Quaker. Also in the late 1850s, Tubman raised money

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p. 90.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. p. 92.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. p. 96.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. p. 113.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 152.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p. xxiv.

to support her family by joining antislavery lecture circuits in Boston and the surrounding region, telling of her experiences as a slave and a conductor on the Underground Railroad. In Boston she formed relationships with more prominent abolitionists, such as William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Franklin Sanborn.<sup>33</sup>

In 1858, John Brown, having become aware of Tubman due to her involvement and speeches at abolitionist meetings, sought her out in St. Catherines. He was hoping that Harriet would help him recruit runaway slaves, and strategize an attack on Harper's Ferry, Virginia. He thought that her experience and knowledge of terrain, gained on the Underground Railroad, and her relations to Southern fugitives would assist in his raid.<sup>34</sup> Because she would be able to do these things for him, Brown dubbed her "General Tubman." However, Brown was unable to contact Tubman and began the raid without her. His attack was unsuccessful and he was executed.<sup>35</sup>

In the late winter of 1859, William H. Seward, a New York Senator and the future Secretary of State under the Lincoln Administration, sold Harriet Tubman a small parcel of property on the town line of Fleming and Auburn, New York. "The lot consisted of a house, a barn, several outbuildings and tillable land, providing ample room for Tubman, her parents and any other family members or friends who were in need of a home."<sup>36</sup>

Harriet Tubman's last trip on the Underground Railroad was made towards the end of 1860. She went to retrieve her only remaining sibling and her children. When Tubman reached the eastern shore she received news of her sister's death. Harriet did not

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p. 162.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 157.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p. 158.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. p. 163.

leave empty-handed, however. A party of seven, including an infant, accompanied her north. This trip proved difficult as the Underground Railroad had changed and began to fade since Tubman's last journey, three years prior.<sup>37</sup>

All and all, in thirteen trips, in the ten years that she was a conductor, in addition to ensuring her families' safety and speaking out against the institution of slavery, she assisted nearly one hundred and twenty fugitives to freedom, seventy of which she removed from the clutches of slavery herself. Tubman later said, "I can say what most conductors can't say—I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger."<sup>38</sup>

### ***Cook, Nurse, Scout, and Spy 1861-1865***

The Civil War began in 1861 when Confederate troops fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina. In January of 1862, Massachusetts Governor, John Andrew, arranged to send Harriet Tubman to Hilton Head, South Carolina, to assist in the "Port Royal Experiment."<sup>39</sup> The Experiment was a program that focused on breaking down the plantation slave labor system and instating a wage based system. Here, Tubman taught newly freed women how to wash, cook, and sew for the Union Soldiers.<sup>40</sup>

It didn't take long for Union officers to realize what an asset they had in Tubman. With Underground Railroad experience, and stealth, she was virtually undetectable as a Union spy to Confederate rebels. Harriet was scouting beyond the occupied Port Royal

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<sup>37</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Harriet, The Moses of Her People*. New York: J.J.Little and Co. 1901. p 83

<sup>38</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 276.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* p. 203.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* p. 204.

area, up rivers and streams spying on enemy activity.<sup>41</sup> In June 1863, Tubman led a raid from Port Royal, twenty-five miles up the Combahee River, under the command of Col. Montgomery. This attack resulted in the liberation of over seven hundred slaves fleeing from plantations on or near the river.<sup>42</sup>

About a month later, Harriet Tubman was witness to the horrific event of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts regiment assault on Fort Wagner, resulting in 256 casualties for the Fifty-fourth. This is how she described it, “And then we saw the lightning, and that was the guns; and then we heard the thunder, and that was the big guns; and then we heard the rain falling, and that was the drops of blood falling, and when we came to get in the crops it was the dead that we reaped.”<sup>43</sup> The wounded were transferred to Beaufort, South Carolina, where Tubman nursed and cared for the injured and dying men of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts regiment.<sup>44</sup>

From 1863 to 1865 Harriet Tubman continued working for the Union army in various places throughout the south, cooking, nursing, scouting, or spying. However, she was never paid for her services. After the Civil War she was hired by the New England Freedmen’s Aid Society to work as a practical teacher to recently freed women, in Hilton Head, South Carolina.<sup>45</sup> After a brief furlough of visiting friends and family in the north,

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid. p. 210.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. p. 212.

<sup>43</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004 p.220.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p. 221.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. p. 227.

and speaking at Camp William Penn and before returning to Auburn, Tubman worked in Virginia, nursing the ill and wounded at Fortress Monroe.<sup>46</sup>

### ***Humanitarian, Suffragist, and Caretaker 1865-1913***

After the war, Harriet Tubman returned home to Auburn, to care for her elderly parents. She spent the final forty years of her life here. Tubman became an active member at church and in her community. Harriet Tubman busied herself by organizing freedmen fairs, held at the Central Presbyterian Church, and raising money for the newly freedmen in the south.<sup>47</sup> Trying to improve schools for her race she sent teachers, clothes, and books to freedmen schools. She herself was burdened by debt, accumulated from the purchase of her property and the cost of living for her and her family. But she continued to fundraise on the freedmen's behalf. Throughout the rest of her life she persisted with her humanitarian work, fought for suffrage, and tried to alleviate the sufferings of the disenfranchised of her race.<sup>48</sup>

In 1867 Harriet Tubman married Nelson Davis, who had volunteered with the Eighth United States Colored Regiment. He was a boarder in her house and at least twenty years her junior.<sup>49</sup> In the 1870s and 1880s, Harriet opened her door to anyone in need. She and her husband operated a farm on the property, raising potatoes, vegetables, and apples, as well as making butter, and selling eggs and chickens. They also conducted a small brick-making works on the premises.<sup>50</sup> After Nelson grew sick with tuberculosis,

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p. 229.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 248.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p. 250

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. p. 250.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p. 260.

Harriet Tubman's wood frame house was destroyed by fire around 1883, and a brick house was soon built to replace it.<sup>51</sup>

With these events adding to her debt, Harriet Tubman took up public speaking more frequently. She attended as many suffrage meetings in New York and Boston that she could, throughout the 1880s, 1890s and 1900s. Tubman told her audiences "brave and fearless deeds of women who sacrificed all for their country and moved in battle when bullets mowed down the men." She said, "[They] were on the scene to administer to the injured, to bind up their wounds and tend them through weary months of suffering in army hospitals. If those deeds do not place woman as man's equal, what do?"<sup>52</sup> She spoke at the women's convention in Rochester, New York, in 1895. In 1896 she was the oldest woman in attendance at a meeting of the National Association of Colored Women in Washington, DC.<sup>53</sup>

In the late 1890s, Harriet Tubman purchased twenty-five acres of land adjoining her property. She had a vision to set up a home for freed slaves who could no longer care for themselves. Again, there was a shortage of funds and Tubman deeded the land to the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, in 1903, in the hopes that they could bring her dream to a reality.<sup>54</sup> In 1908, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged and Infirm Negroes opened.<sup>55</sup> In the meantime Tubman continued to travel and speak on behalf of women's rights. By 1910, this was not possible as she became wheelchair bound.<sup>56</sup> The following

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid. p. 261.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p. 273.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p. 287.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 284.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 285.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p. 287.

year Harriet was forced to enter the elderly home she had helped form. On March 10, 1913 Harriet Tubman died at the age of ninety-two.<sup>57</sup>

Harriet Tubman's funeral was held on March 13, at the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, with hundreds in attendance. Her body was interned at Fort Hill Cemetery, in Auburn. In Sarah H. Bradford's book *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, published in 1869, Tubman was labeled as a "black Joan of Arc" and the "Moses of her people." She always wanted to help those in need and remedy the social injustices of slavery and not having the right to vote. This activism and need in Harriet Tubman continued until the day she died. Before her death, Tubman said to the remaining family members that surrounded her, "I go away to prepare a place for you, that where I am you also shall be."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid. p. 288.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. p. 289.

## **IV. Current Harriet Tubman Sites**

The following is a survey of the sites currently documented as having designated associations with Harriet Tubman: the Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Church, and the Harriet Tubman gravesite. These four sites were listed in the Legislation for the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study. They are all located in Auburn, New York.

### ***Auburn, NY***

Harriet Tubman passed through Auburn, New York many times on her way to Canada. Auburn was a community sympathetic to the plight of fugitive slaves, offering safe houses on the Underground Railroad. It was in Auburn that William Seward offered her the property where she lived the last forty years of her life. This is where she deposited her family while she was enlisting her strengths on the Union side of the Civil War. It was the place she called home. Tubman's second marriage took place in Auburn. The sites are not merely sites she passed through. They are of major importance in her life, especially her residence, and the Home for the Aged. It would make sense that there are currently four sites in Auburn that are documented and associated with Harriet Tubman.

## Harriet Tubman Residence



Harriet Tubman Residence (National Park Service)

The Harriet Tubman Residence is located at 182 South Street, in Auburn, New York. On May 25, 1859, William H. Seward, a New York Senator and the future Secretary of State under the Lincoln Administration, sold Harriet Tubman a small parcel of property of seven acres, on the town line of Fleming and Auburn, New York. “The lot consisted of a house, a barn, several outbuildings and tillable land, providing ample room for Tubman, her parents and any other family members or friends who were in need of a home.”<sup>59</sup> The house was destroyed by fire sometime between 1882 and 1884. Shortly thereafter Tubman, her family, and friends, built a brick residence on the foundations of the original wood-frame dwelling.<sup>60</sup>

Tubman resided here until 1911, continuing to carry on her life’s work of serving as a caretaker for those in need, when her failing health forced her into the nearby Home

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<sup>59</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 163.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p. 161.

for Aged that she had helped to create. Upon her death she left the house to her family members. Tubman's heirs sold the parcel in 1914 to alleviate the debt on the estate. The identity of Harriet Tubman's residence was lost over the years. At some point the house was boarded up and rendered unusable. In the 1990s, with its identity being reestablished, the lot was purchased by the A.M.E. Zion Church.<sup>61</sup>

Tubman's Residence is a simple two story brick house. Its interior has undergone extensive changes over the years. For example, a number of the interior partition walls have been relocated and a new set of stairs put in.<sup>62</sup> Research has been done to determine the original configuration of rooms and a restoration process has begun. This was made possible by a Save America's Treasures grant of \$450,000 awarded in 2000 to the Harriet Tubman Home, Inc. The organization is expecting to open the residence by the 2005 tourist season.<sup>63</sup>

In 2000 the Harriet Tubman Residence was added to the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged National Historic Landmark 1974 designation, with the expansion of its boundaries, comprising five acres of Tubman's original seven acre purchase. Behind the house is a "non-contributing" building, a garage/barn that might have been part of Harriet Tubman's small farm. More research and the removal of modern additions might establish a Harriet Tubman connection.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> "Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church," National Historic Landmark Nomination. p. 17

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>63</sup> Interview by Author with Rev. Paul G. Carter, Resident Manager at the Harriet Tubman Home. 4/1/04.

<sup>64</sup> "Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church," National Historic Landmark Nomination. p. 7.

## Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged



Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged (National Historic Landmark)

The Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged stands at 180 South Street in Auburn, New York. In 1896 Harriet Tubman purchased twenty-five acres of land adjoining her property to the North. Two circa 1860s houses, one brick and one wood-frame, as well as barns and other out buildings, stood on this tract of land adjoining the property of her residence to the north. She had a vision to set up a home for freed slaves who could no longer care for themselves. Because there was a shortage of funds Tubman deeded the land to the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, in 1903, in the hopes that they could bring her dream to a reality.<sup>65</sup> In 1908, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged and Infirm Negroes opened.<sup>66</sup> Tubman actively provided care for the Home's infirm residents until she joined them in May of 1911. Harriet Tubman died at the Home for the Aged on March 10, 1913.

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<sup>65</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 284.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* p. 285.

The Thompson A.M.E. Zion church continued to run the Home for Aged for several years until the last infirm resident deceased. The buildings were eventually abandoned and by the early 1940s were thoroughly dilapidated. Within a few years only the wood-frame house was still extant. By the late 1940s, Bishop William J. Walls of the A.M.E. Zion Church thought that something needed to be done. He enlisted his congregation in an effort to restore the remaining building. By April 30, 1953, The Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged was recognized as an historic site and memorial to the life and work of Harriet Tubman.<sup>67</sup>

In 1974, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged was designated as a National Historic Landmark, even though virtually nothing of the original interior remains. “It represents an important aspect of Harriet Tubman’s charitable work and activities in Auburn. It maintains integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling, design and association.”<sup>68</sup> The boundaries of the Historic Landmark were expanded in 2000 to include the Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church.

Every year the A.M.E Zion Church hosts an Annual Tubman Pilgrimage, where church members gather at the site to celebrate Harriet Tubman’s life and work.<sup>69</sup> Thousands of visitors have come to the site to take a one hour tour of the Home, learning about Tubman, her life, and what she has done in Auburn, and to see a small collection of Harriet Tubman’s belongings.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> “Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church,” National Historic Landmark Nomination. p. 14.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p. 15.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Interview by Author with Rev. Paul G. Carter, Resident Manager at the Harriet Tubman Home. 4/1/04.

