THE

PILGRIM'S

PATHWAY

The Underground Railroad in Lancaster County

by
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FOREWORD

The writing of this monograph was suggested by a field trip taken by members of the Community Historians on Saturday, July 13, 1963, under the leadership of William P. Bucher. Detailed description of locations and the annotated map should be helpful to those who would like to explore points of historical interest in southern Lancaster County. Although the major concern belongs to the first half of the nineteenth century, there are references to places and events which belong to the eighteenth century.

In a sense there is no such thing as an "historical fact." Past events can never be recovered. What happened yesterday is forever lost as an event, it can never be restored. All that we can have now is a narration of the event, not the event itself. The narration is only a *symbol* of what actually happened. The value of the symbol depends upon its accuracy and its objectivity.

Any story of the Underground Railroad must, by necessity, be a combination of historical narrative and of fiction. The fact that records were not kept makes it almost impossible to find primary written sources. Any history which is preserved orally is bound to be incomplete, obscure, and exaggerated. Although the author has used all available written sources, none of which were written before 1872 (at least several decades after the events occurred); he has also made use of information which has been handed down orally from generation to generation. The reader must, therefore, be aware that these pages contain a combination of historical narrative, of fiction, and of legend, all of which is now a part of the story of Southern Lancaster County and the Underground Railroad.

In addition to the printed bibliography the author is particularly indebted to several community historians. Mr. William P. Bucher was most generous, making available his extensive library, including his invaluable scrapbooks of clippings covering local history; taking trips to many of the places which are referred to in this treatise, especially to places where the 'hide-away' for fugitive slaves is still available; and sharing the wealth of information which he has stored in his unusual memory.

Much of the information about Bart and Sadsbury Townships could not have been secured without the efficient cooperation of Mr. Clyde L. Groff, a native of this area. During more than thirty years Mr. Groff has been doing genealogical and other historical research in this locality. It is a thrilling experience to drive through an area of Lancaster County with a man who has at his "fingertips" exact historical information about nearly every farm and place of business. Mr. Groff was also most generous in allowing me access to his vast collection of notes on local history. He also

made available the picture of the Peter Woods family on Page 40. At the time the picture was taken Peter Woods was the only surviving person who had participated in the Christiana Riot. This picture has never been published before.

Cartography is one of the many fields in which I have no competence at all. For help in this field, we always turn to Mr. Howard L. Feather. He is entirely responsible for the map of southern Lancaster County, with its annotated references (by numerals and letters) to all of the places which are described in this Annual. To take a tour with this man, with a pile of maps on the front seat as a guide, locating every stop exactly on the map, listening to his detailed information about this and that farmer, insisting that we see the two magnificent Cedars of Lebanon near the Maryland state line—is to have a most unusual experience.

The author is alone responsible for any errors or misinterpretations which may appear in this monograph.

ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND OF THE

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The name (originally "underground road") supposedly dates from 1831 when the Kentucky master of a fugitive slave named Tice Davids, unsuccessfully pursued him across the Ohio river at Ripley, Ohio, and remarked that Davids "must have gotten away by an underground road". The Underground Railroad was a secret and shifting network of hiding places and routes for helping fugitive slaves escape to the north or Canada. Without formal organization, it is known to have existed as early as 1786 and to have flourished in the Western Reserve after the War of 1812, but its spread through fourteen northern states did not come until 1830. It is estimated that some 50,000 slaves escaped to freedom via the Underground Railroad from 1830 to 1860.

The *Concise Dictionary of American History* contains the following description of the Underground Railroad: "This was an informal, secret system of aiding fugitive slaves to attain freedom in the free states and Canada. It was operated, generally at night, by Quaker, Negro, Covenanter, Wesleyan Methodist, and other anti-slavery people, who, using all sorts of hiding places, and sometimes disguising their passengers, passed the fugitive from station to station. Slaves first heard of Canada from the veterans of the War of 1812. They sang of the "promised land" and learned from friendly whites of the north star as their guide . . . Networks of routes ran northward through eastern and western Pennsylvania, all of Ohio and Indiana, and eastward through southern Michigan."

The National Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 added fresh impetus to the Underground Railroad. The new law added United States Commissioners to the usual courts to issue warrants for the arrest of fugitives and certificates for their removal to the states and territories whence they had escaped. Citizens were expected to aid in executing the law. Those harboring, concealing, or rescuing a fugitive were liable to a fine of $1000, six months' imprisonment, and court damages of $1000 for each runaway so lost. The new law produced an era of slave hunting and kidnapping in the north, drove hundreds of runaways from the free states to Canada, created some vigilance committees, increased underground railroad operations and stimulated Mrs. Stowe to write *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

The information available would indicate that the Underground Railroad in Lancaster County began to operate soon after the beginning of the nineteenth century and continued beyond the close of the Civil War.

Three main routes passed through Lancaster County, all of them leading eventually in the direction of Christiana, which seemed to be the point of crossing over into Chester County for the continued journey north in the direction of Canada. There were many stations available in Chester County.

The fugitives from Frederick, Maryland; Winchester, Virginia; and parts farther south; came through Franklin, Adams, and York Counties, entering Lancaster County at Columbia, where William Wright was an active agent; he may have begun to operate as early as 1804. From the Wright home fugitives were sent to the Gibbons home near Bird-in-Hand, and then to homes of Dr. J. K. Eshleman in Strasburg, Thomas Whitson at Bart, Jeremiah Moore near Christiana, and others.

