This context also discusses two Federal laws that were designed to curb the escape of fugitives and circumscribe the actions of those who assisted them. The first was the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793, which was based on Section 2 of Article 4 of the U.S. Constitution and was superseded by the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865. It stated, "No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due." In practice, any claimant of a fugitive or agent of a claimant had only to testify that the person apprehended was the person sought; alleged fugitives were denied the right to a jury trial, and anyone who harbored those persons were obliged to pay a fine of five hundred dollars. Nothing in the law, however, prohibited such states as Massachusetts and Pennsylvania from attempting to countermand the edict by passing what were termed "personal liberty laws," which in some instances mandated trial by jury and required written documentation of enslaved status and ownership.

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was far more coercive and punitive. Signed by President Millard Fillmore as part of the Compromise of 1850 on 18 September 1850, it required state and federal officials to play a role in enforcing the law. Fugitive claimants and agents did have to secure an affidavit attesting their ownership and to seek a warrant from a federal commissioner for their arrest and rendition. However, these commissioners were authorized to enlist the aid of anyone to enforce the law; fugitives were still denied the right of trial by jury and could not testify in their own behalf. Any law officer who failed to cooperate with Federal officials and any citizen who obstructed a fugitive arrest or concealed a fugitive were liable to heavy fines as well as imprisonment. A Federal hearing in which a commissioner presided determined the validity of ownership, and no appeal of the ruling was permitted.

Defining the Underground Railroad

The term "*underground railroad*" was understood and used in its time, both by fugitives and fugitive assistants. Thomas Smallwood, an African American man who worked in Washington, D.C., with Massachusetts native Charles Turner Torrey to assist enslaved Virginians en route to freedom, wrote in his narrative, "The origin of this technicality, *underground railroad,* is supposed to be this,—a number of slaves would sometimes disappear from a neighbourhood in the course of a single night of whom no trace could be obtained until they were entirely out of the reach of their astonished owners, which

(continued)

led them to exclaim, that, 'the Negroes had a railroad under the ground.'"[1] In 1869, fugitive assistant Samuel J. May described the Underground Railroad as persons opposed to slavery "scattered throughout all slaveholding states" who knew or had "taken pains to find" others "at convenient distances northward" who felt similarly; these persons were in turn connected to others "still further North" and on "to the very borders of Canada," May wrote. "Furnished at first with written 'passes,' as from their masters, and afterwards with letters of introduction from one friend to another, we had reason to believe that a large proportion of those who, in this way, attempted to escape from slavery were successful. Twenty thousand at least found homes in Canada, and hundreds ventured to remain this side of the Lakes." May had been the general agent and corresponding secretary for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in the mid- to late 1830s, and by his own testimony had sent fugitives from his Brooklyn, Connecticut, home to that of Effingham Capron in Uxbridge, Massachusetts (not extant), before moving his sphere of activity to Syracuse, New York, in 1845.[2]

The term also signified in its time that this loosely organized network of fugitive system was hidden from view and clandestine; the term "underground" had signified as much for centuries. While no one has ever defined the Underground Railroad in literal terms—that is, as fugitives escaping to the North on a subterranean railroad system—scholars over the past forty years have debated how analogous the overall mode of fugitive assistance was to the nation's railroad network. Was the Underground Railroad a system of regular routes that could be mapped, as Ohio State University historian Wilbur Siebert construed it in 1898 and in several state monographs in the 1930s? Or was it instead the case, as Larry Gara argued in 1961, that there was "no centralized organization" and "only a semblance of organized underground railroad activity in certain localities. . . . no 'deep-laid' scheme to run away the slaves. Rather it was a matter of a relatively small number of energetic individuals who organized vigilance committees and local underground railroad service."[3] Primary sources, including many cited in this context statement, indicate that while the Underground Railroad was clearly not a centralized system, it does appear to have been more than "local underground railroad service." Recent scholarship has demonstrated that far-flung connections existed throughout the Atlantic coastal states, and, though they fell far short of forming a centralized operation, they may properly be understood as a extensive series of largely unconnected networks covering regions of varying extents and linked internally by like sociopolitical notions, kinship, friendship, religious affiliation, and/or other factors. However, the Underground Railroad did not operate entirely, or perhaps even mostly, in

(continued)

color were largely responsible for sheltering fugitives who came to Massachusetts and in many instances for finding work for them. The records of the Vigilance Committee of Boston amply document that fugitives were boarded in the homes of that city's community of color. With a letter of introduction from the New York Vigilance Committee's black secretary David Ruggles, New Bedford white abolitionists Joseph Ricketson and William C. Taber brought Frederick Douglass to the home of African Americans Nathan and Polly Johnson (**21 Seventh Street, MHC #2036, NR 1976, NHL 2000**). And George Teamoh, a fugitive who came to New Bedford in late 1853 or early 1854 from Norfolk, Virginia, was directed to the boardinghouse (not extant) of African American William Bush by another fugitive, James Pritlow, whom he knew from his native Norfolk, Virginia. "Quite a large number of fugitives for a time stayed at his house and received the same hospitalities as did his regular boarders, notwithstanding the former were not able to pay their way," Teamoh wrote. "If any reliance may be placed in the statement of many of the older citizens of N.B. Deacon Bush,—now deceased,—has been one of the most zealous, hard working and liberal friends the fugitive ever found."[7]