In addition to the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, there are four “non-contributing” resources at 180 South Street. One is a circa 1953 concrete garage. The Harriet Tubman Memorial Library and the Harriet Tubman Multipurpose Building serve the Home in the assistance of interpretation. Both are accessible to the disabled. The last resource is a cellar hole, part of the original brick house on the property that Tubman bought and deeded to the church. It was called John Brown Hall, as Tubman was so fond of him and would always remember him, and functioned as part of the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged. The building fell into disrepair and its walls were pushed into the cellar hole.<sup>71</sup>

### **Thompson Memorial AME Zion Church**



Thompson Memorial AME Zion Church (National Historic Landmark)

The Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Church stands on residential Parker Street, in Auburn, New York. When Harriet Tubman first came to Auburn, she and her family were members of the Central Presbyterian Church, which is described in the Documented Sites

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<sup>71</sup> Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church,” National Historic Landmark Nomination. p. 7.

chapter. Tubman's husband Nelson Davis was elected trustee of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1870. The A.M.E. Zion Church was a focal point of the African American community in Auburn. Tubman eventually became an active congregant of the A.M.E. Zion church towards the end of that decade. At that time services were conducted at the vacant Washington Street School.<sup>72</sup> Funds were raised to erect a new church building. Tubman pledged \$500 for the construction of the Thompson A.M.E. Zion church (later the Thompson Memorial A.M.E Zion church). By 1891 the congregation was gathering at the new church on Parker Street in Auburn.<sup>73</sup>

In 1896, when Harriet Tubman purchased the twenty-five acre land parcel for her Home for the Aged, she requested the elders of the A.M.E. Zion church to supply a bank mortgage of \$1000 for the remaining sum of the down payment.<sup>74</sup> Tubman then deeded the land to the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in 1903.<sup>75</sup> In 1908, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged and Infirm Negroes opened, overseen by the church, in which Tubman provided care.<sup>76</sup> Harriet Tubman's funeral was held on March 13, 1908 at the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church.

The Church continued to be used until 1993, when it could no longer sustain the needs of the congregation. In 2000 the site was added to the 1974 National Historic Landmark nomination of the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged. "It serves as a

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<sup>72</sup> Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman The Life and the Life Stories*, Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003. p. 94.

<sup>73</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 276.

<sup>74</sup> Catherine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman, The Road to Freedom*, New York: Little, Brown and Co. 2004. p. 207.

<sup>75</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 284.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* p. 285.

reminder of the importance of the Church in the African American community in Auburn and of the central role that the church and religion played in the life of Harriet Tubman, its historically important member.”<sup>77</sup>

Of the sites in Auburn the church is the most unchanged from Tubman’s time. Light fixtures, pews, and shingling are the elements that have changed. The church is over all very simple.<sup>78</sup> It has been vacant since 1993, when it was closed; there is some water damage as a result of a leaky roof. The Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Church is currently under restoration. It is expected to open by the 2005 tourist season.<sup>79</sup>

### Harriet Tubman Grave Site



Harriet Tubman Grave Site (Tour Auburn, NY)

Harriet Tubman was laid to rest with military honors in a picturesque setting of winding paths and a hilly landscape at Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York on March 13, 1913. Only a Norway spruce marked her grave until 1915 when the Empire

<sup>77</sup> “Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church,” National Historic Landmark Nomination. p. 19.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>79</sup> Interview by Author with Rev. Paul G. Carter, Resident Manager at the Harriet Tubman Home. 4/1/04.

State Federation of Women's Clubs erected a granite monument on the site, eventually to be replaced by the current headstone dedicated by the same group in 1837.<sup>80</sup> Its epitaph reads:

To the Memory of Harriet Tubman Davis  
Member of the Underground Railroad  
Nurse and Scout in the Civil War  
Born about 1820 in Maryland  
Died March 10, 1913 at Auburn, NY  
Servant of God, Well Done  
dedicated by the  
Empire State Federation of Women's Clubs  
July 15, 1837

The Harriet Tubman Grave Site was not included in the National Historic Landmark designation of the Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence, and Thompson A.M.E. Zion church boundary expansion. (The National Historic Landmark program will only designate grave sites if no other link to the historic figure exists.<sup>81</sup>) Each year the grave is visited on Memorial Day as part of the Pilgrimage administered by the A.M.E. Zion Church to commemorate Harriet Tubman.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman The Life and the Life Stories*, Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003. p. 128.

<sup>81</sup> Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church," National Historic Landmark Nomination. p. 13.

<sup>82</sup> Interview by Author with Rev. Paul G. Carter, Resident Manager at the Harriet Tubman Home. 4/1/04.

## **V. Other Sites Listed in the Legislation**

In addition to the four Auburn, New York sites currently designated for Tubman, three other were specifically listed in the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act: the William Henry Seward Home in Auburn, New York and the Brodess Plantation and the Bazel Church, both in Dorchester County, Maryland. Each of these three Harriet Tubman associated sites are described below.

### ***Auburn, NY***

Auburn, New York was home to a large and strong abolitionist community in the years leading up to the Civil War. It was often referred to as the “Cradle of Abolitionism.”<sup>83</sup> William Henry Seward, one such abolitionist, brought Harriet Tubman and her family to Auburn in 1859 by selling her a seven acre parcel of land. Tubman’s presence was felt in Auburn thereafter. The currently designated Harriet Tubman sites, discussed above, as well as the William Henry Seward Home are located in Auburn, New York.

### **William Henry Seward Home**

The William Henry Seward Home is located at 33 South Street, Auburn, New York. William Henry Seward was Governor of New York from 1839 to 1843. He was a United States Senator from New York from 1848 to 1861, and he served as Secretary of State under both Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson. His home was built in the Federal Style by Seward’s father-in-law, Judge Elijah Miller, in 1816; and Seward moved

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<sup>83</sup> Interview by Author with Jennifer Haines, Curator of Education and Outreach at the William H. Seward House. 4/1/04.

into it in 1824. Additions were placed on the back of the house by Seward throughout the middle of the Nineteenth Century in the Italianate style. It remained his permanent residence until his death in 1872.<sup>84</sup>

The house remained in the family until 1951, when William Henry Seward III bequeathed the building and its furnishings to Foundation Historical, a non-profit organization. For four years the Foundation inventoried the family's papers and collections, and in 1955 opened the house to the public. In 1976 the William H. Seward House was placed on the National Register. It was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1983. As the house was passed through three generations of the family, not much has changed since Seward's time.<sup>85</sup>

Visitors to the William H. Seward House observe a collection that includes Civil War memorabilia and mementoes from Seward's extensive travels. An hour and a half tour is conducted through seventeen of the thirty rooms in the house, decorated with Seward's furnishings. Visitors learn about Seward's lists of contributions to the town of Auburn, the state of New York, and the United States.

Harriet Tubman is mentioned on this tour. Seward was an abolitionist and his house is a documented stop of the Underground Railroad. He offered financial support to Tubman, by relinquishing her debt for her property upon his death and by assisting her attempts to claim a Civil War pension.

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<sup>84</sup> "William H. Seward House," National Historic Landmarks Program website. <http://tps.cr.nps/nhl/>

<sup>85</sup> Interview by Author with Jennifer Haines, Curator of Education and Outreach at the William H. Seward House. 4/1/04.

The Foundation Historical offers other programs, including a Women’s tour, talking about the females of the Seward House, and a “Nooks and Crannies” tour, which takes visitors into the basement and attic of the house.<sup>86</sup>

## ***Dorchester County, MD***

Harriet Tubman was born on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, in Dorchester County. Here she spent her formative years as an enslaved person, owned by Edward Brodess. Also at this time Tubman was developing her strong faith based on religious teachings.<sup>87</sup> The two sites associated with Harriet Tubman that are identified in the legislation are located in Dorchester County, Maryland. They are the Brodess Plantation and the Bazel Church. A map of Dorchester County is provided in Appendix B.

### **The Brodess Plantation**

Brodess’ estate was located on land in Bucktown on Greenbriar Road off Route 50 between the Transquaking River and Little Blackwater River (See Appendix B for a map of Dorchester County).<sup>88</sup> Between late 1823 and early 1824, Edward Brodess had moved to his property in Bucktown to establish a farm, bringing his slaves, Rit, Minty and her siblings, with him. The Brodess farm was small but the family was growing large. Brodess often hired out his slaves or sold them to make ends meet. It was here where Harriet Tubman saw her sisters sold into the Deep South. She herself was hired out. It is unknown exactly when and how much time Tubman spent on the Brodess

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 46.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. p. 17.

Plantation.<sup>89</sup> The 1830 Federal Census records Minty Ross, aged 10, one of nine slaves belonging to Edward Brodess.

The Brodess Plantation was long believed to be the birthplace of Harriet Tubman. However, Kate Larson, through her extensive research of the Dorchester County Court Records, has learned that Tubman was born on the Plantation of Anthony Thompson, the elder. Today the Brodess Plantation is private farmland. Richard Hughes, an archaeologist from the Maryland State Historic Preservation Office, has determined that no buildings from Harriet Tubman's time remain.<sup>90</sup> The location of the slave quarters, where Tubman would have lived, has not been identified. An historical marker erroneously marks this property as her birthplace. The marker reads:

HARRIET TUBMAN  
1820 – 1913  
THE “MOSES OF HER PEOPLE,” HARRIET  
TUBMAN OF THE BUCKTOWN DISTRICT  
FOUND FREEDOM FOR HERSELF AND SOME  
THREE HUNDRED OTHER SLAVES WHOM SHE  
LED NORTH. IN THE CIVIL WAR SHE  
SERVED THE UNION ARMY AS A NURSE,  
SCOUT AND SPY.  
Maryland Civil War Centennial Commission

## **Bazel Church**

The Bazel Church is located one mile south of Greenbriar Road on Bucktown Road and a short walk through the woods from the Brodess Plantation. Larson says oral tradition has Tubman, her family, and other free and enslaved blacks attending church at

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid. p. 38.

<sup>90</sup> National Park Service. “Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study,” Draft summer 2003. p.23.

Bazzel's Methodist Episcopal Church. Though the current church was built in 1876, it is said that services were held in the 'open air' at that location, possibly in the area behind the church. The Church is used intermittently today.<sup>91</sup> It is uncertain where Harriet Tubman went to church and received her religious teachings in her early life.

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<sup>91</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 46.

## **VI. Documented Sites**

While the previous chapters dealt with the sites listed in the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act, this section briefly describes the various documented sites associated with Harriet Tubman that are not specifically mentioned in the legislation. Referring to the three most recent well-researched biographies, by Jean M. Humez, Catherine Clinton, and Kate Clifford Larson, documentation could be found linking Harriet Tubman to specific places. As the list of documented sites is long and varied, the contacts and site visits of the National Park Service study were consulted. The list is arranged chronologically and corresponds to the chapters in Tubman's life: sites associated with Harriet Tubman's Enslavement, Underground Railroad sites visited by Harriet Tubman, Harriet Tubman Civil War sites, and sites Tubman visited during her Humanitarian/Suffragist Years.

### ***Sites associated with Harriet Tubman's Enslavement***

Much of Harriet Tubman's early life remains a mystery, as the lives of the enslaved were rarely documented. In addition, Harriet Tubman herself could not read or write, leading us to rely on what others have written about her. The list of sites that are associated with her enslavement was formulated by the stories that Tubman told later in life. Most of the sites where Tubman resided and worked during the years while she was enslaved do not survive today.

## **Anthony Thompson Plantation**

Dorchester County, Maryland

Kate Clifford Larson has determined that Harriet Tubman was born at the Anthony Thompson Plantation in 1822.<sup>92</sup> Anthony Thompson was the owner of Ben Ross, Harriet Tubman's father. Thompson's wife, Mary had inherited Rit Green, Harriet Tubman's mother; and upon her death left Rit and her children to her son Edward Brodess from her first marriage. Brodess could not take hold of his estate until 1822 when he became of age. Brodess moved Rit and her children to his farm in late 1823 and early 1824, once his home was built in Bucktown, Dorchester County. Thompson continued to live and work at his timberland plantation, owning slaves, one of which was Ben, and working the land until his death in 1836.<sup>93</sup>

The Anthony Thompson Plantation is located in Peter's Neck, Harrisville Road in Dorchester County, Maryland (See map, Appendix B). Larson has visited the site; and it is very rural and isolated with no visible resources. The property woods and fields are now part of a hunting preserve. The National Park Service would like to evaluate the area and landscape further, as it might have potential for archaeological research.<sup>94</sup>

## **James Cook Home Site**

Dorchester County, Maryland

When Harriet Tubman was about six or seven she was hired out to James Cook, who made her set and check muskrat traps in the Eastern Shore marshes in the middle of

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<sup>92</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 18.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. p.67.

<sup>94</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p.29.

the winter. This was detrimental to her health, rendering her weak.<sup>95</sup> The James Cook Home Site is located around Little Blackwater River and Bridge at the Key Wallace Drive Area in Dorchester County, Maryland. Kate Larson observed that it is a rural, farming, and timber marshy area, in which there are no known extant buildings.<sup>96</sup>

## **Bucktown Crossroads**

### **Dorchester County, Maryland**

When Harriet Tubman was a teenager she received a head injury from a local overseer at a dry-goods store in Bucktown which plagued her with bouts of unconsciousness for the rest of her life.<sup>97</sup> Kate Larson writes that “a dry goods store located at the crossroads of Bucktown Road coming from the northeast, Bestpitch Ferry Road from the south and Greenbrier Road from the west (toward the Brodess Plantation), is most likely the scene of this tragic event.”<sup>98</sup>

Catherine Clinton, another Harriet Tubman biographer, describes the scene of where this event took place.

On a deserted road in Dorchester County, a small wooden structure, once a store, can still be found. The building has a porch and ceilings too low for anyone over six feet to stand upright. At the small crossroads of Bucktown, Maryland, only the asphalt and telegraph lines, plus an occasional passing car, suggest it is a later century than Tubman’s. A sense of the past haunts this secluded spot. Even on a bright day, the place has an air of melancholy.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 38.

<sup>96</sup> National Park Service. “Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study,” Draft, Summer 2003. p. 25.

<sup>97</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Harriet, The Moses of Her People*. New York: J.J.Little and Co. 1901. p. 109.

<sup>98</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 42.