A second route was used by the fugitives who came from Baltimore. They came to the banks of the Susquehanna River at Peach Bottom, where they were met by a Negro, who rowed them across the river at night, and directed them to the home of Joseph Smith near Liberty Square. Smith directed many to the homes of Thomas Whitson and Lindley Coates, who lived near Christiana. Others were sent to the John N. Russell farm near Unicorn, who in turn directed them to the Bushong and Hood farms in Bart Township, and then towards Christiana. The route from the river, at Peach Bottom, to the Russell farm can still be followed—part of it is only a path, and part is hard-top. This is still known locally as the Pilgrim's Pathway.

A third route, farther south followed the Susquehanna River to the mouth of the Octorara Creek. One of the first stations was near the Maryland state line, the home of William Brown, which was the site of the story of *John and Mary.* This route also led in the direction of Christiana, where William Parker, who was born a slave in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, was a central figure in helping fugitives to follow the Railroad into Chester County. Many who took this third route were directed by Thomas Garrett, the fearless friend of slaves in the city of Wilmington, Delaware. It is remarkable that, while living in a slave state, with a population hostile to Abolitionists, of the nearly 2900 fugitives who passed through his hands only one was recaptured. Many of the fugitives were guided by Garrett through southern Chester County, and along the boundary of Lancaster County, where Garrett had many friends who guided the escapees northward.

The general direction of these three routes is indicated on the map. Seventeen different stations, located along these routes, are listed on the map. Most of these stations were operated by anti-slavery Quakers. These routes were not always followed. On one occasion where haste was necessary Daniel Gibbons sent a fugitive into Berks County.

Not all the fugitives from the South followed the North star of freedom. Many settled in the southern part of Lancaster County, getting jobs on the surrounding farms. Among these was William Parker, whose family lived in the tenant house on the farm of Levi Pownall. Parker's place was the setting for the riot which began in the early dawn on the morning of September 11, 1851, when Southern and Federal forces approached the Parker house, in an effort to capture slaves who had escaped from the Gorsuch homestead located in Baltimore County, Maryland. In a short time neighbors had gathered, who refused to aid the authorities in executing warrants for the escaped slaves. Someone, it may have been Dickinson Gorsuch, the slave-owner's son, fired at Parker. Parker knocked the pistol out of young Gorsuch's hand before the "fighting began in earnest," which resulted in the death of Edward Gorsuch, owner of the escaped slaves; the severe wounding of his son, Dickinson; the violent beating of his fleeing nephew, Joshua; the full retreat of the United States deputies marshal; and the removal of $400 from Edward Gorsuch's body. By nightfall every man inmate of the Parker house and every runaway slave from Baltimore County was on his way to Canada.

Dickinson Gorsuch was soon removed to the friendly shelter and tender ministrations of the nearby Levi Pownall homestead. There he learned to know that the Quaker families of the valley, while they were considerate of the slave, could be no less kind to the master in distress. During Dickinson Gorsuch's convalesence Dr. John L. Atlee, Sr., of Lancaster was called in consultation. The author recently visited the Pownall homestead, which is presently owned by Mr. Levi Pownall, a direct descendant of the Levi, whose hospitality sheltered Dickinson Gorsuch for almost a month following the tragic death of his father.

It is apparent that not all the fugitives who came into Lancaster County moved farther north. Many remained in the county, purchased property, and their descendants are still living in the county. When the author was a boy in the village of Bowmansville, a colony of descendants of former slaves lived on Yellow Hill, near the Berks County line. These colored people did visiting back and forth with another group who had settled on the Welsh Mountain, where their descendants still live. Many similar groups are scattered throughout the county.

LANCASTER COUNTY STATIONS

It is impossible to ascertain how many Underground Railroad stations operated in southern Lancaster County between 1830 and 1860. There were at least twenty-five to thirty. In this narrative we shall include only those seventeen for which specific information is available; in some cases the hide-away place is still in existence.

Station One — William Wright

The first recorded Underground Railroad work was done at Columbia in 1804, by William Wright, great-grandson of John Wright, the founder of Wright's Ferry (now Columbia). The Wrights were among the many Quakers who had settled in Columbia. John Wright was born of Quaker parents in Lancashire, England in 1667, came to Pennsylvania in 1714. The Wright house is still standing at 28 South Second Street.

Many of the fugitives coming into Columbia came from the station operated by another William Wright, a Quaker living in York Springs, Adams County. In 1817 this William Wright married Phebe Wierman, sister of Hannah W. Gibbons, the wife of Daniel Gibbons at Bird-in-Hand. William and Phebe Wright lived in a very old settlement of Quakers near the southern slope of South Mountain. This location placed them directly in the way to render great and valuable aid to fugitives, as hundreds guided by that mountain range northward, came into Pennsylvania and were directed to the Wright home, from which they were sent to the home of William Wright of Columbia.

It is most natural that the Columbia William Wright would send these fugitives to Daniel Gibbons, the brother-in-law of the York Springs William Wright. It was a long journey from Columbia to Bird-in-Hand. Very likely many spent the first night in or near Lancaster, perhaps at places suggested by Thaddeus Stevens.

Station Two — Daniel Gibbons (1775-1853)

Many of the fleeing slaves who stopped at the home of William Wright in Adams County probably were sent to the home of his brother-in-law Daniel Gibbons. The Gibbons' stone house, built in 1815, still standing, is located along Mill Creek, about one mile north of the village of Bird-in-Hand, now known to most tourists as the location of the Old Village Store. This is also the area in which Conrad Beissel lived before he settled on the banks of the Cocalico at Ephrata, where he founded the German Baptist Seventh Day monastic community, which is now known as the Cloisters.