Period of Operation

The time frame of this context study ranges from 1783, when slavery was abolished in Massachusetts by judicial decree, to 1865, when the Civil War ended and the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, was ratified.[8] Before the case *Commonwealth v. Jennison*, in which Massachusetts Chief Justice William Cushing stated his view that slavery was "inconsistent" with the 1780 constitution of the Commonwealth and that "there can be no such thing as perpetual servitude of a rational creature," persons enslaved in Massachusetts had escaped from those who claimed ownership in them: Boston Massacre victim Crispus Attucks is the most famous case in point. However, this context statement applies to historical circumstance in which enslaved persons were able to escape from places in which slavery was legal to places in which slavery was banned. The Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect 1 January 1863, freed enslaved persons only in the southern states still in rebellion against the Union. Fugitives were remanded to claimants from the District of Columbia as late as June 1863, and technically persons who escaped from such border states as Maryland and Delaware were legally slaves until the act was repealed in 1864.[9] The high likelihood of extralegal action suggests that the end of the war and the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment form a more realistic end date.

(continued)

Evidence exists, in Massachusetts and elsewhere, of organized efforts to assist fugitive escapes almost immediately after the passage of the 1793 Fugitive Slave Law. In that year Josiah Quincy, later governor of Massachusetts, undertook the legal defense of a fugitive who had been apprehended. He later wrote that while in court he "heard a noise, and turning round he saw the constable lying on the floor, and a passage opening through the crowd, through which the fugitive was taking his departure without stopping to hear the opinion of the court."[10] In New Bedford runaway notices document the landing of fugitives, both by captains who knowingly carried them and those who claimed to be unaware of their presence on board. In August 1794 Captain Noah Stoddard placed a notice in the village's *Medley* that Bob, who confessed that Molly Bird of Charles City, Virginia, claimed to own him, had stowed away on his schooner *Betsey*; Stoddard had discovered four days from Richmond and, "the wind being ahead," he felt it "inconsistent to return." Another *Medley* notice, this one placed by a Maryland claimant, claimed that the Thomas Wainer, the Afro-Indian captain of a Westport, Massachusetts, vessel, had willfully "carried off" an enslaved man and wife from two towns in Maryland in 1799.[11] Research would probably show similar instances in other Massachusetts port cities and towns.

Fugitives were present in Massachusetts throughout the period this context covers, and it appears that efforts to assist them became more systematic by the mid-1830s. A vital prerequisite was the formation of organizations devoted to antislavery and abolitionism. Though membership in such groups was far from coterminous with fugitive assistance, the networks of affiliation they established were critical in forming links of fugitive assistance. In 1826, Boston people of color organized the Massachusetts General Colored Association; in 1831, William Lloyd Garrison founded the *Liberator*, dedicated to immediate abolitionism; in January 1832 whites and people of color formed the New England Anti-Slavery Society; and throughout the 1830s local anti-slavery societies emerged throughout the Commonwealth—though not in every town and city.[12] The Underground Railroad was active well before the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, though it does seem clear that "vigilance committees," as fugitive aid groups often were called, stepped up their activity in response both to the law and increased fugitive traffic afterward.

(continued)

Geographical Framework

Of the New England states, only Massachusetts and Vermont offered relatively safe havens to people of color in the late colonial and early national periods. In the 1783 case *Commonwealth v. Jennison*, Massachusetts Chief Justice William Cushing stated his view that slavery was "inconsistent" with the 1780 constitution of the Commonwealth and that "there can be no such thing as perpetual servitude of a rational creature," thus banning slavery in the Commonwealth (which included Maine, a district of Massachusetts until it became a state in 1820). In 1777, the first year of its decade-long existence as an independent republic, Vermont abolished slavery in its constitution.[13]

Yet in other New England states and in bordering New York, slavery continued to exist. New Hampshire's 1783 constitution stated that all men are "born equal and independent," and six years later the state ruled that "slaves cease to be known and held as property." However, this ruling meant only that enslaved people were no longer to be treated as taxable property in that state; it did not free them. The 1790 federal census enumerated 157 slaves in New Hampshire, in 1800 eight slaves were counted in the state, and one enslaved person was listed there in 1840.[14] New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island all had put in place "gradual emancipation laws" by which children born of enslaved parents were free after serving terms into their mid- to late twenties. In the two New England states, children born to enslaved people of color after 1 March 1784 would be free, after twenty-five years of service if they were female; if male, they were to be free after twenty-one years of service. Claimants of these enslaved children were not bound to pay them wages during these years. Rhode Island legislators did not pass an act formally banning slavery until 1843; Connecticut lawmakers did not do so until 1848. New York's 1799 Gradual Emancipation Act stipulated that children of enslaved mothers born after 4 July 1799 were to serve as indentured servants until the age of twenty-eight if they were male or until twenty-five if they were female. This act was amended in 1817 so as to free on 4 July 1827, when all of the children specified in the 1799 act would be free, those slaves born before 4 July 1799.[15] Two New York slaves who spent significant part of their lives in Massachusetts—Sojourner Truth, born Isabella Baumfree or Van Wagenen in 1797 in Ulster County, and the Reverend Thomas James, born in Canajoharie in 1804—would have been emancipated under the 1799 law, but both escaped before 1827.[16]