<sup>99</sup> Catherine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman, The Road to Freedom*, New York: Little, Brown and Co. 2004. p.21.

During a visit to the site, Richard Hughes, archaeologist for the Maryland State Historic Preservation Office, verified that there were originally three stores on three corners of the crossroads. The stores do not exist today. One mid-nineteenth century building is open to the public on a sporadic schedule. This store however, was erected after Harriet Tubman's time in Bucktown. There is also an eighteenth century house at the crossroads, currently in a restoration process.<sup>100</sup>

### **John T. Stewart Store and Home Site** Dorchester County, Maryland

Edward Brodess let Harriet Tubman hire herself out, on the condition that she would pay him a set wage. For five or six years, from about 1838 to 1844, she lived with John T. Stewart, a merchant and shipbuilder, to whom she was rented out.<sup>101</sup> Stewart put her to work driving oxen, carting, and plowing, "all the work of a man."<sup>102</sup>

The John T. Stewart Store and Home Site were in Tobacco Stick, which is Madison, Maryland today (See Appendix B for map of Dorchester County). Madison is a small village on Madison Bay. It is a place where the mercantile and lumber business was and is still prevalent. No buildings from Harriet Tubman's time have survived in Tobacco Stick/Madison Bay.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p.24.

<sup>101</sup>Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 5.

<sup>102</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 75.

<sup>103</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p. 28.

## **Dr. Anthony C. Thompson Plantation**

Caroline County, Maryland

Dr. Anthony C. Thompson was the son of Anthony Thompson from a prior marriage to his marriage with Mary Pattison Brodess Thompson. He inherited Ben Ross upon the death of his father. Even though Ben received manumission in 1840, he continued to work for Dr. Thompson clearing timber.<sup>104</sup> “For the last two years of slavery she [Tubman] lived with Dr. Thompson.”<sup>105</sup> It is known that when Tubman fled the south in 1849, it was from the younger Thompson’s property. As Thompson owned two properties at that time, the particular property from which Harriet Tubman fled remains an uncertainty.

Harriet Tubman returned to the site in 1854 to bring three of her brothers away, to escape the lives of bondmen. It was arranged that the party would meet at a corn crib not far from the home of their parents, who were residing on the plantation property.<sup>106</sup> She revisited the site once more in 1857 to take her parents to St. Catherines, Canada. Although Ben had been manumitted and he purchased Rit’s freedom in 1855, they were suspected of aiding others in escape attempts and were therefore unsafe.<sup>107</sup>

The Dr. Anthony C. Thompson Plantation is located in Poplar Neck, Caroline County, Maryland (See Appendix B for location near Dorchester County). The Plantation was comprised of a brick “big house,” grain fields, a fruit orchard, and slave quarters.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 21.

<sup>105</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Harriet, The Moses of Her People*. New York: J.J.Little and Co. 1901. p. 76.

<sup>106</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 112.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.* p.xvii.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* p. 80.

The specific location and condition of the site has not been ascertained. The National Park Service has not conducted a site visit yet.<sup>109</sup>

**Dr. Anthony C. Thompson Small Farm Residence (Bellefield)**  
Dorchester County, Maryland

Dr. Anthony C. Thompson's Small Farm Residence (otherwise known as Bellefield) is the second property owned by Dr. Thompson. Bellefield was the Doctor's main residence for several years while he practiced medicine and ran an apothecary and fine goods store in Cambridge, Dorchester County. He and his family spent time at this dwelling as well as his plantation in Caroline County in the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>110</sup> Harriet Tubman could have possibly escaped from this site in 1849, as she was living with Dr. Thompson during her last two years of enslavement.

The Dr. Anthony C. Thompson Small Farm Residence is located in Cambridge, Dorchester County, Maryland. Fourteen and one-half acres, a main house, several out buildings, and two slave cabins made up Bellefield.<sup>111</sup> Richard Hughes, an archeologist in the Maryland State Historic Preservation Office, reported that the location of the farm is now part of the town of Cambridge, comprising an empty lot. The property buildings no longer exist.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p.30.

<sup>110</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 82.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p.30.

## ***Underground Railroad Sites Visited by Harriet Tubman***

The route that Harriet Tubman most likely took while conducting passengers on the Underground Railroad had main stations in Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Syracuse, Rochester and St. Catherines, Canada.<sup>113</sup> Appendix B has two maps broadly outlining Tubman's routes while traveling the Underground Railroad. What little is known about where Tubman was, while guiding fugitives, has been pieced together through surviving letters and journals. Facts remain hidden, partially due to the surreptitious nature of the Underground Railroad. "Clandestine operations were safeguarded by her silence and the silence of other conspirators, and to this day remain obscure."<sup>114</sup> There is an array of Underground Railroad sites that Tubman most likely or probably used but no written record exists or has been discovered that definitively links them to her. However, the following is a list of Underground Railroad sites where Harriet Tubman's visit has been documented.

### **Market Street Bridge**

#### **Wilmington, Delaware**

The Market Street Bridge, which goes over the Christiana River into Wilmington, Delaware, was a crucial point which Harriet Tubman traversed to access while traveling the Underground Railroad. In *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Sarah Bradford describes an episode in which Tubman and her "passengers" were unable to cross the bridge because it was lined with policemen out for rewards on escapees' heads. Tubman

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<sup>113</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p 93.

<sup>114</sup> Catherine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman, The Road to Freedom*, New York: Little, Brown and Co. 2004. p.37.

secreted away her fugitives and got word to Thomas Garrett, the Wilmington Underground Railroad Station Master. He secured a wagon and sent it over the bridge to collect the runaways. On the wagon's return trip over the bridge it conveyed Tubman's group of six, safely, unsuspected by the police officers.<sup>115</sup>

The Market Street Bridge unfortunately was replaced around 1920. The modern one is in generally the same location of the bridge that Harriet Tubman used, according to Robin Bodo of the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office.<sup>116</sup> Near the Market Street Bridge there is a riverfront park in which a commemorative plaque has been placed for Harriet Tubman and Thomas Garrett, dating from the 1970s. The park is the central Underground Railroad interpretation point in Wilmington, lined with interpretive signage.<sup>117</sup>

### **Thomas Garrett Home Site** Wilmington, Delaware

Thomas Garrett, an active abolitionist Quaker, was a vital Underground Railroad Station Master for forty years in Wilmington, Delaware. He would hide runaway slaves, always keeping a supply of food and clothing for those in need. Thomas Garrett aided over 2700 slaves on their journey to freedom.<sup>118</sup> He had often helped financially support Harriet Tubman's expeditions, by writing to abolitionists on behalf of her cause and by providing her with shelter. In a letter, dated May 11, 1856, Garrett wrote to William Still, a Philadelphia Underground Railroad Station Master, that he had forwarded four young

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<sup>115</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 30.

<sup>116</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p. 10.

<sup>117</sup> Network to Freedom website, [www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr](http://www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr)

<sup>118</sup> Frances Cloud Taylor, *The Trackless Trail*, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania: 1976. p. 4.

men to Longwood (an area in Chester County, PA) on May 9, with Harriet Tubman following the next day.<sup>119</sup>

Thomas Garrett's home was located on 227 Shipley Street in Wilmington, Delaware. Nothing remains of his house today, as the structure was demolished in the 1970s. There is, however, a New Castle County historical marker telling of Garrett's undertakings at the site.<sup>120</sup>

### **Allen and Maria Agnew Home Site** Kennett Square, Pennsylvania

Allen and Maria Agnew were Quaker Abolitionists who lived in Kennett Square, Chester County, Pennsylvania. This area, a Quaker community with many homes that were willing to hide runaway slaves, was the last stop on the Underground Railroad before reaching Philadelphia. Thomas Garrett often sent fugitives through here on their way north.<sup>121</sup> Harriet Tubman came to the Agnew's home when she helped her brothers escape enslavement in 1854.

Wilmington, 12 mo. 29th, 1854

Esteemed Friend, J. Miller McKim:--We made arrangements last night, and sent away Harriet Tubman, with six men and one woman to Allen Agnew's, to be forwarded across the country to the city. Harriet, and one of the men had worn their shoes off their feet, and I gave them two dollars to help fit them out, and directed a carriage to be hired at my expense, to take them out, but do not yet know the expense. I now have two more from the lowest county in Maryland, on the Peninsula, upwards of one hundred miles. I will try to get one of our trusty colored men to take them to-morrow morning to the Anti-slavery office. You can then pass them on.

THOMAS GARRETT.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> William Still, *The Underground Railroad*, New York: Arno Press, 1968. p.387.

<sup>120</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p. 9.

<sup>121</sup> Frances Cloud Taylor, *The Trackless Trail*, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania: 1976. p. 24.

<sup>122</sup> William Still, *The Underground Railroad*, New York: Arno Press, 1968. p. 296.

The Allen and Maria Agnew home site is located on McFarlan Road in Kennett Square. Originally the site was 150 acres situated just north of the Delaware line along the Brandywine Creek in Pennsbury Township.<sup>123</sup> The Agnew home is currently a privately owned residence.<sup>124</sup>

### **Site of William Still's pre-Civil War Home/Antislavery Office** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

William Still was the Underground Station Master in Philadelphia. He worked for the Vigilance Committee of the Pennsylvania Abolitionist Society. He was responsible for securing passage of hundreds of freedom seekers from Philadelphia to points north, mostly directly to New York City. He relied on a huge network of abolitionists, Underground Railroad stations throughout central New York cities to Canada, as well as abolitionist communities in Massachusetts.<sup>125</sup>

Still kept account of most of the fugitives seeking shelter and assistance at his office at the Anti-Slavery Society, at 31 North Fifth Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He recorded each person's name, age, height, and skin color, the name of their enslaver, where they had lived, and sometimes personal family information, like numbers of siblings and relative's names.<sup>126</sup> These records made it possible for William Still to publish his book, *The Underground Railroad*, in 1872. On December 29, 1854, Still wrote down the details of Harriet Tubman's entourage of slaves, which included her

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<sup>123</sup> Frances Cloud Taylor, *The Trackless Trail*, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania: 1976. p. 24.

<sup>124</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p. 88.

<sup>125</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 115.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

brothers and three others.<sup>127</sup> On another occasion he logged in his Vigilance Committee journal that he gave Harriet Tubman \$2.50 (November 28, 1856.)<sup>128</sup>

The Site of William Still's pre-Civil War Home was located at 832 South Twelfth Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Still's home has been replaced with a later nineteenth century Philadelphia row house. 31 North Street is now the site of the United States Mint in Philadelphia.

### **Frederick Douglass Home** Rochester, New York

Frederick Douglass was a contemporary of Harriet Tubman. He too was born into enslavement and sought his own freedom. Douglass was enslaved in Baltimore, Maryland. He spent most of his active life in Rochester, New York. There Douglass was an abolitionist, speaker, writer, and a proponent of women's rights. He housed escaped enslaved persons, and Harriet Tubman stayed with him and his wife on occasion. This is what he had to say to her about the publication of Sarah Bradford's biography:

Rochester, August 29, 1868

Dear Harriet: I am glad to know that the story of your eventful life has been written by a kind lady, and that the same is soon to be published. You ask for what you do not need when you call on me for a word of commendations. I need such words from you far more than you can need them from me, especially where your superior labors and devotion to the cause of the lately enslaved of our land are known as I know them. Most that I have done and suffered in the service of our cause has been in public, and I have received much encouragement at every step of the way. You on the other hand have labored in a private way. I have wrought in the day—you in the night. I have had applause of the crowd and satisfaction that comes of being approved by the multitude, while the most that you have done has been witnessed by a few trembling, scarred, and foot-sore

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<sup>127</sup> William Still, *The Underground Railroad*, New York: Arno Press, 1968. p. 297.

<sup>128</sup> Judith Bentley, "Dear Friend" *Thomas Garrett & William Still Collaborators on the Underground Railroad*, New York: Cobblehill Books, 1997. p. 43.

bondmen and women, whom you have led out of the house of bondage, and whose heartfelt “God bless you” has been your only reward. The midnight sky and the silent stars have been the witnesses of your devotion to freedom and of your heroism. Excepting John Brown—of sacred memory—I know of no one who has willingly encountered more perils and hardships to serve our enslaved people than you have. Much that you have done would seem improbable to those who do not know you as I know you. It is to me a great pleasure and a great privilege to bear testimony to your character and your works, and to say to those to whom you may come, that I regard you in every way truthful and trustworthy.

Your Friend, FREDERICK DOUGLASS<sup>129</sup>

In 1851 Tubman brought a large assemblage of eleven slaves through Philadelphia to Albany and then to Rochester, New York. Seeking shelter, Tubman enlisted none other than Frederick Douglass.<sup>130</sup> In his 1881 autobiography, Douglass speaks of this experience:

On one occasion I had eleven fugitives at the same time under my roof, and it was necessary for them to remain with me until I could collect sufficient money to get them on to Canada. It was the largest number I ever had at one time, and I had some difficulty in providing so many with food and shelter, but, as may well be imagined, they were not very fastidious in either direction, and were well content with very plain food, and a strip of carpet on the floor for a bed, or a place on the straw in the barn loft.<sup>131</sup>

In 1872, Douglass’s Rochester home burned down. However, the Talman building that housed his office, where he produced his newspaper and took in slaves from 1847 to 1863, still exists at 25 East Main Street in Rochester New York. In 1991, The Rochester City Council created a committee to look into the establishment of a Frederick

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<sup>129</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869.

<sup>130</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 92.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* p. 93.

Douglass Museum. The Museum will occupy the entire building of five stories and 30,000 square feet.<sup>132</sup>

## **Susan B. Anthony House**

Rochester, New York

Susan B. Anthony wrote in her diary of Harriet Tubman and their endeavors together bringing slaves to freedom in Canada. The two also collaborated for woman's suffrage in the later years of her life. (This site is described further in the Approach Used on Related Sites section of this paper.)