Daniel Gibbons was a tanner by trade. All Quaker children in the eighteenth century were given trades. However, Daniel preferred farming, having inherited a large farm from his father. He engaged in assisting fugitives for a period of fifty-six years. He

was one of the few station operators who kept a record (after 1824) of those "who passed." With the passage of the fugitive slave act in 1850 the record was destroyed. In *The Liberty Line* Larry Gara estimates that the number who found refuge at the Gibbons' place was between nine hundred and one thousand.

A tap at the window at night; the entire household knew what it meant. Slave hunters came one day for an escaped slave, who happened to be in the house. While Mr. Gibbons detained the men his wife slipped the slave out through the back door and hid him under an inverted rain barrel. Satisfied that there was no slave on the premises the men left. The next evening another fugitive was heading toward the north star.

HANNAH W. GIBBONS.

DANIEL GIBBONS.

During 1805 Daniel Gibbons took a 1300 mile pedestrian trip to Niagara Falls, returning through Ohio and Pittsburgh, as a result of which he suffered permanent injury to his feet. Therefore his Underground Railroad activities depended upon his wit and cleverness. Later on his son Joseph did most of the 'foot work' involved in the station activities.

Gibbons gave each of the fugitives an assumed name, which he was asked to adhere to and never to divulge his real name. This fact came out in the trial which followed the Christiana Riot. When the monument commemorating the riot and the subsequent treason trial was dedicated September 9, 1911, Peter Woods was the only survivor of those who had been indicted. When someone asked him to divulge his real name he refused.

Daniel and Hannah Gibbons were members of the Bird-in-Hand

Meeting; both were Elders for a quarter of a century; they are buried in the graveyard of their Meeting.

Daniel Gibbons' work was taken up by his son, Dr. Joseph Gibbons, who married Phebe Earle in 1845. She was the daughter of Thomas Earle, who was a candidate for President in 1840 on the Liberty Party Ticket. She was also an ancestor of the former Governor George Earle.

Mrs. Marianna G. Brubaker, granddaughter of Daniel Gibbons, read a paper on *The Underground Railroad* before the Lancaster County Historical Society, April 7, 1911. (Marianna was married in 1902 to Oram D. Brubaker, Chairman of the County Prohibition Committee.) The Gibbons' farm remained in the Brubaker family until several years ago. It is now owned by Mr. Franklin McCockle, a former student of the author.

Station Three — Dr. J. K. Eshleman (1810-1893)

Daniel Gibbons sent some of the fugitives who came to his house to Dr. J. K. Eshleman of Strasburg, who began his underground railroad work in 1840, and continued until he moved to Downingtown in 1848, where he received fugitives from Chester and Lancaster Counties. The exact location of his Strasburg home is not known, but it must have been about five miles south of the Gibbons place.

The Doctor rarely ever asked fugitives any questions. He cared to know nothing about them, further than to ascertain who had sent them to his place. The neighborhood in which he lived contained many bitter opponents of the anti-slavery cause, who went so far as to burn the barns of abolitionists.

Station Four — Thomas Whitson (1796-1864)

Both Daniel Gibbons and Dr. J. K. Eshleman sent slaves to Thomas Whitson of Bart, which was less than four miles south of Strasburg. Dr. Eshleman was the physician for the Whitson family. The records indicate that Whitson's home became a station soon after Dr. Eshleman became active in the Underground Railroad.

Thomas Whitson was one of the three Lancaster County signers of the document which brought into being the American Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia during November of 1833. John G. Whittier has given the following pen portrait of Whitson's presence at the organization of this society.

"Thomas Whitson, father of the author of the Hicksite School of Friends, fresh from his farm in Lancaster County, dressed in plainest homespun, his tall form surmounted by a shock of unkempt hair, the odd obliquity of his vision contrasting strongly with the clearness and directness of his spiritual insight."

d. 11/29/1864 Age 69

THOMAS WHITSON.

He was remarkably reticent about his activity in the Underground Railroad. His children were taught not to ask questions when colored people stayed at their home. The fugitives who came to his house at night—from either the Gibbons or Eshleman homes —were sent in care of a trusted colored man who knew how to awake Thomas without arousing other members of the family. Those who came by day carried a slip of paper upon which was written, "Friend Thomas, some of my friends will be with thee tonight." No name was signed, but Thomas undoubtedly recognized the handwriting on the note.

On one occasion he was approached by officials who were hunting fugitives. He was threatened with a revolver in the hands of one of the officials. He was asked if he was one of "those abolitionists of the neighborhood." "I am," said Thomas, "and I am not afraid of thy shooting me, so you might as well put thy pistol down." The officer with the revolver, turning to another asked, "Shall I shoot him?" "No," was the answer, "let the old Quaker go."

During the early part of his anti-slavery activity he lived in Bart Township. After 1853 he moved into Sadsbury Township. He was a member of the Sadsbury Friends Meeting, and is buried in its graveyard.

Station Five — Lindley Coates (1794-1856)

Both Daniel Gibbons and Thomas Whitson sent fugitives to the home of Lindley Coates, who lived one mile south-west of the

Sadsbury Meeting house in Sadsbury Township. The Coates Genealogy reports that he was "noted for clearness of thought, soundness of judgment, steadiness of nerve, and marked executive ability. He was voluable in speech, and possessed a remarkable astuteness in so cross-questioning the opponent as to elicit answers conflicting his own arguments." This characteristic is reminiscent of Socrates of ancient Athens.

LINDLEY COATES.

As a reward for his antagonism to the bands of kidnapers who infested his neighborhood, his barn was reduced to ashes about 1850.