As historian Ira Berlin has noted, slavery was "more deeply entrenched" in southern New England than in the northern part of the region—presumably because Rhode

(continued)

Island and Connecticut were more agriculturally viable and had plantation-like farms. While 157 enslaved persons lived in New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont collectively in 1790, enumerators counted 3,606 in Rhode Island and Connecticut in that first federal census. As this context will later explore, fugitives escaped into Massachusetts not only from the South but from other northern states as well. In 1800, the federal census recorded 380 enslaved persons in Rhode Island and 951 in Connecticut, but 20,903 in New York. In 1830, two enslaved people were enumerated in Maine, three in New Hampshire, one in Massachusetts, seventeen in Rhode Island, twenty-five in Connecticut, and seventy-five in New York—all after, in most instances well after, they should legally have been free.[17] Thus, in the earlier period under examination, Massachusetts existed within a region where slavery continued to exist.[18]

In the earliest years, Massachusetts and Vermont were the safest northern havens in the eastern United States for fugitives. In 1790, federal census takers counted 5,369 free people of color in Massachusetts and 269 in Vermont. By 1860 the population of color in Massachusetts had increased to 9,602 and that of Vermont to 709. Of all New England states, Massachusetts had the largest population of color throughout the period, most likely for three reasons. Its booming economy offered the greatest number of employment opportunities, its cities contained supportive and often activist enclaves of African Americans, and it was a major center of abolitionist activity. Vermont, an overwhelmingly rural state, lacked these essential features. It therefore served more as a passage than a destination for most fugitives whose stories are known.[19]

This context documents fugitive traffic, presence, and assistance over much of the Commonwealth, though solid evidence has so far not emerged for the area west of the Berkshire Mountain range and for Cape Cod other than Mashpee.[20] Examples of the range of activity will be cited throughout this report.

Fugitives and Their World

Although narratives make plain that many enslaved persons escaped without assistance, other accounts provide evidence of the presence of willing help in the South. Using the subterfuge of towing oyster sloops through the harbor of Wilmington, North Carolina, the father of North Carolina fugitive Peter Robinson worked with the vessel owners, Quakers Fuller and Elliott (whose first names he did not supply), to ferry

(continued)

fugitives to the next "station." Thomas Smallwood wrote that he worked with Charles Turner Torrey "in the escape of all I could from Slavery, and after a time they crowded upon me by scores, and thank the Lord I was enabled to effect the escape of all except seven, who, through their own indiscretion and the treachery of others I was foiled in effecting their escape."[21] A man of color named "Ham and Eggs" helped enslaved people escape from Petersburg, Virginia, until 1860. Philadelphia Vigilance Committee William Still called another, Henry Lewey, nicknamed Blue Beard, "one of the most dexterous managers in the Underground Rail Road agency in Norfolk"; Lewey himself escaped to Boston some months before his wife Rebecca did in July 1856, but nothing is yet known of his life in Massachusetts.[22]

There is no question that lines of communication connected those who assisted fugitives in the South with their cohorts in the North, as Samuel J. May recalled in *Some Recollections of Our Antislavery Conflict* in 1869. Another retrospective account of the working of the Underground Railroad explained the role of Boston attorney and orator Wendell Phillips. "People used to write Mr. Phillips from the South, out in those places just before slaves were about to start," Austin Bearse stated in *Reminiscences of Fugitive-Slave Law Days in Boston* in 1880. "Mr. Phillips got the letters, and so was on the lookout when the vessels got into Boston harbor. He would know the name of the vessel, and who was on board, and be all ready to help them." Bearse, a key member of the Boston Vigilance Committee, then sailed his excursion boat, the *Moby Dick*, to these anchored vessels at night and brought the fugitives to shore. Robert Purvis, a well-known fugitive assistant in Pennsylvania stated in one 1838 letter that the son of a local Quaker slaveholder in New Bern, North Carolina, whom he did not name, routinely hid fugitives on Philadelphia-bound lumber vessels, either with the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee's address or in the company of other assistants.[23]

That enslaved persons were well aware of means of escape is attested in numerous sources. Daniel Drayton, a mariner in the coastal trade who became an abolitionist after a religious conversion, wrote in his 1853 memoir, "My trading up and down the bay . . . of course brought me a good deal into contact with the slave population. No sooner, indeed, does a vessel, known to be from the north, anchor in any of these waters—and the slaves are pretty adroit in ascertaining from what state a vessel comes—than she is boarded, if she remains any length of time, and especially over night, by more or less of them, in hopes of obtaining a passage in her to a land of freedom." He began ferrying fugitives in small groups and continued to do so until 1848, when his attempt to carry

(continued)