## **Suspension Bridge**

Niagara Falls, New York

Harriet Tubman used the Suspension Bridge to cross the United States/Canadian border while en route to St. Catherines, Canada. One of the stories told in Sarah Bradford's book involves this bridge and a fugitive by the name of Joe Bailey:

When they entered the Anti-slavery office there [New York City], Joe was recognized by the description in an advertisement [for fifteen hundred dollars]...at this Joe's heart sank. If the advertisement had got to New York, that place which it had taken them so many days and nights to reach, he thought he was still in danger...When told how many miles, for they were to come through New York State, and cross the Suspension Bridge, he was ready to give up...They passed along in safety, and at length found themselves in the cars, approaching Suspension Bridge. The rest were very joyous and happy, but Joe sat silent and sad...

The cars began to cross the bridge. Harriet was very anxious to have her companions see the Falls. William, Peter, and Eliza came eagerly to look at the wonderful sight; but Joe sat still, with his head in his hand.

...At length Harriet knew by the rise in the center of bridge, and the descent on the other side that they had crossed "the line." She sprang across to Joe's seat, shook him with all her might and shouted, "Joe, you've shook de lion's paw!" Joe did not know what this meant. "Joe, you're free!" shouted Harriet...The cars

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<sup>132</sup> The Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center website, [www.ggw.org/freenet/f/fdm/](http://www.ggw.org/freenet/f/fdm/)

stopped on the other side. Joe's feet were the first to touch British soil, after those of the conductor.<sup>133</sup>

The Suspension Bridge, a railroad bridge, was located in Niagara Falls, New York. Kate Clifford Larson ascertained that the pilings still exist, but the bridge itself does not.<sup>134</sup>

## **Abolitionism**

In the late 1850s, Harriet Tubman raised money to support her family by joining antislavery lecture circuits in Boston and the surrounding region, telling of her experiences as a slave and a conductor on the Underground Railroad.<sup>135</sup> During her visits she stayed with prominent Boston abolitionists, speaking at events and attending rallies.<sup>136</sup>

### ***Cyrus Bartol's Home Site***

*Boston, Massachusetts*

Reverend Cyrus A. Bartol was a Unitarian Minister and staunch abolitionist in Boston. West Church, which he served, was a stop on the Underground Railroad.<sup>137</sup> He and his wife hosted Harriet Tubman in their home. Franklin Sanborn, a friend of Tubman, wrote to a fellow Boston supporter of the cause to abolish slavery, Thomas W. Higginson on May 30, 1859. Sanborn informed Higginson, that Harriet Tubman would be holding

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<sup>133</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. pp.31-34.

<sup>134</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer, 2003, p. 2.

<sup>135</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 81.

<sup>136</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 162.

<sup>137</sup> Old West Church website, [www.oldwestchurch.org/Pages/History\\_Text.html](http://www.oldwestchurch.org/Pages/History_Text.html)

an audience at “Mrs. Bartol’s on Chestnut St.—can you not attend?”<sup>138</sup> This is what an attendee at this reception had to say about it to a friend:

Yesterday afternoon I missed through my weather caution of an unique entertainment, to which I had been kindly invited by Mrs. Bartoll, who at the request of Mrs. Cheney opened her doors for a gathering of friends, to ascertain who might be disposed to aid a real heroine. Where Mrs. Cheney found her, I do not know, but her name is Harriet.<sup>139</sup>

Cyrus Bartol’s Home Site is located on 16 Chestnut Street, within the Beacon Hill National Historic Landmark District, in Boston, Massachusetts. The building still stands and is privately owned.<sup>140</sup>

### ***Boarding House Site (Home of Burrill Smith)***

*Boston, Massachusetts*

When Tubman went to Boston in May of 1859, to secure funds to eliminate the debt she had incurred for the purchase of her home from William Seward, she stayed with an African American porter by the name of Burrill Smith. He assisted ‘passengers’ on the Underground Railroad and contributed to John Brown’s campaign for the attack at Harper’s Ferry.<sup>141</sup> In Sanborn’s same letter to Higginson of May, 1859 he stated that Harriet Tubman was staying at “168 Cambridge St.”<sup>142</sup> The Boarding House does not stand today. It is now the site of a grocery store.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid. p.166.

<sup>139</sup> Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman The Life and the Life Stories*, Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003. p.198.

<sup>140</sup> National Park Service. “Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study,” Draft, Summer 2003. p. 33.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 166.

<sup>143</sup> National Park Service. “Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study,” Draft, Summer 2003. p. 33.

### ***Ednah Dow Cheney Home***

*Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts*

Harriet Tubman and Ednah Dow Cheney, a dedicated reformer and suffragist, had a long lasting friendship. Cheney was an early biographer of Tubman.<sup>144</sup> When John Brown was executed for his offenses at Harper's Ferry, Tubman went to Cheney for consolation. Ednah Dow Cheney wrote, "Her heart was too full, she must talk."<sup>145</sup> Cheney's house stands at 117 Forest Hills Street, in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. The site is highlighted on the Boston Women's Heritage Trail.<sup>146</sup>

### ***Lewis Hayden Home***

*Boston, Massachusetts*

Lewis Hayden provided his home as a safe house to runaway slaves and an anti-slavery gathering place for abolitionists. Tubman sometimes stayed with him in Boston's historic black neighborhood.<sup>147</sup> Located at 66 Phillips Street, on Beacon Hill, the home is highlighted on the Black Heritage Trail, which is an interpretative tour administered by the Boston African American Historical Park. A private residence today, it was built in 1833 in the federal style.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 163.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* p. 177.

<sup>146</sup> Boston Women's Heritage Trail website, [www.bwht/jp1.html](http://www.bwht/jp1.html)

<sup>147</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 171.

<sup>148</sup> Interview with Kenneth A. Heidelberg. Site Manager at Boston African American Historical Park. 3/9/04

## ***Tremont Temple***

*Boston, Massachusetts*

The Tremont Temple Baptist Church was established in 1839. In August of 1859 the New England Colored Citizen's Convention was held at Tremont Temple in Boston. Topics discussed at the convention included the Fugitive Slave Act, proslavery religious organizations, the Dred Scott decision, segregated schools, and the American colonization movement, which strove for the repatriation of African Americans to Africa.<sup>149</sup> An article in *The Liberator*, entitled "The New England Colored Citizens' Convention," reported that Harriet Tubman spoke at the event, denouncing the colonization movement, by telling a parable about a man who sowed onions and garlic to increase his dairy production.

But he soon found the butter was too strong, and would not sell and so he concluded to sow clover instead. But he soon found the wind had blown the onions and garlic all over his field. Just so, she said, the white people had got the 'niggers' here to do their drudgery, and now they were trying to root'em out and send them to Africa. 'But,' said she, 'they can't do it; we're rooted here, and they can't pull us up.' She was much applauded.<sup>150</sup>

The church that stands at 88 Tremont Street was built in 1894, postdating the time when Tubman was there. It was designed by C. H. Blackwell and is home to several Baptist congregants. No tours are offered at the site.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 172.

<sup>150</sup> Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman The Life and the Life Stories*, Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003. p.38.

<sup>151</sup> Harvard University Pluralism Project website, [www.fas.harvard.edu/~pluralism/98wrb/ch\\_trem.htm](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~pluralism/98wrb/ch_trem.htm).

## ***Franklin Sanborn Home***

*Concord, Massachusetts*

Franklin Sanborn, an abolitionist and writer, first met Harriet Tubman in 1858, when she was in Boston making the rounds on the antislavery lecture circuit and campaigning for John Brown. Sanborn was well associated with the major Boston Abolitionists including William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Lewis Hayden. Franklin Sanborn published the first (1863), biography of Tubman's early life in the *Boston Commonwealth*, which he forwarded to Bradford to include in her book.<sup>152</sup>

In the summer of 1860, Tubman was speaking at antislavery meetings, small parlor gatherings and in public venues in Boston, continually trying to secure funds to support her family and pay off her debt. Franklin Sanborn wrote to his friend Benjamin Lyman speaking highly of Tubman during her visit to his Concord, Massachusetts home.<sup>153</sup> He told Sarah Bradford in 1868:

...The first time she came to my house, in Concord, after that tragedy [John Brown's execution], she was shown into a room in the evening, where Brackett's bust of John Brown was standing. The sight of it, which was new to her, threw her into a sort of ecstasy of sorrow...

She has often been in Concord, where she resided at the houses of Emerson, Alcott, the Whitneys, the Brooks Family, Mrs. Horace Mann, and other well known persons.<sup>154</sup>

The National Park Service has not yet visited the Concord group of homes. More research needs to be conducted into specific location and site conditions – especially Sanborn's home, as he has the strongest Tubman connection.

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<sup>152</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 162.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.* p. 183.

<sup>154</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 54.

## **Gerrit Smith Estate Land Office**

Peterboro, New York

Gerrit Smith was a well known social reformer, with strong antislavery sentiment. He played a pivotal role in the functions of the Underground Railroad. He was a station master from his estate and land office in Peterboro, New York.<sup>155</sup> Just after Harriet Tubman's last trip to Maryland, Smith wrote to Franklin Sanborn on January 29, 1861. In his letter he said that Tubman "sits by my side...she returned Christmas from another one of her southern expeditions, bringing with her 7 slaves." She had been staying with Smith a few days and was expected to remain for several more.<sup>156</sup>

Gerrit Smith's Land Office is situated at the corner of Nelson and Main Streets in Peterboro. The Estate was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2001. Under the ownership of the Town of Smithfield, it is the only building from the original estate that is open to the public. Smith's mansion, built in 1804, as was the office, was destroyed by fire in 1936. The Land Office serves as a tangible link to the life of an Underground Railroad station master.<sup>157</sup>

## **Harriet Tubman Civil War Sites**

Sarah H. Bradford wrote:

This fearless woman was often sent into the rebel lines as a spy, and brought back valuable information as to the position of armies and batteries; she has been in battle when the shot was falling like hail, and the bodies of the dead and wounded men were dropping around her like leaves in autumn.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Aboard the Underground Railroad. [www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/ny3.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/ny3.htm)

<sup>156</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 189.

<sup>157</sup> Aboard the Underground Railroad. <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/ny3.htm>

<sup>158</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 42.

Harriet Tubman's Civil War career took her from Boston to South Carolina, from Philadelphia to Virginia. The following six sites are those whose connection to Tubman has been identified through documented resources.

### **Twelfth Street Baptist Church Site**

Boston, Massachusetts

Harriet Tubman lectured in 1862 at the Twelfth Street Baptist Church in Boston to raise funds for her trip to Port Royal, South Carolina. However, a large sum of money was not raised. Sanborn reported this in the "Harriet Tubman" Article in *The Liberator* for February 21, 1862.<sup>159</sup> Although the church at 43-47 Phillips Street no longer stands, it is still mentioned in Boston's Black Heritage tour.<sup>160</sup>

### **Port Royal District/Beaufort**

South Carolina

In January of 1862, Massachusetts Governor John Andrew arranged to send Harriet Tubman to Hilton Head, South Carolina, to assist in the "Port Royal Experiment."<sup>161</sup> The Experiment was a program that focused on breaking down the plantation slave labor system and instituting a wage based system. Here, Tubman taught newly freed women how to wash, cook, and sew for the Union Soldiers.<sup>162</sup>

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH,  
HILTON HEAD, PORT ROYAL, S.C., FEB. 19, 1863.

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<sup>159</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 361.

<sup>160</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study" Summer 2003, p. 46.

<sup>161</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p.203.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid. p. 204.

Pass the bearer, Harriet Tubman, to Beaufort and back to this place, and wherever she wishes to go; and giver her free passage at all times, on all Government transport. Harriet was sent to me from Boston by Gov. Andrew of Mass., and is a valuable woman. She has permission, as a servant of the Government, to purchase such provisions from the Commissary as she may need.

D. HUNTER, Maj.-Gen. Com.<sup>163</sup>

The area includes broad savannas and salt marshes, dotted with groups of thickly wooded islands and blackloamed mainland with a pine forest. The islands are separated by inlets, rivers, snaking tidal creeks, and deep swamp areas. There is currently a separate proposal for a Special Resource Study concerning the theme of Reconstruction for the Beaufort Area.<sup>164</sup>

## **Combahee River Area**

### **South Carolina**

In June 1863, Tubman led a raid from Port Royal twenty-five miles up the Combahee River, under the command of Col. Montgomery. This attack resulted in the liberation of over seven hundred slaves fleeing from plantations on or near the river.<sup>165</sup>

The following letter from Col. Montgomery was printed in *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*.

ST. HELENA ISLAND, S.C., JULY 6, 1863.

HEADQUARTERS COLORED BRIGADE

BRIG.-GEN. GILMAN, Commanding Department of the South—

GENERAL: I wish to commend to your attention, Mrs. Harriet Tubman, a most remarkable woman, and an invaluable as a scout. I have been acquainted with her character and actions for several years...

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<sup>163</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 69.

<sup>164</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study," Draft, Summer 2003. p. 107.

<sup>165</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 212.

I am, General, your most ob't servant,  
JAMES MONTGOMERY, Col. Com. Brigade.<sup>166</sup>

The Combahee River Area runs close to twenty-five miles from Beaufort to the “pontoon bridge,” South Carolina. The National Park Service suggests conducting additional research into this river campaign, by consulting Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, which describes the river’s course and the plantations that Montgomery and his troops took during their raid. Comparing the current Combahee river along with the extant plantations today, with the river and plantations of the Civil War period may reveal information regarding an historic landscape.<sup>167</sup>

### **John S. Rock Home** Boston, Massachusetts

During her furlough in the summer of 1864 Tubman traveled to Boston to visit her abolitionist friends. Frank Sanborn produced a brief notice in the *Commonwealth*, stating that she was staying with Dr. John S. Rock.<sup>168</sup> John Sweat Rock was another Antislavery activist, who lived in Beacon Hill’s black community.