The following sketch appeared in an anti-slavery newspaper a few days after his death:

"Lindley Coates, of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, was no uncommon man, and his past relations to the cause were such as to make his departure from our midst no ordinary occurrence. He was one of the earliest, ablest and most devoted friends of freedom of the state of Pennsylvania. He aided in forming the Clarkson Anti-Slavery Association . . . He was a man of great simplicity of character and of inflexible moral honesty, and was endowed with a mind of unusual vigor and of the strictest logical accuracy.

"In 1840, when the new organization schism took place in New York, he was chosen president of the American Anti-Slavery Association."

He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1837, and made the most strenuous efforts to prevent the insertion of the word "white" into the organic law of Pennsylvania, whereby suffrage was restricted to members of the Caucasian race.

After his appearance at the organization meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, John G. Whittier wrote of him:

"That tall, gaunt, swarthy man, erect, eagle-faced, upon whose somewhat martial figure the Quaker coat seemed a bit out of place, was Lindley Coates."

Lindley's son Simmons and wife Emmeline occupied part of the Coates house. A colored girl lived with them; she was engaged to be married to one of the slaves whom Edward Gorsuch was after. He (the slave) made his escape to Toronto, Canada, and wrote to the girl to meet him there. On the night of the Christiana tragedy in 1851 Simmons told her and another colored girl living in the house, to go to the cornfield and remain under the shocks till morning, as it was not improbable that their house would be searched. They did so, and as soon as practical started for Toronto, where the engaged couple met and were married.

Lindley Coates was a member of the Sadsbury Meeting, and is buried there.

Station Six — Jeremiah Moore (1803-1887)

Many slaves were sent from Daniel Gibbons to Jeremiah Moore's at Christiana, which is a distance of almost sixteen miles. They were to know his residence by its being "the first house over the bridge where the public road crossed the railroad." He hid them in one of the upper rooms in his house, and when they were brought down to meals the doors were bolted.

Pro-slavery men in Moore's section were wont to speak of abolitionists as "no better than horse-thieves." One Quaker preacher asked Jeremiah the direct question which he thought covered the whole moral ground against abolitionism—"What would thee think if thee had a horse stolen and taken to Maryland, and the persons having him, and knowing him to be stolen, would refuse to give him up?" Jeremiah simply responded by adverting to the unjust and un-Christian comparison between a man and a brute.

From Moore's the fugitives were sent in a furniture wagon in care of a trusty colored man to James Fulton's in Chester County, a distance of eight miles.

Jeremiah Moore was a farmer and an undertaker. He later moved into Chester County. He is buried in the West Grove cemetery.

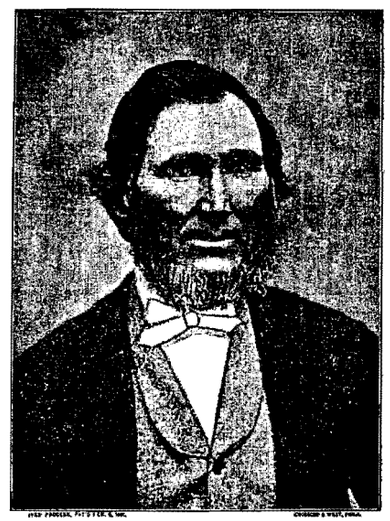
Station Seven — William H. Rakestraw (1813- ?)

The Rakestraw farm is located south of the Green Tree Inn in Bart Township. William Rakestraw presided over an anti-slavery meeting which was held in Georgetown, October 11, 1850. The Maple Grove Boarding and Day School was established in his house about 1860. The Rakestraw ore-bank is nearby.

The present owner, Benuel Stoltzfus, showed the author a small secret section in the cellar of the old part of the farm house, which is reported to have been a hide-away for fleeing slaves.

Station Eight — Caleb C. Hood (1817-1901)

In Bart Township, the home of Caleb Hood was an active station. One night in the spring of 1843 eight fugitives, whom it was necessary to hurry along with great speed, were sent to the Hood home by Joseph Smith of Drumore Township. They were given something to eat and taken by Caleb the same night to Lindley Coates, where they were hidden until the following night, and then taken farther on.



CALEB C. HOOD.

After the Christiana riot, three men who had been engaged in it, William Howard, Charles Long, and James Dawsey, formerly slaves, came to Caleb's place about midnight to ask his advice about the best course for them to pursue. A good supper was given them, and after consultation it was decided that they should take shelter in the woods, as the premises might be searched. Later they spent two weeks under the floor of a colored man's house in Drumore Township, after which they started for Canada.

Station Nine — Thomas Pownall

The Thomas Pownall buildings stood north of the Riot house, along side of the 'long lane'. There is practically nothing in writ-

ten records about this station, but a number of stories are still available in the neighborhood, for which there is some objective evidence.

The barn which stood north of the house was removed when the railroad was built in 1905. A hiding place existed at the east end of the horse stable. Next to the house, on the north side stood a butchering shop, on the floor of which there was a trap door which opened into a dark pit, surrounded by four stone walls. It is reported that many fleeing slaves hid here when their intended captors appeared in the neighborhood. The building has been destroyed, and the pit filled, but under the surface the four stone walls can still be found.

Until recently this farm was owned by the late Reverend George H. Shea, who was Pastor, for 50 years, of the Middle Octorara Presbyterian Church. It is now owned and being restored by a dedicated and courageous Philadelphia art teacher, Mr. Miller.