77 persons from Washington on the schooner *Pearl* ended tragically in the sale of most of the fugitives and his imprisonment for more than four years. Drayton took his life in a New Bedford's Mansion House hotel after visiting his "old friend" William Bush, whose wife Lucinda may have assisted Drayton in bringing the enslaved Washingtonians to his vessel.[24] Drayton's grave in New Bedford's Rural Cemetery is extant, though the Mansion House (the former home of whaling merchant William Rotch Sr.) has not. Thomas H. Jones, enslaved but permitted to hire his time as a stevedore on the wharves of Wilmington, North Carolina, learned in 1848-49 that the enslaved children of his second wife, whose freedom he had purchased, were to be sold. "I kept a good lookout for a vessel," Jones wrote in his 1862 narrative. "I found one, and made a bargain with the captain to take on board for New York a free colored woman and her three children." Just before 11 July 1849 they left, and by 25 July he learned that they had reached "a true-hearted friend in Brooklyn. I had notified him beforehand that they were coming; and now the good and glorious news came that they were safe with Robert H. Cousins, where the slaveholders could trouble them no more." Jones's narrative makes clear that he knew Cousins, an African American porter living on Jay Street in Brooklyn. Born in Virginia, Cousins's wife Sarah had been born in North Carolina, and in his home in 1850 was the 74-year-old Elizabeth Jones, also born in North Carolina.[25] By early September Jones was able to follow his family; he later lived in Boston, New Bedford, Worcester, and the Florence section of Northampton; his Florence house (NR pending 2005) survives.[26]

Routes to Freedom

A preliminary survey of primary sources bears out that most fugitives who passed through or settled in Massachusetts, however briefly, came from slaveholding states and districts along the Atlantic coast—Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and to a far lesser extent from Florida and through the port of New Orleans. Generally speaking, enslaved persons from interior portions of these states and from the Deep South were more apt to escape through the nation's midsection, into New York State, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.[27]

Exceptions did occur, however. Perhaps the most notable among them was Lewis Hayden, who escaped Lexington, Kentucky, in 1844 after the sale of his first wife and child to the statesman Henry Clay. Calvin Fairbank (1816-98), then a student at Oberlin College, and Delia Webster of Vermont helped convey Hayden and his second wife and child to Ohio; from there the Haydens escaped into Canada West (what Ontario was

(continued)

called between 1841 and 1867).[28] But Hayden, who longed to be closer to the center of antislavery activity, left Canada for Detroit and then for Boston by early 1846.[29] The house he rented beginning in 1847 on Beacon Hill's north slope (sold to his wife Harriet in 1865), survives (**66 Phillips Street, MHC #4088, NHL**). Moses Roper, born in 1817 in Caswell County, North Carolina, escaped aboard a lumber and cattle schooner from Savannah in 1834 to New York City and then, unable to find work in the countryside thereabouts, took another vessel up the Hudson to Poughkeepsie. Again unable to find work, he shipped out as a steward on a canal boat, eventually going northward, probably on the Champlain Canal. In Sudbury, Vermont, he got a job on a farm until nearby farmers told him his wages were too low, and after an argument he left when he came to suspect the farmer would contact his former owner. Roper then went to Ludlow, Vermont, and stayed with two different persons because he learned an advertisement for his return had appeared; he then went into New Hampshire and still felt unsafe. Finally Roper went to Boston for about a month, but, with the knowledge that he was being pursued, he fled to England in November 1835.[30]

Like Roper, those in bondage were on the whole more likely to escape initially by vessel from one of the South's coastal and riverine ports than on foot. As Gary Collison, biographer of fugitive Shadrach Minkins, has pointed out, "The enormous size of Chesapeake Bay—the largest estuary in the world—and the number of its tributaries and corresponding swamps and marshes made travel by land through Tidewater Maryland and Virginia slow and circuitous. The water routes, by contrast, were direct and swift." By water Philadelphia was only 270 miles—"a two-day trip with a good breeze"—from Norfolk, Virginia. New Bedford was only 500 miles from that southern port and Boston only 600,[31] and the pre-Civil War populations of both northern cities included scores of African Americans from Norfolk and Portsmouth, the city directly across the Elizabeth River. Many firsthand narratives document the use of coastwise vessels in the movement of fugitives into New England, either by mariners unwittingly or quite willingly involved in the activity. William Grimes, who had worked on board several vessels from Savannah after the War of 1812, came to know several of the crew of the Boston brig *Casket* when it came to that port to load cotton. Having grown "attached" to him, they made a space for him among the bales on deck, and he hid there nearly all the way to New York, when the master of the vessel discovered his presence and put him ashore on Staten Island. From there Grimes walked to New Haven, Connecticut, where he saw a relative of one of his former owners and so pushed on to Southington, back to New Haven, then to Newport, and then on foot to New Bedford, where he got work as a servant in the home of John Howland (not extant) in June 1816.[32]

(continued)

The road to freedom of most fugitives appears to have combined foot, vessel, and rail travel —in short, whatever means presented itself at any given time as safe, expedient, and affordable. Using another man's seaman identification paper, Frederick Douglass took a train from Baltimore in early September 1838, took a ferry across the Susquehanna River at Havre de Grace, Maryland, boarded another train to Wilmington, Delaware, and then took a steamboat to Philadelphia. From there he took the railroad to New York and then another steamer to Newport, Rhode Island. Two New Bedford Quakers met him at Newport and accompanied him by stagecoach to New Bedford. A preliminary survey of modes of escape among Massachusetts fugitives shows that in 38 escape episodes, 20 were persons escaping alone, seven were groups of three or more (and at least once in a group with twenty other persons), six were mothers or fathers with children, one was a married couple, five were in a group of two or three, and one was unknown. Of 80 individuals in this partial survey, 50 were men, 20 were women, and 10 were children.[33]