The National Park Service has determined that Rock was living at 83 Phillips Street in 1864. The current apartment building at the site was constructed in 1890. However, an historic plaque claims it as the home of John S. Rock. It is a part of the Beacon Hill National Historic Landmark District and the Black Heritage Trail.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 65.

<sup>167</sup> National Park Service. “Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study,” Draft, Summer 2003. p. 102.

<sup>168</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 226.

<sup>169</sup> Black Heritage trail. <http://www.nps.gov/boaf/>

## **Camp William Penn**

Lamott, Pennsylvania

At the end of the Civil War, before Tubman returned to South Carolina after her furlough, she stopped at Camp William Penn, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to inspire newly recruited black Union soldiers. This event was recorded in a letter to the editor of the *Christian Recorder* dated April 6, 1865:

On last Saturday evening we had a very entertaining homespun lecture from a colored woman, known as Harriet Tubman...She seems to be very well known by the community at large, as a great Underground Rail Road woman, and has done a good part to many of her fellow creatures, in that direction. During her lecture, which she gave in her own language, she elicited considerable applause from the soldiers of the 24<sup>th</sup> regiment, U.S.C.T., now at the camp. She gave a thrilling account of her trials in the South, during the past three years, among the contrabands and colored soldiers, and how she had administered to thousands of them, and cared for their numerous necessities...The lecture was interspersed with several gems of music...After a liberal collection for the lecturer, the meeting adjourned.<sup>170</sup>

Camp William Penn is located in LaMott, Cheltenham Township, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. An historical marker in LaMott illustrates how the village of LaMott was laid out on the site of the former Camp William Penn. The Camp William Penn gate and building are all that survive today. There is a museum within the building that interprets the history of the camp to the public.

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<sup>170</sup> Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman The Life and the Life Stories*, Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003. p.370.

## Fortress Monroe Hospital

Hampton, Virginia

Tubman concluded her Civil War career in Virginia, nursing the ill and wounded at Fortress Monroe.<sup>171</sup> On her way back to South Carolina, she was commissioned by the War Department to head to Hampton, Virginia.

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D.C.,

July 22, 1862

Permit Harriet Tubman to proceed to Fortress Monroe, Va., on a Government transport. Transportation will be furnished free of cost.

By order of the Secretary of War,

L. H., Asst. Adj.-Gen.

Not transferable.<sup>172</sup>

### Appointment as Nurse

Sir:--I have the honor to inform you that the Medical Director Department of Virginia has been instructed to appoint Harriet Tubman nurse or matron at the Colored Hospital, Fort Monroe, Va.

Very respectfully, your obdt. Servant,

V.K. Barnes, Surgeon-General

HON. Wm. H. SEWARD,

Secretary of State, Washington, D.C.<sup>173</sup>

Fort Monroe Museum has identified that Tubman worked at the colored hospital, a wooden structure that was located across the causeway from the stone fort itself. The colored hospital has since been demolished.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 229.

<sup>172</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 70.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study" Summer 2003, p. 111.

## ***Sites Tubman visited during her Humanitarian/Suffragist Years***

Most of Harriet Tubman's active suffragist and humanitarian work took place in Auburn, New York and the surrounding region. The major sites that Tubman is associated with at this time were discussed in the previous chapters. Some additional sites she visited during her humanitarian and suffragist years that are not specifically mentioned in the legislation are described here.

### **Site of Roadside, Home of Lucretia Mott**

Cheltenham Township, Pennsylvania

Lucretia Mott was a Pennsylvania Quaker and abolitionist. Along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, she founded the Women's Anti-slavery Society. It is believed that she provided a safe house in her Philadelphia home to Tubman and others traveling the Underground Railroad. Before heading home to Auburn at the end of the War, Tubman stopped by Roadside, just outside Philadelphia. In an October 2, 1865, letter to her sister, Lucretia mentioned that she was glad that Tubman stopped by. They talked of politics, specifically "Freemen and their right to vote."<sup>175</sup> Roadside stood on York Road, in Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. An historical marker indicates the site of the residence.

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<sup>175</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 230.

## **Site of Central Presbyterian Church**

Auburn, New York

The Central Presbyterian Church in Auburn was founded in 1861 under the pastorship of Rev. Henry Fowler.<sup>176</sup> Sarah Bradford recalled in her book that, During the Civil War, she often saw Tubman's parents at the church where she taught Sunday school.<sup>177</sup> After the Civil War, Harriet busied herself by organizing freedmen fairs, held at the Central Presbyterian Church, raising money for the newly freedmen in the south.<sup>178</sup> In March of 1867 Harriet Tubman married Nelson Davis at this church. A notice of the Tubman-Davis wedding appeared in the March 19, 1869 edition of the *Auburn Morning News*. Rev. Fowler presided as the vows were witnessed by "friends...and a large number of the first families of the city."<sup>179</sup>

Michael Long, a planner of the City of Auburn has documented that the congregation of the Central Presbyterian Church met in a basement chapel at 140-146 Genesee Street. In the 1970s, the Metcalf Plaza was constructed on the site of the church.<sup>180</sup>

## **Site of Eliza Wright Osborne Home**

Auburn, New York

Eliza Wright Osborne came from a tradition of Quaker beliefs, abolitionist sentiments and suffragist activists. Her mother was Martha Coffin Wright and her aunt was Lucretia Coffin Mott. She herself hosted suffrage meetings within her home.

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid. p. 375.

<sup>177</sup> Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. p. 3.

<sup>178</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 248.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid. p. 252

<sup>180</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study." Draft, Summer 2003. p. 60.

Osborne was a friend of Tubman, frequently supporting her or convincing others to do the same. She was concerned for Tubman's health. On January 29, 1884, she wrote to her daughter, describing one of Tubman's seizure episodes with visions. "While Harriet sat here, she said she heard a harp playing...she seemed sensible enough."<sup>181</sup> Tubman always regained herself after some time with her condition.

Tubman visited the Osborne home in 1902 to attend a suffrage meeting. Susan B. Anthony wrote in her diary about the gathering saying, "All of us were visiting at the Osborne's, a real love feast of the few that are left and here came Harriet Tubman."<sup>182</sup> Emily Howland, another suffragist present, inscribed in her journal on November 18, 1902, "Harriet said we should never all be there again together I tho't so I dreaded to turn away from the charmed group of souls."<sup>183</sup>

Eliza Wright Osborne resided at 99 South Street, not too far from Tubman's home in Auburn, New York. Michael Long, a planner of the city of Auburn, found that only the former library wing of the Osborne home remains to date. Apparently that former library wing is in poor condition.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. p. 262.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.* p. 283

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.* p. 386.

<sup>184</sup> National Park Service. "Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study" Summer 2003, p. 62.

## **VII. Approach Used on Related Sites**

The purpose of this thesis is to determine which site or a combination of sites best tells the story of Harriet Tubman. To help do this, different approaches to interpretation are described and evaluated at historic sites and parks that interpret themes and historic figures having some aspects in common with Harriet Tubman, aspects that should be included in the telling of her story.

The chapters of Harriet Tubman's life read like topic themes in African American history. What follows delves into several site-specific interpretations of these themes: African American history in general, slavery, the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, and women's rights. The sites were selected to illuminate this discussion of interpretation, based on the coverage they provide on these themes.

### ***African American Sites***

Harriet Tubman is a prominent, African American figure in this nation's history. It is important to see where she fits into the African American experience, as well as how that experience is conveyed to the public. An example of this broader interpretive perspective can be seen at Boston African American Historical Park. In addition, observing how the life of an important African American individual, and contemporary of Harriet Tubman, is portrayed at the home of Fredrick Douglass in Washington DC, offers suggestions for the interpretation of Harriet Tubman herself.

## **Comprehensive African American Interpretation**

In the past, if African American history was interpreted at all, it has been interpreted by focusing on a limited number of central themes, such as slavery, the Underground Railroad, and civil rights. However, movements have been made to go beyond these powerful themes to a more comprehensive telling of the African American story. The Boston African National Historical Park attempts to do just that. Examining interpretation at this park allows insight into to such a comprehensive approach to African American history, and what resources are being used to do so.

### ***Boston African American Historical Park***

Boston African American Historical Park was created and authorized by an act of Congress in 1980. Its roots are in the Museum of Afro-American History in Boston, which has been interpreting and participating in the preservation of African American history since the 1960s. That is when the Museum acquired the African Meetinghouse, which dates to 1806, making it the oldest African American church in the country. It focused primarily on material artifacts of Nineteenth Century African American lifestyle. The Museum continued to conduct research discovering eighteenth century homes of African Americans on Boston's Beacon Hill.<sup>185</sup>

Today the Park interprets the largest collection of pre-Civil War African American homes, privately owned by Beacon Hill residents, in the United States. The National Park Service works hand and hand with the Museum, the owner of the Meetinghouse. The themes and topics the staff at Boston African American Historical

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<sup>185</sup> Interview by Author with Kenneth A. Heidelberg. Site Manager at Boston African American Historical Park. 3/9/04

Park and the Museum of Afro-American History discuss run the gamut from Nineteenth Century Abolitionists, to the Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> Regiment (famous for its Civil War exploits), which was recruited at the African American Meeting House, to education and segregation.

The interpretations at the Park are presented primarily through four programs. Perhaps the major component is the Black Heritage Trail, a 1.6 miles tour around Beacon Hill, which showcases the largest concentration of pre-civil war black-owned structures in the United States. Another method of interpretation offered at Boston African American National Historical Park is a puppet show called “To Freedom’s Land,” dramatically expressing the involvement of Lewis Hayden and Harriet Tubman in the Underground Railroad, Boston’s Nineteenth Century Abolitionists, and the free African community that fought to end slavery. “From Boston Harbor We Set Sail” is a program for school groups who visit the Park, interpreting African Americans in the maritime industry. “Resisting for Justice” is a role-playing exercise demonstrating the roles Boston’s citizens played as they protested the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850.<sup>186</sup>

### **Tubman’s Contemporaries**

In addition to such general interpretation of African American History, more suggestions about how to approach interpreting Harriet Tubman can be found by observing interpretation at the home of Fredrick Douglass, an important African American individual and contemporary of Harriet Tubman. Tubman and Frederick

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

Douglass were both major figures in African American History, avid abolitionists, operators on the Underground Railroad, and proponents of women's rights.

### ***Fredrick Douglass National Historic Site***

The Fredrick Douglass National Historic Site was Fredrick Douglass's home in the District of Colombia from 1877 to 1895. Although Frederick Douglass spent the majority of his public career in Rochester, New York, while living in Washington DC he made contributions to international affairs, to the District Council of Government, and served as a United States Marshal for the District of Colombia. In 1900, Douglass's second wife, Helen, had formed the Frederick Douglass Memorial (the house) and Federation to commemorate this African American spokesman that freed himself from slavery. The two had traveled to Mount Vernon together, where Douglass had expressed his hope that their home be open to the public as a memorial similar to George Washington's home.

The Federation struggled to keep the site open to the public for some time, petitioning the Federal Government for designation as a unit of the National Park System. The Frederick Douglass National Historic Site was authorized in 1962 and opened to the public in 1972.<sup>187</sup>

At this historic site Frederick Douglass is interpreted as a statesman, an abolitionist, and a promoter of women's rights. The visitor experience starts by learning about these aspects of Douglass' life and career through a seventeen minute introductory film entitled "Frederick Douglass: Fighter for Freedom." In this film reenactment

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<sup>187</sup> Interview by Author with Yola Dance, Interpretation Park Ranger at Frederick Douglass National Historic Site 3/11/04

elements of slavery are portrayed, as well as Douglass' connections with Harriet Tubman. Visitors see her consoling Douglass after the death of his first wife, and bringing fugitive slaves to his Rochester Home. Ranger guided tours through the house, tell of the eighteen years when Douglass lived there. Small exhibits and educational programs are also part of the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site's interpretation.<sup>188</sup>

### ***Sites Associated with Slavery***

Harriet Tubman was born into enslavement. Slavery was all she knew in the first third of her life, until she freed herself in 1849. This is the first of many adversities she had to overcome, and the first aspect of her legacy that people are moved by. How should this part of her story be told? In addition, how is the controversial subject of slavery interpreted? The National Park Service, as well as other historic sites and museums have been challenged with confronting the paradoxes and conflicts of American heritage concerning this topic. Many historic sites established initially to memorialize prominent white Americans are now trying to include an accurate portrayal of slavery that existed there. A good example of this attempt to deepen interpretation can be seen at Hampton National Historic Site.

### **Hampton National Historic Site**

The authorizing legislation for Hampton National Historic Site in Maryland was enacted in 1979. The significance identified in the legislation concerned the architecture of the 1790s Georgian mansion that housed seven generations of the Ridgeley family and its immediate outbuildings. Today the Park Service is charged with interpreting not just

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

the architecture of the estate, or the Ridgley family plantation business that evolved over the years, but ultimately the “ironies of life in America.”<sup>189</sup> This is currently done through a forty-five minute Ranger led tour through the mansion and grounds.<sup>190</sup>

Slavery at the site is now addressed through a small exhibit in the kitchen of the estate. “Who Answered Those Bells, Anyway,” provides information about the enslaved peoples at Hampton using text panels and artifacts. It reveals how the Ridgley’s work force was a part of their plantation life. According to Debra Sterm, Chief of Visitor Services, although the National Park Service has many Ridgley Family records regarding the enslaved at Hampton, an African American tour is not yet offered at the site. She says, “The information is from the point of view of the family, which challenges presenting the story holistically.”<sup>191</sup>

The park rangers at Hampton attempt to tie all that is known together to tell the whole history in their tours. They can’t say if the slave masters were good or bad. They can’t say if the enslaved were happy or sad. That kind of information is not available, leading the interpretation at the site to be complicated. Debra Sterm says that “that fact fits into the interpretation itself and hopefully says a little something about how things are complicated today.”<sup>192</sup> Hampton National Historic Site serves as an example of the complexity of interpreting slavery.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Interview by Author with Debra Sterm, Chief of Visitors Services at Hampton National Historic Site.