Station Ten — Henry Bushong (1783-1870)

The home of Henry Bushong was one of the busiest stations in Bart Township. Fugitive slaves were sent there by Daniel Gibbons of Bird-in-Hand, Dr. J. H. Eshleman of Strasburg, Joseph Smith and John N. Russell of Drumore, and others.

In 1832 a Negro woman and her daughter came to the Bushong place. The back of this poor woman was a revolting sight. It had been cut into gashes with the master's whip until it was a mass of lacerated flesh and running sores. Her owner was exasperated by the fact that one of her children had escaped and that she knew where the child was but refused to tell the owner. To compel her to tell she was bound down in a bent position and five hundred lashes with a cat-o-nine tails were inflicted upon her bared back. No amount of whipping would induce her to betray her child. As soon as she had sufficiently recovered she determined to risk her life and escape, ultimately landing at the home of Henry Bushong, who sent her to a station farther east.

There is a small stone house on the Bushong farm which was built by a free slave, Moses Johnson, and was probably a refuge for escaping slaves. One of the fugitives who was being chased by his owners moved from the stone house into the hay mow when his pursuers were reported to be in the neighborhood. The present owner of the Bushong farm, Mrs. H. C. Kreisle, great granddaughter of Henry Bushong, reports that she used this small stone house as a play-house during her childhood. This house has been renovated and enlarged and is now occupied by the Walter F. Koch Jr. family.

Henry Bushong first lived in Adams County, along the Codorus Creek. He married a Quaker and became a Quaker himself, with strong abolitionist feeling. His great-granddaughter reports that

when he moved from Adams to Lancaster County his possessions consisted of a grain sack and $1200. According to family traditions, on a certain occasion he was accosted by one of the enemies of the abolitionists, who threatened his life, to which he replied, "Burn me if thee will, but thee cannot hurt me."

Henry Bushong was a big and powerful man, unafraid of anyone. Later in life he was elected President of the Farmers Loan Co., which became the Lancaster County National Bank. After organizing the farm work he would frequently walk to Lancaster, a distance of 21 miles, in order to attend to Bank business.

The present house is very large as the result of many additions. The original part was a log house, which contains a small closet on the attic, with a half door, and may have been used as a hide-a-way for fugitive slaves, who were later moved into Chester County in wagons, with hay covered over the fugitives.

Station Eleven — Joseph Smith (1801-1878)

Joseph Smith was born near the London Grove Meeting House in Chester County; moved to Drumore, Lancaster County during 1818; was married to Jacy Shoemaker September 17, 1823. He operated the most important station in the southern end of the county. His farm was one of the model farms of Lancaster County during the nineteenth century; it was called Locust Grove.

Fugitives from Maryland crossed the Susquehanna at Peach Bottom and were directed to the Smith farm, which was about four miles north. Among the first fugitives was one who came from Maryland in June of 1844. It was early in the morning. The man was without hat or shoes. His appearance suggested that something was wrong. The men who worked for Smith were at breakfast. Because these men were opposed to interfering with slavery, although they were Quakers, Smith ordered the man to be kept out of sight until he could have opportunity to question him. Later he was fed and concealed during the day, and at night was sent in care of one of Joseph's colored men to Thomas Whitson, who sent him on the following night to Lindley Coates; from there he was safely sent from friend to friend until he reached Canada.

Joseph Smith's grandson, the late I. C. Arnold, Esq., read a paper before the Lancaster County Historical Society during 1951, in which he reported that one of Smith's workmen had told him that Arnold's grandfather was called the Switch Turner of the Underground Railroad; that he took the escaping slaves to John N. Russell, Henry Bushong, Thomas Whitson, or William Rakestraw, as circumstances seemed best.

When pursued the fleeing slaves were hidden in a vault under the Smith barn bridge, which was inspected by the Community Historians in 1963. The only entrance was a door in the stable,

which could be hidden by straw or hay. Part of the vault has been destroyed recently by the erection of a silo.

According to tradition, the largest number who stayed here at one time was thirteen, all from Virginia. On being asked why they came here, they answered, "Down there they said you would help us to Canada, where we would be free." They had planned their escape for several weeks. As they came north they were afraid of being caught; every little noise scared them. They travelled only at night, during the day they hid in swamps. At times they travelled for several days without anything to eat. This story illustrates how word had spread about Joseph Smith, the Switch-Turner, to many slaves in the south. Of course, there was no written document about Smith, which was circulated among slaves who wanted to escape. The word was circulated by the 'grape-vine', a form of communication which has frequently proven to be very effective.

During October of 1859 Joseph Smith and his daughter Rachael visited Niagara Falls, registering at the Cataract House. The head waiter, having seen Rachael's name on the register, approached her one day, apologized for intruding, and asked whether she knew a man named Joseph Smith in Pennsylvania. She replied that he was her father. He then told her how he had ferried many poor fugitives across the river into Canada. Many of these had told him that the first place in which they had stopped in Pennsylvania was the Joseph Smith farm. He also told her that he frequently visited his parents in Lundy's Lane (Canada) where many of the fugitives owned homes and were doing well. Apparently news about Joseph Smith was available in the north as well as in the south.