Many narratives and assistants' accounts of the passage of individuals from South to North omit certain details of how the journey was accomplished or how links between assistants were established. We know, for example, that in his escape from City Point, Virginia (now Old Point Comfort), George Lewis took a ferry across the James River presumably to Norfolk, where he hid until a sloop came into port whose captain he knew. The captain took him along with the wood loaded there to Alexandria. We know that Austin Bearse took him by merchant vessel from Albany, New York, to Boston. However, we do not know how Lewis went from Alexandria to Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Albany. When Frederick Douglass made his way to New York, David Ruggles sent him with a letter of introduction to African American caterer Nathan Johnson, but how the two knew each other is unknown, nor is it known how and by whom the link between William C. Taber and Joseph Ricketson, who escorted Douglass from Newport to New Bedford, was engineered.

Primary sources reveal that many fugitives intended to go to Canada, either of their own devising or on the advice of vigilance committee members or other assistants. But a good many remained in the northern United States. Historian Robin Winks has argued that probably 30,000 fugitives from American slavery, or their children, were living in Canada West by 1860, but that reaching Canada was so difficult that an untold number remained in, or returned to, the United States. And just as southern claimants of fugitives exaggerated the monetary loss of slaves escaping, Winks has asserted,

(continued)

Boston, where she lived in the Pinckney Street home of Mr. and Mrs. George Stillman Hillard (**62 Pinckney Street, Beacon Hill NHL HD 1966**). New York Vigilance Committee secretary Sydney Howard Gay noted that Mrs. Galt had "friends" in Boston. In 1856 her sister-in-law Sophia Gray escaped and came to Boston with her two children; in 1857 her nephew Thomas F. Page had escaped and was living at the Hillard house as well.[41]

Some cities and towns differ very markedly both in the composition of their black populations and in the frequency with which they are mentioned in primary sources of the Underground Railroad. A comparison of Springfield and Salem may serve to illustrate the point. Both were transportation centers: Salem an Atlantic port and Springfield on the Connecticut River. Yet Salem's most robust growth occurred between 1790 and the War of 1812, when it carried on an immense trade with the East Indies as well as a coastwise trade distributing these former goods along the eastern seaboard; it was the sixth largest city in the United States in 1790. But by 1840, as historian Samuel Eliot Morison put it, "the center of interest in Massachusetts shifts from wharf to waterfall," and the state—with the notable exception of its whaling industry—became focused on its manufacturing economy. By 1815 Salem had only 57 vessels in its transatlantic fleet; in 1807 182 had been registered in that port. As commercial traffic bypassed Salem, most of its merchants—including Nathaniel Bowditch, father of abolitionists and fugitive assistants William Ingersoll and Henry Ingersoll Bowditch—abandoned the city for Boston.[42] Salem is scarcely mentioned in letters or narratives of fugitives and their assistants, and only 8.4% of Salem's black population claimed a slave-state birthplace in 1855.

By contrast, Springfield is mentioned relatively often in narratives and newspaper accounts. The town was sited on the Connecticut River, a major artery ferrying goods north and agricultural products south; it had also been a significant migration path since the early 17th century. The United States Armory, constructed in 1794, had drawn merchants and both skilled and unskilled labor to the city, and with the building of rail links to Worcester in 1839 and Hartford and New York City in 1844 Springfield became a key transportation hub.[43] In the fall of 1838 James Lindsay Smith, of Northumberland County, Virginia (between the Rappahannock and the Potomac Rivers) escaped with two friends by sailboat and then on foot to New Castle, Delaware, and then on to Philadelphia. Assistants there sent him "with a letter directed to David Ruggles" of the New York Vigilance Committee, and Ruggles in turn sent Smith off with "two letters, one

(continued)

city. Hayden then took Minkins by hired carriage to Watertown and then to the Cambridge home of the Rev. Joseph C. Lovejoy (not extant), who had earlier helped the fugitive brothers Lewis and John Milton Clarke (whose house at 2-4 Florence Place in Cambridge has survived) and was brother to the abolitionist printer Elijah Lovejoy, killed in a riot in Alton, Illinois, in 1837. Sometime later, with fellow black abolitionist John J. Smith, Hayden in another carriage took Minkins to the Concord home of Francis Edwin and Anne Bigelow. There he stayed part of the night, and then Francis Bigelow took him by carriage to the home of Jonathan and Frances Drake in Leominster, which survives. How he accomplished his journey beyond that point is not known.[67]