3/11/04

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

The site has plans to significantly broaden its approach to and expand its interpretation of the subject. At Hampton there are tangible physical features linked with slavery, such as slave quarters, an overseer's house and agricultural structures, allowing for these plans. Currently the site approaches slavery as a side note, something separate from the architectural and artistic distinction of Hampton.

## **Booker T. Washington National Monument**

The Booker T. Washington National Monument is a place where slavery is interpreted directly. It was created in 1956. It is the birthplace of Booker T. Washington (1856) and the site of his childhood dwelling until he was nine. Like Tubman and Douglass, he was born into slavery, overcame adversity and went on to found the Tuskegee Institute for African American in 1881. The Monument is the site of the Burrough's tobacco farm, a place where both slave and master worked the plantation to yield a crop. Today, the Burrough's house itself no longer exists. However, the rest of the plantation outbuildings, including a kitchen cabin, smokehouse, blacksmith shed, tobacco barn, corncrib, horse barn, and chicken lot, have been restored to the mid-nineteenth century, offering insight into Washington's boyhood and the institution of slavery.<sup>194</sup>

The Monument is interpreted to visitors in four programs. "The Great Educator" is an exhibit in the visitor center that tells of Washington's life as a slave, student, educator, and national leader through text and photographs. Also, in the visitor center is an introductory video to the site. The "Plantation Trail" is quarter-of-a-mile ranger guided, (or self-guided with a brochure) tour through the historic area enlightening

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<sup>194</sup> Interview by Author with Timothy Sinclair, Interpretation Park Ranger at Booker T. Washington National Monument. 3/11/04.

Washington's life on the plantation and how it functioned. "Jack-O-Lantern Branch Heritage Trail" is mile-and-a-half loop exploring how enslaved persons of the Burrough's farm made use of native plants and animals. Timothy Sinclair, Interpretation Ranger, said he discusses, by sticking to facts, the controversial topic of slavery and its effects on America. "We are putting a face on slavery."<sup>195</sup>

### ***Approaches to the Underground Railroad***

The Underground Railroad is a web of sites dotted across a large area of the country. Harriet Tubman traveled some of these complex routes. How does one protect and interpret something so complicated, spanning large areas and large number of sites, with varying degrees of documentation and physical integrity? On the national level the National Park Service and its numerous partners use two approaches: The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program and a Travel Itinerary entitled "Aboard the Underground Railroad." The Underground Railroad is also approached on a smaller scale and at a local level. The Kennett Underground Railroad Center is a perfect example of this.

### **The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program**

The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program is administered by the National Park Service. It is a program "to coordinate preservation and education efforts nationwide and integrate local historical places, museums, and interpretive programs associated with the Underground Railroad into a mosaic of

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

community, regional, and national stories.”<sup>196</sup> The Program was created in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act, passed by Congress in 1998, one of the recommendations made by the National Park service in the Underground Railroad Special Resource Study conducted in the 1990s.<sup>197</sup> Since its inception the program has identified 129 sites, facilities and programs, including thirteen National Park Service Sites.<sup>198</sup>

The Network is a collection of historic sites, and facilities, and programs that have a documented association with the Underground Railroad. These are called Elements of the Network. Elements are eligible for inclusion to the Network if there is a verifiable connection to the “resistance to enslavement through flight (the Program’s definition of the Underground Railroad).”<sup>199</sup> This could be a station on the Underground Railroad, a place where flight originated; a battle site or fort that provided refuge to the enslaved, or a cemetery that holds the burials of famous people who participated in Underground Railroad activities.<sup>200</sup>

Organizations that currently focus on the Underground Railroad, but do not have a verifiable connection to it, are recognized as Network Partners. The Program and its Partners collaborate to carry out the Network to Freedom Program mission: to promote programs and partnerships to commemorate, preserve sites and other resources associated with, and educate the public about the historical significance of the Underground

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<sup>196</sup> Network to Freedom website, [www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr](http://www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr)

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> “Network to Freedom,” Official Newsletter of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, Issue 6, p. 1.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>200</sup> Network to Freedom website, [www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr](http://www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr)

Railroad.<sup>201</sup> The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom is telling the “flight to freedom” story by creating a network of sites that goes from coast-to-coast, and spans international borders, including Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean.<sup>202</sup>

## **Aboard the Underground Railroad**

“Aboard the Underground Railroad” is a travel itinerary created by a collaboration between the National Register of Historic Places, the National Historic Landmarks Survey and Park History programs. The travel itinerary is available on the World Wide Web. It is accessible to anyone interested in Underground Railroad history, the people, and the sites associated with it. “Aboard the Underground Railroad” offers a description and photographs of sixty historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and associated with Underground Railroad activities. The properties are listed by state; a map of each state is provided to showcase the location of the site. Also, included within the travel itinerary is an introduction describing the history of the Underground Railroad and a map of common escape routes.<sup>203</sup>

## **Kennett Underground Railroad Center**

An example of interpretation of the Underground Railroad at the local level is the Kennett Underground Railroad Center, a non-profit organization, located in Kennett Square, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The organization educates the public through its learning center, exhibits, lectures, and tours; and helps to preserve over two dozen historic Underground Railroad stations or sites that are located within an eight mile

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> “Network to Freedom,” Official Newsletter of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, Issue 6, p. 1.

<sup>203</sup> Aboard the Underground Railroad Website, [www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/)

radius of Kennett Square. This is done by the Center nominating these sites to the National Register of Historic Places, or by assisting the property owners in the nomination process.<sup>204</sup>

Visitors to the Kennett Underground Railroad Center have the opportunity to peruse its “History Station,” which holds exhibition rooms and a general store. One room contains pictures of local conductors and stations, with a map of the region highlighting the Underground Railroad sites. Other rooms are interactive, mock furnished nineteenth century period rooms showcasing possible hiding places for fugitive enslaved persons. The general store is a gift shop. From the History Station a trolley takes sixteen passengers on the Kennett Underground Railroad Heritage Tour, pointing out and telling of the area’s local Underground Railroad stations.<sup>205</sup>

### ***Civil War Sites***

Harriet Tubman was a nurse, scout and spy in Civil War. The National Park Service interprets the Civil War at numerous National Battlefields and Historic Sites. Interpretations of the role of African Americans who fought in the war can be found for example, at Fort Scott National Historic Site, Fort Scott, Kansas; Richmond National Battlefield, Richmond, Virginia; Petersburg National Battlefield, Petersburg, Virginia; and Vicksburg National Military Park, Vicksburg, Mississippi; Gettysburg National Military Park, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Kennett Underground Railroad Center Website, <http://undergroundrr.kennett.net/>

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Connie Slaughter. *African Americans in the Civil War*. CRM. National Park Service v. 19 n.2 1996. p. 31

Fort Scott National Historic Site produces a site bulletin, "First to Serve," on contributions to the Union cause made by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiments. Richmond National Battlefield Park, where the battle of New Market Heights was fought, displays photographs and exhibitions of the fourteen African American Medal of Honor winners who fought in that battle. Another such site bulletin can be found at Petersburg National Battlefield entitled "African Americans at Petersburg." Petersburg also offers a living history program that portrays Union encampments. Vicksburg National Military Park has wayside exhibits telling of African American involvement in the digging of Grant's Canal and the Battle of Miliken's Bend.<sup>207</sup> The 150,000 African Americans that fought at Gettysburg are included in its interpretation. There also is a wayside exhibit illustrating how the battle affected two free African American landowners in the area.<sup>208</sup>

There is very little, if any, interpretation of women existing at Civil War historic sites. Interpreters tend to focus on military maneuvers and campaigns, and less on the communities that surrounded Civil War battlefields (Gettysburg goes beyond military campaigns). Generally these aspects involved men. However, women also made contributions as nurses and cooks. The case of Harriet Tubman's involvement as a scout and spy to the Union effort is the exception.<sup>209</sup> Hopefully women's participation on and around the Civil War battlefield will be added to the context of the interpretation in the future.

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Briton Fitzgerald, Interpreting African-American History in the National Parks. *CRM*. v. 19 n.2 1996. p. 33

<sup>209</sup> Danyelle A. Nelson. No Place for Women, Interpreting Civil War Battlefields. *CRM*. v. 20 n. 3 1997. p. 59

## ***Sites Associated with Women/Suffrage***

Harriet Tubman was also deeply concerned with women's rights and suffrage, and of the fundamental importance to that movement. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were both women of accomplishment in the suffrage movement. Seeing how Stanton and Anthony are interpreted at respective the places where they lived can enhance the understanding of approaching the interpretation of Harriet Tubman as a woman and suffragist.

## **Women's Rights National Historical Park**

Women's Rights National Historical Park was created by Congress in 1980 to commemorate the first American women's convention, held in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. The primary focus of the Park, as showcased in its museum, is the women's struggle for equality, both before and after the convention. Resources within the park include: the home of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the primary organizer of the convention, the convention site, and three homes of other convention organizers.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's home has been restored to the period of the convention when Stanton lived there. Her home serves as the interpretation focal point in which tours are conducted. To enhance interpretation there is a museum within the park demonstrating women's struggles and achievement. All the greats are mentioned: Sojourner Truth, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Harriet Tubman.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Interview by Author with Jack Shane, Interpretation Ranger. Women's Rights National Historical Park.3/5/04

Interpretation of women's rights continues to be improved. Currently in negotiation are studies to create a Women's Heritage Trail in Upstate New York, linking the sites that are associated with women's suffrage and rights. This is intended to be a partnership program and not a National Park Service unit. Both the Harriet Tubman Home and the Susan B. Anthony House are intended as trail sites.<sup>211</sup>

## **Susan B. Anthony House**

The home of Susan B. Anthony is a historic house museum and National Historic Landmark, directed by the Susan B. House, Inc. for over fifty years. Susan B. Anthony spent her childhood in Rochester, New York and returned to the city to live at this site for the last and most active forty years of her life. She was arrested here for voting in 1872. Susan B. Anthony was a major American civil rights leader; both as an Abolitionist and Suffragist. She was a contemporary of Harriet Tubman. Anthony documented in her diary their work together in assisting fugitive enslaved persons escape to Canada.<sup>212</sup>

Visitors who come to the site go on a tour that starts in the Visitor's Center, conducted by the small staff and volunteers of the Susan B. Anthony House, Inc. The tour proceeds through various rooms within the house telling of the stages of Anthony's life. The house serves as an excellent platform to tell of Susan B. Anthony's notorious life, as it was the most active time in her life when she lived there. The tour concludes in the photograph room. There are photographs of Anthony and her contemporaries. It is in this room that the relationship between Tubman and Anthony is discussed.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Interview by Author with Sue Gaffey, Susan B. Anthony House 3/9/04

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

## **VIII. Policy**

To make a recommendation of how to commemorate Harriet Tubman in the manner required in the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act, after determining the sites that are associated with her, and looking into ways to approach aspects of her life, it is necessary to have knowledge on what policies go into creating an historic site, and more particularly, those governing the addition of units to the National Park System. Generally, a congressionally authorized Special Resource Study is conducted to determine if a site could be a worthy addition to the National Park System, as with the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study.

The following section reviews the policy of the National Park Service for such Special Resource Studies: the criteria it requires, and the types of designation and management, such as National Historic Trails, National Heritage Areas, and National Register Travel Itineraries.

### ***National Park Service Unit Criteria***

Since 1916 the National Park Service (NPS) has been responsible for protecting areas for public enjoyment to the extent of ensuring the enjoyment of future generations. Today, the National Park System is comprised of some 385 units. The NPS has an established process for adding units to the National Park Service System. A new unit of the National Park System can only be created by an official authorization act of Congress adding it to the system. Before Congress is to designate a resource as a Park Service Unit, information is needed as to its quality and availability to meet established criteria. To

gain this information the NPS, authorized by Congress, conducts a “Special Resource Study” to determine if it meets standards of national **significance**. Once such a case for significance is made, studies are then carried out to ascertain the **suitability** and **feasibility** of the area for inclusion in the National Park System.<sup>214</sup> In addition to the studies, **management alternatives** are weighed, park boundaries are determined, and authorization options are consulted, possibly granting assistance programs for those areas not to be authorized.

Cultural areas being considered for Park Unit designation must meet each of four standards of national significance. These standards are:

- The area is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource.
- The area possesses exceptional value or quality in illustration or interpreting the cultural themes of our Nation’s Heritage.
- The area offers superlative opportunities for recreation, for public use and enjoyment, or for scientific study.
- The area retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource.<sup>215</sup>

The last standard concerns integrity – the quality of the resource. A future Park Service Unit must exceptionally illustrate and interpret national heritage. This is done through the seven qualities of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.<sup>216</sup>

Further evaluation is performed after significance is determined. An area has to be suitable and feasible to become part of the National Park Service System. If a site is **suitable** for inclusion in the National Park System, it must possess a cultural theme or be a different type of resource not currently represented or protected for public enjoyment

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<sup>214</sup> National Park Service brochure. Division of Park Planning and Protection.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

by the National Park Service. This is established by comparing the area with current National Park Units; finding differences and similarities of quality, defining characteristics, quantity, and prospects for public enjoyment. The cultural and historic setting of the area ought to possess an adequate size and configuration, allowing for public use, enjoyment and protection of the resource, to be deemed a **feasible** park unit. Factors in determining feasibility are “landownership, acquisition costs, access, threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements.”<sup>217</sup>

The National Park Service also assesses a site’s need for National Park Service management in a Special Resource Study. **Management alternatives** to National Park Service administration are considered in this process. Evaluation of management options may lead to alternatives, such as continued management of the site under consideration by state or local governments, or other entities. Established programs and special projects may allow for technical advice and financial assistance, such as the National Historic Landmarks Program, that grant specially designated and protected sites a cooperative management agreement with the National Park Service. If an area is protected and publicly enjoyed under current management, then an addition to the System likely will not be made.<sup>218</sup> (Different types of Management alternatives that still work in cooperation with the National Park Service are discussed further below.)