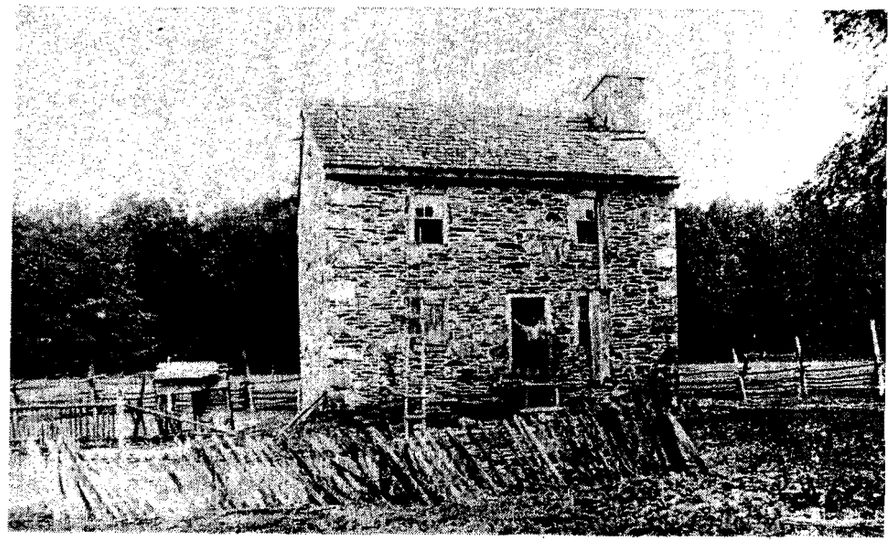
In Maryland, Joseph Smith was called the black abolitionist; a reward of $500 was offered for his capture. On one occasion Maryland officers deputized Hugh O'Neil, a Martic Township constable, to search the Smith house. His grandson, I. C. Arnold, reports that Joseph "buried himself in the straw mow, formed himself like a gimlet and went down into the straw".

Joseph Smith was a member of the Society of Friends, belonged to the Drumore Meeting.

When we visited this farm in 1963 we were joined by Mary Sue Bradley, a great-great-great-granddaughter of Joseph Smith. She represented the Quarryville Sun. After the death of Joseph Smith the farm became the property of the Hon. William and Ellen Brosius, daughter and son-in-law of the Smith's. William Brosius was a representative in the Lower House of the Pennsylvania Legislature 1885-1902. After his death the farm passed into the hands of the Sinclair family.

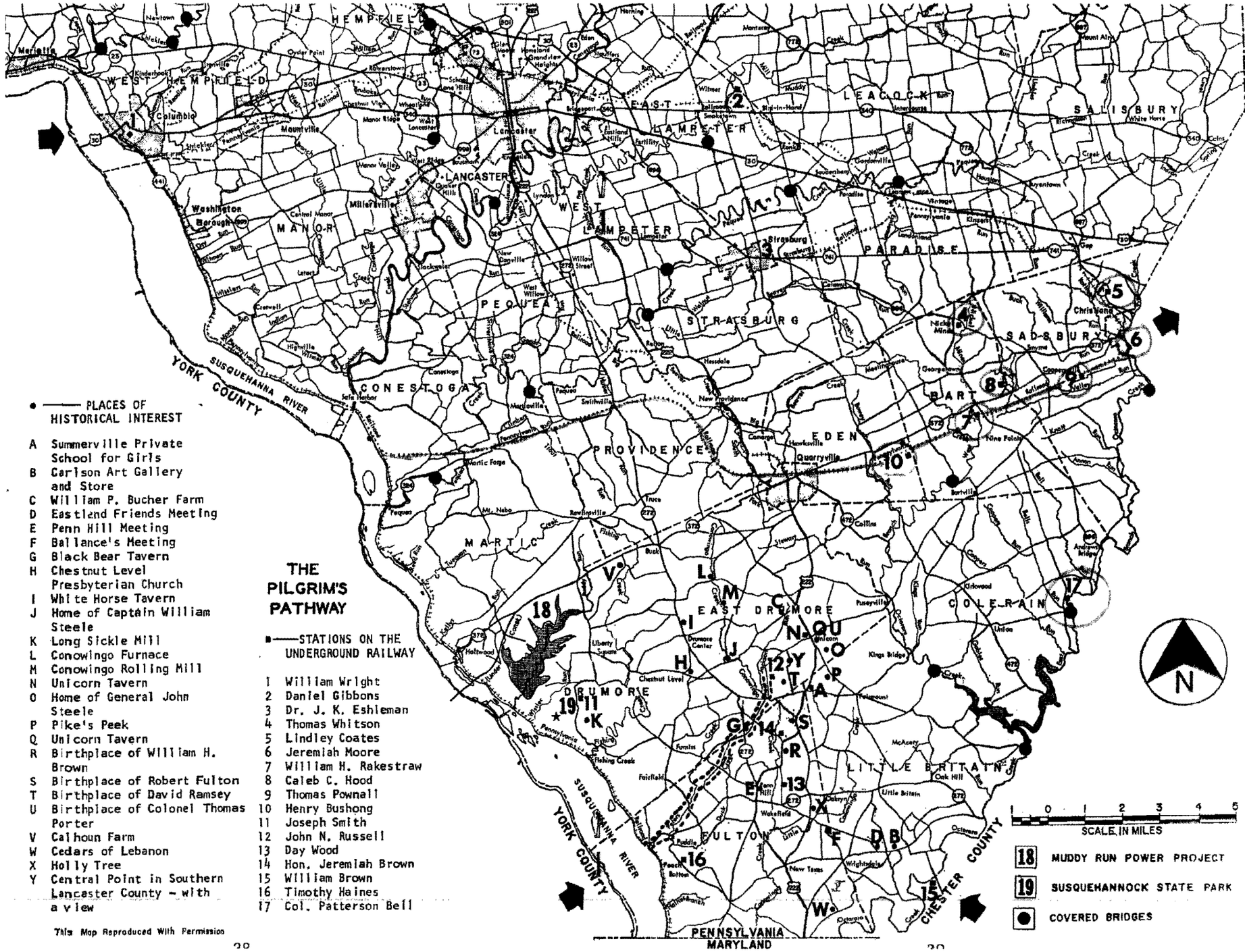
Station Twelve — John N. Russell (1804-1876)

Joseph Smith sent many of the slaves from his place to the Russell farm about seven miles east. It was a very active station,



THE CHRISTIANA RIOT HOUSE

(no longer standing)



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FAMILY OF PETER WOODS

L to R top row: Howard, Susan, James, Annie, Percy, Harry, Leora, Eugene, all children of Peter.