Basil Dorsey's route of escape in 1836 took him and his brothers from Frederick County, Maryland, through Gettysburg, Reading, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Basil and two of his brothers were sent to the Bucks County, Pennsylvania, farm of famed African American abolitionist Robert Purvis and worked there about two years, but one day while plowing in one of Purvis's fields Dorsey was overtaken by his former owner and several other men. At trial after his arrest, he was released on a technicality. Purvis hurried Dorsey away. Philadelphia assistants sent him on to David Ruggles in New York, and there, according to one 1867 article, "gentlemen from the Anti-Slavery Standard" (an abolitionist newspaper published in New York) sent him to Northampton. For one or two days Dorsey stayed with Haynes K. Starkweather on South Street, and then Captain Samuel Parsons took him by carriage to the home either of Roger Leavitt or that of his son, Roger Hart Leavitt, both in Charlemont. Both houses are still standing. Dorsey, with his free wife Louisa and their three children, lived in Charlemont for five years. When Louisa Dorsey died in 1844, Dorsey moved to the Florence section of Northampton, where he worked as a teamster and laborer in the Florence cotton mill of abolitionist John Payson Williston.[68] Dorsey died in Florence, and both of the houses he occupied there, at 191 Nonotuck Street (NR pending) and 4 Florence Road, are extant.

Even though vigilance organizations denied it as a general mode of operation, some fugitive assistants reached directly into the South to abet escapes. Daniel Drayton was one of them, motivated by such views as animated Austin Bearse, a Barnstable native who had sailed as mate on various coastwise schooners along the coastal South and up its rivers to the rice and cotton plantations between 1818 and 1830. "People who go for visits or pleasure through the Southern States, cannot possibly know those things which can be seen of slavery by shipmasters who run up into the back plantations of countries, and who transport the slaves and produce of plantations. . . ," Bearse wrote in

(continued)

his *Reminiscences*. "I saw these things as others did, without interference. Because I no longer think it right to see these things in silence, I trade no more south of Mason and Dixon's line." With such men as Captains Alfred Fountain, William Lambdin, and William Baylis, all of whom regularly worked with Delaware's Thomas Garrett and Philadelphia's William Still to bring fugitives from the South, several Massachusetts men were actively involved in such efforts in the South. Jonathan Walker, a mariner born in Harwich, helped orchestrate the escape of seven slaves from Pensacola, Florida, in 1844 but was overtaken at sea; that state's officials branded the palm of his hand with the initials "S. S.," for "slave stealer," and put him in jail for nearly a year. Charles Turner Torrey, born in Scituate and a resident of Salem, Boston, and other Massachusetts cities and towns, is claimed to have helped between two and four hundred enslaved people escape to the North between early 1842 and his arrest in Baltimore on 24 June 1844; he died in jail on 9 May 1846.[69]

As these accounts indicate, once in Massachusetts fugitives traveled by rail, by carriage, and presumably on foot. The first rail line in operation in the Commonwealth opened from Washington Street in Boston to Newton on 18 April 1834 and was run through to Worcester by July 1835. It was surely this line to which William I. Bowditch of Brookline (**9 Toxteth Street, MHC #1726, NRHP IND 1985**) referred in one 1893 letter to Wilbur Siebert. "We had no regular route and no regular station in Massachusetts," he stated. "I had had several fugitives in my house. Generally I passed them on to Wm. Jackson at Newton. His house being on the Worcester Railroad, he could easily forward any one."[70] Jackson's house, now known as the Jackson Homestead, survives (**527 Washington, MHC #167 [listed as Timothy Jackson House], NRHP IND 1973**). Jackson was the brother of Boston Vigilance Committee treasurer Francis Jackson. Elizabeth Buffum Chace regularly relied upon the Providence and Worcester Railroad, in operation by October 1847. Robert Adams, a fugitive assistant in Fall River, brought fugitives by carriage to her home in Valley Falls, Rhode Island; she and her husband then put them on this rail line. Chace directed fugitives to transfer to "the Vermont Road," where a Unitarian minister named Young met them and directed them on to Canada. Chace wrote, "I used to give them an envelope, directed to us, to be mailed in Toronto, which, when it reached us, was sufficient by its postmark to announce their safe arrival, beyond the baleful influence of the Stars and Stripes, and the anti-protection of the Fugitive Slave Law." The fugitives could have gone to Vermont by one of two routes—on the Western Railroad to Springfield (completed by 1839), transferring to the Hartford and New Haven line (completed by 1844), and then taking the

(continued)

Connecticut River Railroad to connect to the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad, the latter of which reached Brattleboro, Vermont, by late February 1849; or by the Fitchburg and Worcester Railroad (probably 1849) to the Cheshire Railroad, completed from North Ashburnham through Keene, New Hampshire, to Bellows Falls, Vermont, by 1849. Chace was probably describing the 1850s, for the clergyman Young of whom she spoke was probably Joshua Young, shown as a Unitarian minister in Boston in 1850 and known not to have been living in Burlington, Vermont, until after 1852.[71]

Fugitive Assistance among People of Color

Fugitive assistance groups such as the New England Freedom Association in Boston, the League of Gileadites in Springfield, and the Vigilant Aid Society in Boston indicate the presence of organized action on behalf of fugitives among people of color in Massachusetts. In addition, while not all communities of color were large enough to support their own ministers and churches, where black churches and settled ministers did exist some have been documented to have lent aid to fugitives. Leonard Grimes's Twelfth Baptist Church on Southac (now Phillips) Street on Beacon Hill in Boston was nicknamed the "fugitive slaves' church" and did count among its membership numbers of fugitives; Grimes himself had been convicted of facilitating the escape of seven persons from Virginia in 1839 and served two years in the state penitentiary. Neither Twelfth Baptist nor Grimes's longtime home at 28 Grove Street on Beacon Hill are extant. A church similar to Twelfth Baptist existed in New Bedford, William Jackson's Second (later Salem) Baptist Church. Jackson, like Grimes a free man of color who had been arrested for assisting in the escape of a fugitive from Philadelphia, baptized and married numerous people of color in his church who can be identified in other records as fugitives.[72] It may have been in Jackson's church that a collection "for the benefit of persons escaping from slavery" was amassed in December 1855. Second Baptist Church and Jackson's home (**198 Smith Street, MHC #2052, also known as the Paul Carlisle House**) have survived, but Salem Baptist Church has not.