If the site seems to have potential for inclusion in the system, the next step in the process considers the **boundaries** of the proposed park unit. Park boundaries are governed by the inclusion of significant features, opportunities for public enjoyment

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

connected to purpose, operational and management issues, and natural or topographic perimeters. “Selection of a park boundary is often a compromise between the ideal and what is practical considering costs and other factors.”<sup>219</sup>

Once an area is regarded as nationally significant, suitable, and feasible as an addition to the Park System, it is up to Congress to **authorize** it. In order for this to happen, congressional committee hearings are held to weigh the information provided by National Park Service study information and the recommendations of the Secretary of the Interior. To date, congress has used over twenty different types of Park Service designations to add units to the system.<sup>220</sup> Under a law passed in 1970, all units of the National Park System have equal legal standing.<sup>221</sup>

## **Types of National Park Units**

Park Service units are classified as areas of land and water administered by Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service. Such units are, with few exceptions, considered to be federally owned and managed. Some examples of these units include: an historical park, an historic site, a battlefield, and a monument.

(Definitions of different types of National Park Units can be found in Appendix C.) A

National Historical Park is generally a group of historic resources and features that are connected by cultural themes. Women’s Rights National Historical Park serves as an excellent example. A National Historic site is one historic resource that is directly associated with its subject. Frederick Douglass National Historic site is an example.

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study website, [www.harriettubmanstudy.org](http://www.harriettubmanstudy.org). Sponsored by the National Park Service.

National Battlefields are those park units that commemorate and interpret the site of an historic battle. Richmond National Battlefield, Petersburg National Battlefield, and Vicksburg National Military Park as described in the Civil War Sites section, are examples. National Monuments are typically smaller areas recognized to protect historic resources containing fewer features than that of a national park, like Booker T. Washington National Monument.<sup>222</sup>

If Congress does not authorize an addition to the National Park System, the National Park Service also oversees and participates in a number of programs that offer recognition and provide assistance. In particular, sites and areas that possess national significance may be eligible for National Historic Landmark designations and programs in association with the National Park Service, while remaining under the management of state and local governments, other agencies and organizations, and private owners. Sometimes these are considered untraditional units. Nationally significant sites may be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, for preservation and protection against federal projects, designated as a National Historic Landmark for technical and limited financial assistance, or subject to National Park Service oversight while under another entities' jurisdiction.<sup>223</sup>

Some examples of federal designations that are not units of the National Park System are Interpretive Centers, which are managed by National Park Service on non-federally owned land, like the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> National Park Service brochure. Division of Park Planning and Protection.

Program, discussed above, and National Heritage Areas described below.<sup>224</sup> National Trails are part of the National Trail System and are administered by the National Park Service. They are interpreted by coordinated partnerships.

### ***National Historic Trail***

The National Trails System includes Recreational, Scenic and Historic trails established for the enjoyment of the public. Official designation of National Historic trails is accomplished through a similar process as National Park Service units, and the same criteria are applied. For a National Historic Trail to be created it must be significant on a national level, and must be a suitable and feasible addition to the National Trails System.<sup>225</sup>

Generally, co-sponsors bring a bill before Congress. This piece of legislation appoints an agency, typically the National Park Service, to determine significance and to conduct necessary studies. One such study is called a Special Resource Study that is much like the current congressional authorized one that is being used for Harriet Tubman sites. The study evaluates extant related and/or associated sites, like grave sites, camps sites, and other structures. At the conclusion of the study the National Park Service makes a recommendation to Congress.<sup>226</sup>

Once the recommendation has been made and Congressional hearings are conducted, a second piece of legislation is introduced. An Authorization bill is enacted as

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<sup>224</sup> The Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study website, [www.harrietubmanstudy.org](http://www.harrietubmanstudy.org) Sponsored by the National Park Service.

<sup>225</sup> Interview by Author with Jere Krakow, Trails Manager, National Trails System Office, Salt Lake City. 3/3/04

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

an amendment to the National Trails System Act. This was first passed as an “umbrella act” in 1968, listing national trail criteria and their standards of scenic quality. In 1978 it was amended to include historic qualities as a potential criterion for national trails. With each new additional trail the act is amended, authorizing the National Park Service to administer it. Today, the National Trails System is comprised of twenty-three national trails, seventeen of which are historic.<sup>227</sup>

The National Park Service administers a National Historic Trail by coordinating the telling of its story. In partnership with historic sites, monuments, state parks and private property, NPS interprets the trail and its resources end to end. In actuality the National Park Service does not own the land along the trail; it is not a long skinny park, though it may own a piece along the trail. The NPS does not manage the land; it instead administers it by working in conjunction with other park units, state, local, county and city parks, and other entities to protect its resources and interpret it to the public.<sup>228</sup>

Interpretation of historic trails is carried out through a variety of means. All National Trails bear signs of the triangular emblem of the specific trail and have a trail brochure produced by the National Park Service working with other cooperations. Trails differ from many other park units in that there is no visitor center, no entrance gate. The NPS often provides ‘introduction to the trail’ videos at trail sites and visitor centers of associated park units, and interpretive panels and plaques along the trail route. By granting financial assistance to trail resource sites, the telling of the trail history is

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

encouraged by the National Park Service. Also, many trails have informative websites offering trail maps, auto tour routes within the trail corridor, and links to related sites.

The Oregon National Historic Trail serves as a good example of a typical historic trail. It follows the route traveled by over 300,000 emigrants, fur traders, gold seekers, missionaries and others looking for a different life, in the 1840s and 1850s. The trip from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon City, Oregon, 2,170 miles, took about five months by wagon to complete. Visitors use brochures provided along the Trail by local, state, and federal related historic sites, auto tour interpretation maps, and the Oregon Trail emblem on interpretive signage, to guide them to wagon wheel ruts, remnant emigrant camp sites, and trail segments, along this historic route. The Oregon National Historic Trail was created after a congressionally authorized study was conducted in 1977.<sup>229</sup>

### ***National Heritage Areas***

There currently exist twenty-three National Heritage Areas in the United States, each of which was separately established in an authorization act by Congress. National Heritage Areas cover large geographical areas, too large for a park. Their make-up leads to partnership coordination similar to the administration of national trails. They are interpreted the same way with brochures, signage and encouraged interpretation.

(Appendix C has a definition of National Heritage Areas.)

A National Heritage Area is a place where natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage areas representative of the national experience through physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in them.

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<sup>229</sup> Oregon National Historic Trail website, [www.nps.gov/oreg/](http://www.nps.gov/oreg/)

These regions are acknowledged by Congress for their capacity to describe nationally important stories about the evolution of our nation. Continued use of the National Heritage Area by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance.<sup>230</sup>

There are as of yet no over-arching legislative criteria for creating or designating a National Heritage Area. Groups interested in determining an area's national significance can follow unofficial National Heritage Area guidelines. A series of four steps are considered pertinent for congressional designation:

1. Completion of a suitability/feasibility study;
2. Public involvement in the suitability/feasibility study;
3. Demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed designation; and
4. Commitment to the proposal from key constituents, which may include governments, industry, and private, non-profits organizations, in addition to area residents.<sup>231</sup>

The management of a Heritage Area is conducted by an entity that may be a State or local agency, a commission, or a private non-profit organization, or a combination thereof. This so-called "management entity," established in the authorization act, typically must develop a management plan for the area within a specified period of time, typically identified in the Heritage Area's authorization act. It is also considered eligible to receive Federal funds on behalf of the Heritage Area.<sup>232</sup> The National Park Service is expected to assist as a partner with the management entity and local active citizens within the Heritage Area community, for the organizing and planning of the area. The National

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<sup>230</sup> *National Heritage Areas*. National Park Service. US Department of the Interior.

<sup>231</sup> National Heritage Areas website, [www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/)

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

Park Serves acts as an advisor to Heritage Areas, but does not typically play any other role in management decisions.<sup>233</sup>

In 2002 the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program gave the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor an interpretation award.<sup>234</sup> The Corridor covers 454 square miles and 24 cities and towns in the Blackstone River watershed. Congress designated this National Heritage Area in 1986 because its distinctive landscape of mill villages, roads, trails and dams, reveals the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. In the eighteenth century the area was transformed from farm land to factory sites, and the landscape continues to evolve today.<sup>235</sup>

### ***Travel Itineraries***

Travel Itineraries are self-guided tours to historic places listed on the National Register. The itineraries highlight different geographic regions and themes through historic places, significant to American history, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

Each Itinerary contains five components:

- Descriptions of each historic place and its importance in American history, plus contextual essays.
- Tourist information for historic places open to the public including hours of operation, tour possibilities, phone numbers and website links.
- Interactive maps.
- Color and vintage photographs.
- Links to related preservation and tourism websites.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Network to Freedom website, [www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr](http://www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr)

<sup>235</sup> *National Heritage Areas*. National Park Service. US Department of the Interior

<sup>236</sup> National Register Travel Itineraries website, [www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel)

Most of the Travel Itineraries are created as a result of proposals from state and local partners. For each Itinerary, based on the region or theme, criteria are gathered and established on what sites to include. All must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Then photos are collected, as well as accessibility information (i.e. what sites are open the public, and when). Descriptions of each site are excerpted from their National Register nominations. In addition, contextual essays are created. Then each Itinerary is designed, by the National Register office, for the web, based on standard design elements that continued throughout the Travel Itinerary series.<sup>237</sup> Aboard the Underground Railroad serves an example of such a Travel Itinerary.

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<sup>237</sup> Interview by Author with Shannon Bell. National Register of Historic Places. 3/13/03.

## IX. Conclusion

Harriet Tubman is a well known nineteenth century American of many deeds and accomplishments. She lived and worked in a variety of places, many of which no longer contain the buildings associated with her. Tubman traveled up and down the East Coast of the United States over her lifetime. Sometimes the nature of her travel required that she be hidden. These stopping stations, places of visit, working locations and temporary dwellings have very little tangible physical evidence to connect to Harriet Tubman. Some sites have taken on a “Washington slept here” quality. However, there is a place to learn of Tubman’s legacy and her gifts to the people of her race, to American women, and the country at large.

Congress has found Harriet Tubman to be an important figure in American History. It has enlisted the National Park Service to investigate resources that are associated with her and to determine if the National Park Service should preserve any site or sites associated with Harriet Tubman in order to recognize her life and her contributions on a national level. Congress asks that the National Park Service recommend a designation of one or a combination of the sites identified in the Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act as a unit of the National Park System, and/or to establish a National Heritage Corridor that integrates the same identified sites and any other sites associated with her. Appendix C defines what a National Heritage Corridor or Area is.

The sites that are associated with Harriet Tubman span from South Carolina to Canada, from Rochester, New York to Boston, Massachusetts. The Tubman associated

sites do not form a nationally distinctive landscape. Her human activity, although shaped by geography, is not a pattern that can be physically traced in the land she covered. Her story ranges across a vast physical and emotional landscape, touching many places where her presence can be documented and perhaps as many where it cannot. However, a Heritage Corridor for Harriet Tubman sites is not plausible based on what a Heritage Area is.

A Harriet Tubman National Historic Trail might seem a logical designation, based on Tubman's Underground Railroad exploits, and other travels. A trail would protect and preserve Tubman sites and interpret them to the public. However, to be designated a Historical Trail, an historic route must exist. Therefore only, Harriet Tubman sites associated with the Underground Railroad would be appropriate. But as the survey of Tubman's documented Underground Railroad sites shows, not much remains of these sites. This trail would not offer much in the form of public enjoyment or enlightenment. "The widespread, decentralized story of the Underground Railroad prevented Congress's commemoration efforts from concentrating of a specific park unit or collections of units, or from designation of a long-distance trail."<sup>238</sup>

A National Register Travel Itinerary is another option for a large collection of sites. The contents of this thesis in essence constitute what might go into such a Harriet Tubman Travel Itinerary. But again, a large portion of the sites are no longer extant, or have little or no integrity to the period when Tubman interacted with them. A travel itinerary is created from national register properties joined by common themes. The

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<sup>238</sup> "Network to Freedom," Official Newsletter of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, Issue 6, p. 3.

Susan B. Anthony House and three of the houses that Tubman visited while in Boston are listed on the National Register. That is not quite enough for a cohesive travel itinerary. However, The Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church are included in the “Aboard the Underground Railroad” Travel Itinerary.

Based on the survey of current Harriet Tubman sites, other sites listed in the legislation, and documented sites summarized above, the Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, all in Auburn, New York, are the resources that should be designated to tell Harriet Tubman’s story. These three sites are in good condition and serve as tangible resources to Harriet Tubman. Auburn is where Tubman spent just under half her life. The work she did there and the life she lived can be found at these sites.

A large majority of the sites associated with Harriet Tubman are no longer standing. The other sites that remain today are not purely identified with Harriet Tubman. They are tangible resources to some other historical figure.