Bottom: wife, Peter Woods, Aunt Mary ? ? ? other children not on photo: Jacob, Sumner, Ida, Tillie, and Peter, Jr.

(Courtesy of Mrs. Lillian Speed, Parkesburg, Pa.)

fugitives came from different points. His place was well known throughout Lancaster and the adjacent counties as one of the regular and prominent stations. Most of the prominent abolitionists of the land were guests, at one time or other, in the Russell home, including Garrison, the Burleighs, Thomas Earle, Lucretia Mott, Daniel Gibbons, Thomas Whitson, and many others.

A company of twenty-two fugitives were brought to his place about midnight by Samuel Bond, a thick-set, heavy, stout mulatto. He threw a pebble against the window of the sleeping room occupied by John and his wife. The signal was understood, the window raised, and "Sam" with his peculiar guttural sound, said, "Please come down quick; I've got a whole field full of 'em." They were taken into the sitting room, and a large table of substantial food was soon set for them in the kitchen. Supper over, they tumbled into a four-horse covered farm wagon, and were driven to Henry Bushong's house, a distance of more than eight miles.

After a large house was built the first house was used as a tenant house. It is still standing; its most recent occupants were pigs. Part of it is a log house, with a very large V-shaped stone chimney, with Peach Bottom slate on its steep roof. It possesses many marks of German architecture. The Russells were from Germany; at first their family name was spelled Roussel. To the left of the stairway, leading to the second floor, is a closet, at the rear of which is a door which leads into a secret chamber to the rear and under the stairway. This was undoubtedly a hide-away for fleeing slaves.

John N. Russell was born of Quaker parents in Brandywine Hundred, Delaware. He was quite a small child when the family moved to Lancaster County.

After the death of John N. Russell this 345 acre farm passed into the hands of the Hon. M. R. Hoffman of Mt. Joy. It is now owned by Mrs. Bessie Kreider, who lives near Unicorn.

Station Thirteen — Day Wood (1812-1865)

There is very little known about this station. Neighbors speak about an underground cave, which may have been used as a hiding place for fugitives. Several stations in Chester County report having received fleeing slaves from the Day Wood place in Fulton Township.

Day Wood's father came from York County in 1760 and settled on a farm in West Nottingham Township in Chester County. Day was one of eight children. The Wood family originally came from Lancashire, England. One of the family was a member of the British Parliament.

Day Wood was a successful farmer near the Penn Hill Meeting. He fed cattle, many of which he purchased in the west. In 1864 he was elected to the State Legislature. He was a Quaker, a member of the Penn Hill Meeting. He was one of the most honored and highly respected persons in Lancaster County.

An underground cave is located on this farm, which is reported to have been a hide-away for fleeing slaves.

The farm is presently owned by a member of the Old Order Wisler (Black-Bumper) Mennonites.

Station Fourteen — Hon. Jeremiah Brown (1785-1858)

Among the early settlers of Fulton Township were the Browns, generally known as the Browns of Nottingham. Jeremiah's father owned the extensive slate hill at Peach Bottom and manufactured roofing slates. He also helped establish the Farmers' Bank in Lancaster in 1810. His son Jeremiah was very active in politics; elected to the State Legislature on the Federal ticket in 1826; appointed a member of the Convention to revise the State Constitution in 1836; elected a member of Congress from Lancaster County in 1840; elected Associate Judge of the Courts of Lancaster County in 1850. His grandson, William H. Brown, was the chief engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

The old Brown house appears as one of the sketches in *Pennsylvania Beautiful* by Wallace Nutting (1924), including the large sycamore tree, which is known as "the cannon-ball tree" since the main trunk has grown around a cannon-ball which had been placed between two branches by a soldier returning from the Revolutionary War. A branch from this tree was taken to the Fulton House by one of the Swift girls, where it was planted. The tree that grew from this branch is still standing. The old Brown house is no longer standing.

That Judge Jeremiah Brown was an Underground Railroad operator is shown by the following letter which Thaddeus Stevens wrote to him in 1847.

"Dear Sir:

I learn that the manstealers of Lancaster have taken means to obtain authority from Maryland (which they soon expect) to arrest and take into slavery two colored girls who lately lived with you and your brother Slater, Ellen Jackson and Emaline Raines. They are thought to be now with Whitson. It is said they belong to Wm. C. Naines of Baltimore. Will you see that they receive immediate notice to flee to a city of refuge. They should not stop short of Canada.

There is a regular chain of agents and spies of the slaveholders in this and all adjoining counties. I have a spy on the spies and

thus ascertain the facts. All this, however, must remain secret or we will lose all the advantages we now have.

These are the eighth set of slaves I have warned within a week.

I doubt not that you will attend to the cause of human rights.

Yours truly,

Thaddeus Stevens"

Station Fifteen — William Brown

The southern route, along the Octorara Creek, was made famous by Elwood Griest in *John and Mary, Fugitive Slaves,* published in 1873. Elwood Griest was the father of W. W. Griest, longtime congressman from Lancaster County. This is a true story of fugitive slaves who lived for a short time in the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Brown, located along the Octorara Creek in the extreme southeastern corner of Lancaster County.

The Brown house stood at the foot of Laurel Hill. Part of the foundation is still standing. Nearby were the "Barrens", thousands of acres of scrub trees and pines and run-down land. Here lived Neddy Johnson, a former slave, possessing extraordinary strength and a remarkable sense for finding lost articles.

At the Brown home, on a very dark and dreary night, at half-past nine, arrived three fugitives, a woman of about 25 or 30 (Mary), carrying a child in her arms; a man (John), quite tall and about the same age. They were hidden in the attic at night, and worked for the Browns during the day.

Within several days news came that the owners of John and Mary were approaching the vicinity. Plans were made to hide the fugitives in a deserted house (one wall of which is still standing) located on the other side of a dam near the Creek. However, someone discovered the plan and reported to the owner of John and Mary, with the result that John and Mary were captured, John was handcuffed. In the meanwhile Neddy Johnson and several others moved to intercept the party as they walked from the deserted house to their wagon. They succeeded. John and Mary were freed, and the owners sent back to Maryland.

When the identity of the person who reported the plans to the owner of the fugitives was discovered, his house was burned to the ground and he was beaten almost to death.

Two days later, John, Mary, and little Charlie left the Browns and began their trek towards the North Star.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were members of the Eastland Friends Meeting.

Station Sixteen — Timothy Haines

The Timothy Haines farm of 150 acres was one of the Underground Railroad stations, which was never reported in written articles, and was not known as part of local tradition.

Lester Finnefrock, the present operator of the farm, told William Bucher about a hide-away under the barn bridge which is exactly like the one at the Joseph Smith farm; but in better condition.

The Haines farm is closer to the Susquehanna River than the Smith farm, the river can be seen from the buildings. This may have been the first stop for some fugitives entering Lancaster County.

Timothy Haines was a noted resident of this area. He was a member of the Penn Hill Meeting, and a son-in-law of Jeremiah Brown.

Station Seventeen — Col. Patterson Bell

In Colerain Township, near the Octorara Creek at Bell Bank, is located the large farm mansion of Col. Patterson Bell, of the Continental Army of the Revolutionary War. A daughter, wife of a Presbyterian minister, accompanied by an infant and a slave left for the frontier in Kentucky to engage in missionary work among the Indians. Enroute the company was attacked by Indians. All were killed except the slave and the infant, which he (the slave) brought back to Colerain Township.

During the summer of 1965 a lady from the state of Washington was in the southern end of the county gathering data about her ancestry, prerequisite to being admitted into the Daughters of the Revolution. She was particularly concerned about information concerning Col. Patterson Bell. Someone told her the story of the infant who was rescued by the slave, and that no one in the neighborhood knew what ever happened to this infant granddaughter of the Colonel. She informed them that the infant became her great-grandmother.

There is a bricked-in-tunnel near Bell Bank, running from the Patterson house towards the Octorara Creek, several miles from Andrew's Bridge. There is a tradition that this tunnel was used by fugitives.

The farm is now known as the Paxson farm.

The story of the Underground Railroad belongs to the past. The saga of the escaping fugitives passing through Lancaster County by the thousands is an epic which belongs to the first half of the nineteenth century. Soon the North and the South became engaged in mortal combat in order to determine the future of the

institution of slavery. During this Civil War President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all slaves. A century has passed. The American Negro has not yet been fully emancipated. The story of the Underground Railroad in Lancaster County symbolizes not only our heritage, but our contemporary responsibility to participate in the implementation of the Civil Rights revolution, to the end that our Negro friends may become first-class citizens, with access to homes, schools, jobs, churches, and political action of their choice.

APPENDIX I

In addition to the seventeen Underground Railroad Stations described in this monograph there were many more located in Lancaster County. The following are mentioned in the literature dealing with the subject.

(a) *Joshua Brinton* (1811-1892), Salisbury Township. His home was not on any of the direct routes, but his home was called by many "a home for colored people."

(b) *Lewis Peart* (1808-1882), East Lampeter Township. Slaves were sent to him chiefly from Daniel Gibbons and direct from Columbia. In 1844 he moved to Chester County.

(c) *Oliver Furniss* (1794-1858), Little Britain Township.

(d) *Joseph C. Taylor* (lived near Pine Grove Forge). He saved a slave who had been captured by using an unloaded gun.

(e) *Christian Frantz* (1805-1890), East Lampeter Township (the only operator of whom we have any record who was a Mennonite). He was the grandfather of Mr. Oram Brubaker, the husband of Marianna G. Brubaker.

(f) *The Boyd Farm* in Drumore Township, a farm west of Fairfield. In the dining-room of the old stone house, along the wall is a set of shelves, which can be swung aside, behind which there is a secret hide-away, in which it is reported that escaping slaves were hidden. The farm is presently owned by Amos Hess, a Mennonite minister.

There are stories extant about others, for which no reliable information is available.

Many changes have taken place in the southern part of Lancaster County during the more than a century since the Underground Railroad ceased to operate. Less than a dozen of the hide-outs are still standing. Descendants of the operators still live in the county, but very few have any records of their ancestors who were active in helping the escaping slaves. Wilbur Siebert reported (1898) that "the operators were quiet persons, little known outside the communities where they lived."

APPENDIX II BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following represents a partial list of source materials for the student of the Underground Railroad in Lancaster County, many of which are available in the Fackenthal Library at Franklin and Marshall College.

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