The three properties associated with Harriet Tubman in Auburn, the Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church each meet the four standards of national significance. (1) They are an outstanding example of a particular type of resource. These three sites have the strongest connection to Harriet Tubman. (2) They possess exceptional value or quality in illustration or interpreting the cultural themes of our Nation’s Heritage. These sites are valuable for illustrating and interpreting the life of Harriet Tubman. (3) They

offer superlative opportunities for recreation, for public use and enjoyment, or for scientific study. These sites offer superlative opportunities to learn about Harriet Tubman, her deeds and accomplishments, and her inspiration to others. (4) They retain a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource. “It [Tubman Home for the Aged] represents an important aspect of Harriet Tubman’s charitable work and activities in Auburn. It maintains integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling, design and association.”<sup>239</sup> The other two sites also meet this criterion for national significance.

If a site is suitable for inclusion in the National Park System, it must possess a cultural theme or be a different type of resource not currently represented or protected for public enjoyment by the National Park Service. This is established by comparing the area with current Park Units; finding differences and similarities of quality, defining characteristics, quantity, and prospects for public enjoyment. The Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, are suitable for inclusion in the National Park System. There is currently within the System no other site designated for Harriet Tubman. These sites offer opportunities for public enjoyment in learning about Harriet Tubman, her deeds and accomplishments, and her inspiration to others.

The cultural and historic setting of the area ought to possess an adequate size and configuration, allowing for public use, enjoyment and protection of the resource, to be deemed a feasible park unit. Factors in determining feasibility are “landownership,

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<sup>239</sup> “Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, Harriet Tubman Residence and the Thompson A.M.E. Zion Church,” National Historic Landmark Nomination. p. 15.

acquisition costs, access, threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements.”<sup>240</sup> More research needs to be conducted into the feasibility of the Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, for inclusion in the National Park System. However the sites are currently a historic site. Their cultural and historic settings are adequate in size and configuration for public use and enjoyment.

If the National Park Service does not designate these sites as part of a National Park Unit, there are management alternatives. Each of the sites is currently managed by the A.M.E. Zion Church and each is designated a National Historic Landmark. The Home for the Aged is open to the public and the Residence and the Church are projected to be in the summer of 2005. If an area is protected and publicly enjoyed under current management, then an addition to the System likely will not be made.<sup>241</sup> These sites do not have particular need for National Park Service management.

Park boundaries are governed by the inclusion of significant features, opportunities for public enjoyment connected to purpose, operational and management issues, and natural or topographic perimeters. The Harriet Tubman Residence and the Home for the Aged are located on the same tract of land and can be interpreted together. The Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion church is just over a mile away. This factor will have to be considered if the three sites are added the National Park System.

Because not much remains from the sites of Harriet Tubman’s early life, her life story can be told at the Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the

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<sup>240</sup> National Park Service brochure. Division of Park Planning and Protection.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

Aged, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, much like what is done at the Susan B. Anthony House, or the Frederick Douglass Historic Site. Unlike Booker T. Washington, Tubman's experience in enslavement cannot be told at the site where she was enslaved. Nor can it be interpreted in a manner such as that at Hampton Historic Site. Such sites for Harriet Tubman no longer exist. For someone who fled bondage her story should be told at her home where she was free.

The very nature of the Underground Railroad makes it difficult to identify specific sites at which to interpret Tubman's contributions to it. While her whole life story could be told at the three Auburn sites, those who desire an Underground Railroad experience can be encouraged at the Auburn sites to use the Network to Freedom Program, or the "Aboard the Underground Railroad" Travel Itinerary, or to visit a local site or museum such as the Kennett Underground Railroad Center, all of which mention Harriet Tubman in their interpretation. Although an Underground Railroad trail cannot be established, a Harriet Tubman pilgrimage can be carried out by using these resources.

Harriet Tubman Civil War activities are also difficult to interpret in-situ, as well as the fact that interpretation of women at Civil War battlefields is lacking. She is talked about at the Fort Monroe Museum. However, the rest of her Civil War experiences will have to be told at the Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church.

Tubman's humanitarian work and suffragist contributions are central to her work over the last forty years of her life in Auburn, New York, at the Harriet Tubman Residence, the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E.

Zion Church. This is where she lived and worked when she made those contributions.

Auburn was Harriet Tubman's home for over forty years. A National Historic Landmark, it is the perfect place to tell her story and would serve her legacy best.

# Appendix A: Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study Act

UNITED STATES PUBLIC LAWS  
106th Congress -- 2nd Session  
(c) 2000, LEXIS-NEXIS, A DIVISION OF REED ELSEVIER INC. AND REED  
ELSEVIER PROPERTIES INC.

PUBLIC LAW 106-516 [S. 2345]  
NOV. 13, 2000  
**HARRIET TUBMAN SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY ACT**

106 P.L. 516; 114 Stat. 2404; 2000 Enacted S. 2345; 106 Enacted S. 2345

## An Act

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study concerning the preservation and public use of sites associated with **Harriet Tubman** located in Auburn, New York, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

[\*1] SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "**Harriet Tubman** Special Resource Study Act".

[\*2] SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that--

(1) **Harriet Tubman** was born into slavery on a plantation in Dorchester County, Maryland, in 1821;

(2) in 1849, **Harriet Tubman** escaped the plantation on foot, using the North Star for direction and following a route through Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania to Philadelphia, where she gained her freedom;

(3) **Harriet Tubman** is an important figure in the history of the United States, and is most famous for her role as a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad, in which, as a fugitive slave, she helped hundreds of enslaved individuals to escape to freedom before and during the Civil War;

(4) during the Civil War, **Harriet Tubman** served the Union Army as a guide, spy, and nurse;

(5) after the Civil War, **Harriet Tubman** was an advocate for the education of black children;

(6) **Harriet Tubman** settled in Auburn, New York, in 1857, and lived there until 1913;

(7) while in Auburn, **Harriet Tubman** dedicated her life to caring selflessly and tirelessly for people who could not care for themselves, was an influential member of the community and an active member of the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, and established a home for the elderly;

(8) **Harriet Tubman** was a friend of William Henry Seward, who served as the Governor of and a Senator from the State of New York and as Secretary of State under President Abraham Lincoln;

(9) 4 sites in Auburn that directly relate to **Harriet Tubman** and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places are--

(A) **Harriet Tubman's** home;

(B) the **Harriet Tubman** Home for the Aged;

(C) the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church; and

[\*\*2405] (D) **Harriet Tubman** Home for the Aged and William Henry Seward's home in Auburn are national historic landmarks.

[\*3] SEC. 3. STUDY CONCERNING SITES IN AUBURN, NEW YORK,  
ASSOCIATED WITH **HARRIET TUBMAN**.

(a) In General.--The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a special resource study of the national significance, feasibility of long-term preservation, and public use of the following sites associated with **Harriet Tubman**:

(1) **Harriet Tubman's** birthplace, located on Greenbriar Road, off of Route 50, in Dorchester County, Maryland.

(2) Bazel Church, located 1 mile South of Greenbriar Road in Cambridge, Maryland.

(3) **Harriet Tubman's** home, located at 182 South Street, Auburn, New York.

(4) The **Harriet Tubman** Home for the Aged, located at 180 South Street, Auburn, New York.

(5) The Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, located at 33 Parker Street, Auburn, New York.

(6) **Harriet Tubman's** grave at Fort Hill Cemetery, located at 19 Fort Street, Auburn, New York.

(7) William Henry Seward's home, located at 33 South Street, Auburn, New York.

(b) Inclusion of Sites in the National Park System. --The study under subsection (a) shall include an analysis and any recommendations of the Secretary concerning the suitability and feasibility of--

(1) designating one or more of the sites specified in subsection (a) as units of the National Park System; and

(2) establishing a national heritage corridor that incorporates the sites specified in subsection (a) and any other sites associated with **Harriet Tubman**.

(c) Study Guidelines. --In conducting the study authorized by this Act, the Secretary shall use the criteria for the study of areas for potential inclusion in the National Park System contained in section 8 of Public Law 91-383, as amended by section 303 of the National Park Omnibus Management Act (P.L. 105-391; 112 Stat. 3501).

(d) Consultation. --In preparing and conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with--

(1) the Governors of the States of Maryland and New York;

(2) a member of the Board of County Commissioners of Dorchester County, Maryland;

(3) the Mayor of the city of Auburn, New York;

(4) the owner of the sites specified in subsection (a); and

(5) the appropriate representatives of--

(A) the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church;

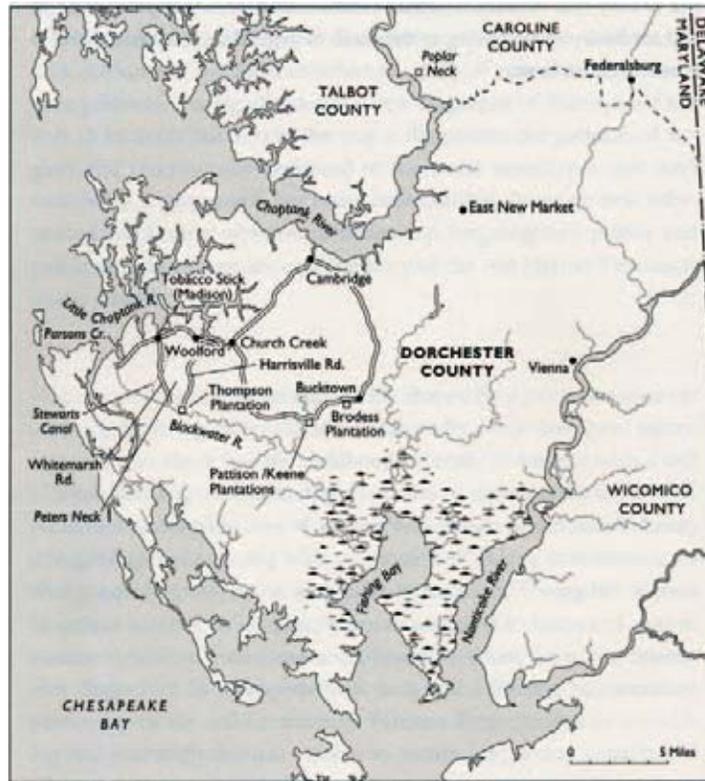
(B) the Bazel Church;

(C) the **Harriet Tubman** Foundation; and

(D) the **Harriet Tubman** Organization, Inc. A

[\*\*2406] (e) Report. --Not later than 2 years after the date on which funds are made available for the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the results of the study.

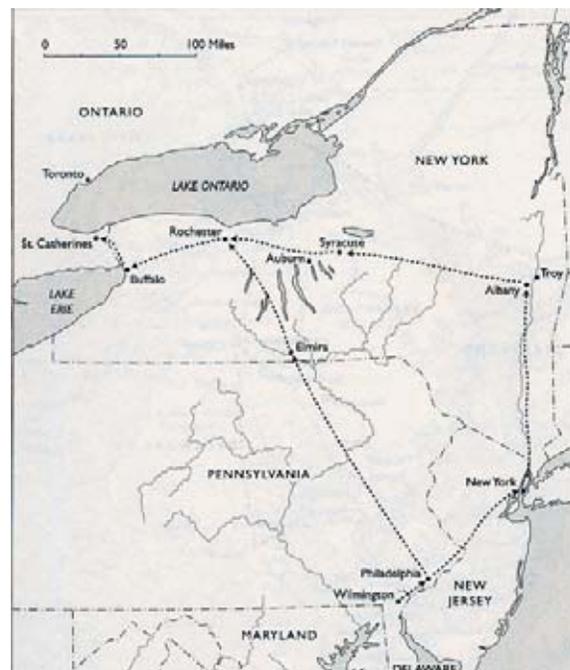
## Appendix B: Maps



Dorchester County, Maryland c. 1800-1860 (Larson)



Tubman's Underground Railroad Southern Routes (Larson)



Tubman's Underground Railroad Northern Routes (Larson)

## Appendix C: National Park Service Terms

### ***Designation of National Park System Units***<sup>242</sup>

***National Battlefield:*** This general title includes national battlefield, national battlefield park, national battlefield site, and national military park. In 1958, an NPS committee recommended national battlefield as the single title for all such park lands.

***National Historic Site:*** Usually, a national historic site contains a single historical feature that was directly associated with its subject. Derived from the Historic Sites Act of 1935, a number of historic sites were established by secretaries of the Interior, but most have been authorized by acts of Congress.

***National Historical Park:*** This designation generally applies to historic parks that extend beyond single properties or buildings.

***National Memorial:*** A national memorial is commemorative of a historic person or episode; it need not occupy a site historically connected with its subject.

***National Monument:*** The Antiquities Act of 1906 authorized the President to declare by public proclamation landmarks, structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest situated on lands owned or controlled by the government to be national monuments.

***National Trail:*** National scenic trails and national historic trails are the titles given to these linear parklands (over 3,600 miles) authorized under the National Trails System Act of 1968.

### ***Other National Park Service Programs***

***National Heritage Area:*** a place designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in the areas. Continued use of the National Heritage Areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> National Park Service website, [www.nps.gov/legacy/nomenclature.html](http://www.nps.gov/legacy/nomenclature.html)

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., [www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/)

***National Historic Landmark:*** a nationally significant historic place designated by the Secretary of the Interior because it possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States.<sup>244</sup>

***National Register of Historic Places:*** the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.<sup>245</sup>

***National Underground Railroad "Network to Freedom" Program:*** Operated by the National Park Service, this program supports and assists a diverse collection of historic sites, facilities, and programs which have verifiable association with the Underground Railroad. The program's goals are the preservation and protection of elements of the Underground Railroad, the system's commemoration, and the education of the public.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., [www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/)

<sup>245</sup> The National Register of Historic Places website, [www.cr.nps.gov/nr/about](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/about)

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