Still, it is possible that not all black churches, at least as corporate entities, could be counted upon to assist fugitives. Historian George Levesque has argued that the growing abolitionist sentiment of the Rev. Thomas Paul of the African Meeting House on Smith Court off Belknap Street in Boston (**8 Smith Court, MHC #4085, Beacon Hill NHL HD 1966, NHL 1974**) came to alienate more conservative segments of his congregation. Paul resigned in 1829 and died in 1831. The *Liberator* stated in 1837 that since Paul's death "the church and congregation have been torn with faction and

(continued)

community. Not even advocates of political and social equality for people of color were necessarily fugitive assistants. George Putnam, a staunch Garrisonian abolitionist and supporter of desegregating Boston's public schools, does not appear among the large list of Boston people of color who sheltered or otherwise assisted those fugitives who were one way or another brought to the attention of the city's vigilance committees. Nor has his name surfaced in any fugitive narrative yet discovered nor in the correspondence of known Massachusetts abolitionists.

Some Native American towns and reserves in Massachusetts either were homes to fugitives or active in assisting them, though little is known to date of their role in general terms. In southeastern Massachusetts as elsewhere, the sex ratios that prevailed among people of color and Native Americans throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries—that is, there tended to be many more Indian women than men and many more men of color than women— tended to promote marriages between blacks and Indians, as did the general proscription against marriages between white and colored persons. In two cases—among the Yarmouth Indians on Cape Cod and the Hassanamisco Indians in and around Grafton—Indians tended to intermarry with whites over time, but 19th-century Massachusetts Indian censuses showed Indian-black intermarriage to be the more common tendency. The authors of the 1848 census noted that no more than "six or eight" of the 847 Indians in the state could be considered of "pure blood"; most of the rest were of Indian and African descent. "This fact, of the admixture of African blood, usually predominating, in amount, over the Indian, is the only one common to all the different tribes; beyond that, the condition and circumstances of each tribe are so peculiar as to require separate consideration." Massachusetts Indian commissioner John Milton Earle wrote after his 1860 Indian census, "The mixture in most of the tribes has been more with the negro race than with the white, till that blood probably predominates, though there are still a considerable number, who have the prominent characteristics of the Indians—the lank, glossy, black hair, the high cheek bones, the bright, dark eye, and other features peculiar to the race."[76] In New Bedford and surrounding towns before 1860, at least 50 men of color (whom early census takers and clerks variously identified as "□egro," "black," "mulatto," and "mustee") married women of the Dartmouth, Gay Head, Chappaquiddick, Mashpee, Narragansett, and Middleborough tribes, all Wampanoags of southeastern Massachusetts, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket. Black women married Indian men, but in far fewer numbers: no more than ten marriages of this sort are known to have occurred in this period, and often Indian women married men of both Indian and African descent.

(continued)

berth aboard a merchant vessel, he was sent to New Bedford by a whaling industry agent. When the captain of the *Milwood* confronted him about his lack of skill as a ship's steward, the job for which he had signed on, Thompson told him, "I am a fugitive slave from Maryland, and have a family in Philadelphia; but fearing to remain there any longer, I thought I would go on a whaling voyage, as being the place where I stood least chance of being arrested by slave hunters." The North Carolina fugitive John S. Jacobs escaped from his owner in New York City by taking a boat to Providence and then went on to New Bedford. After working for merchant William Rotch Rodman (**388 County Street, MHC #70, County Street NRHD 1976**) for several months, he shipped aboard the whaling vessel *Francis Henrietta*, owned in part by Rodman's brother, Samuel Rodman Jr. Upon his return in 1843, Jacobs later became active in the Underground Railroad.[91]

Throughout the 1830s, the abolition movement showed signs of disintegrating over the issues of political, clerical, and women's involvement. The stance of churches as corporate bodies, as opposed to the views of their members as individuals, had long been an issue among abolitionists, and for that reason Underground Railroad researchers should exercise care in associating church buildings with fugitive assistance. Samuel J. May recalled how antislavery meetings were turned away from churches in the mid-1830s; the fugitive Samuel Ringgold Ward, once the pastor of a white Congregational church in upstate New York claimed in his autobiography that "the New England clergy, as a body, had taken ground distinctly and openly against the anti-slavery cause" because, he averred, "it will disturb their existing harmony so to take up, discuss, and consider this question." Catherine Spear told fellow abolitionists that when she attempted to have Frederick Douglass speak in her native Hubbardston church "an effort was made to turn me out of church, not by our good old minister, Rev. Samuel Gay, but by a new preacher from New York." When Cyrus P. Grosvenor, pastor of Salem's Second Baptist Church, gave an antislavery lecture in that town in 1833, he was not permitted to present it in his own church. Thomas Wentworth Higginson resigned his pastorate of Newburyport's First Religious Society in 1850 because "more than one" sea captain in his congregation had felt obliged to return stowaway fugitives to the South.[92] Numerous accounts exist of ministers refusing to read notices of upcoming antislavery meetings from the pulpit. In 1906, Harvard historian Albert Bushnell Hart wrote that Garrison, who believed "nothing was more like the spirit of Christ than to relieve the oppressed . . . and to bring a whole reace of people out of sin and debasement" shortly discovered:

(continued)

> that the cloth in the north was arrayed against him, and that many northern divines entered the lists against abolition, especially Moses Stuart, professor of Hebrew in Andover Theological Seminary, who justified slavery from the New Testament; President [Nathan] Lord, of Dartmouth College, who held that slavery was an institution of God, according to natural law; and [John H.] Hopkins, Episcopal bishop of Vermont, who came forward as a thick-and-thin defender of slavery. The positive opposition of churches soon followed.[93]

Quakers, often credited with a large share of Underground Railroad work and often regarded among fugitives as invariable friends, were not as a sect any more likely to assist fugitives than others, including Wesleyan Methodists and Unitarians. Many 18th-century abolitionists were Quakers, and yearly meetings among them in various regions took early action against holding and trading slaves. But in the 1800s the sect as a whole had grown conservative on the issue and had come to concentrate more on issues of personal piety and simplicity. In 1841 the British abolitionist Joseph Sturge expressed regret that American Friends, "who once took the lead in efforts for the abolition of slavery . . . should now be discouraging, and holding back their members, from taking part is so righteous a cause." Elizabeth Buffum Chace had been overseer of the poor, assistant clerk, and clerk of the Swansea, Massachusetts, Monthly Meeting of Friends, wore the garb of Quakers, and had never, she wrote, "said 'you' to a single person in my life, or given the title of 'Mr.' or ''Mrs.' to anybody." Yet as an abolitionist she was "ostracized" from the meeting, and at the Newport Yearly Meeting "almost everybody was against us. They denounced the *Liberator*; Garrison was an infidel; slavery could only be cut off gradually; the colored race must be colonized in Africa." William Bassett, a Lynn Quaker, was disowned by his meeting for writing a protest of the practice of segregating African Americans in the so-called "negro pew" in the meeting house; Abby Kelley Foster was also disowned from the Uxbridge Meeting for her abolitionist views.[94]

The Boston Vigilance Committee twice sent circulars to religious societies in Massachusetts to raise money for its fugitive aid efforts, once in March 1851 and again in June 1854. During the month before the first appeal, the committee reported, about one hundred fugitives had come to it for help; the second appeal took place shortly after the rendition of Anthony Burns. In the 1851 appeal Massachusetts churches and

(continued)

pastors had contributed $1,500 to the committee; in 1854 78 of 1547 churches responded to the circular and donated $817.36 in all. At that time, committee treasurer Francis Jackson reported to Rev. Theodore Parker, the *Massachusetts Register* reported that there were 471 Orthodox (meaning Congregational), 270 Methodist, 267 Baptist, 170 Unitarian, 130 Universalist, and 239 of all other types of churches in the Commonwealth. Of these totals, 26 Congregational churches gave $323.20 to the Vigilance Committee; 24 Baptist congregations and one Baptist minister gave $184.12; 15 Methodist congregations gave $78.72; eight Unitarian churches gave $196.02—but $132.00 of that total came from Salem's O. B. Frothingham—Episcopalian William Withington of Swansea gave $4.00; two Friends meetings, one in Amesbury and the other in Uxbridge, together gave $27.00; and Jonathan E. Corey representing the Freetown Christian Church gave $4.00.[95]

Some, though relatively few, churches did take a stand against slavery (see the Statement of Associated Property Types for a discussion of them), and there is no correlation between individual clerics of any denomination and the tendency to assist fugitives. Theodore Parker was on the executive committee of the Boston Vigilance Committee and remained a Garrisonian abolitionist to the end—that is, he did not advocate the use of force in the overthrow of slavery. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850 he declared, "I will act with any body of decent and serious men, as the head, or the foot, or the hand, in any mode not involving the use of deadly weapons, to nullify and defeat the operation of this law; and I feel confident there is enough of manhood and true Christianity in Boston, to protect every fugitive amongst us, without the shedding of blood, or even the rending of a garment." He housed William and Ellen Craft at his Exeter Place home (not extant) as fugitive assistants attempted to keep them from pursuing slave agents, married them, and armed William Craft; despite his vow of nonviolence, he wrote, during the Craft incident "for two weeks I wrote any sermons with a sword in the open drawer under my ink-stand and a pistol in the flap of the desk, loaded & ready for defense, until they could be put on board a vessel for England." Vigilance Committee records document his active assistance in other escapes in 1851.[96]

Other clerics were adamantly against Garrison's advocacy of "moral suasion" as the only effective means to end slavery, including the Rev. Charles Turner Torrey and many others who split with the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1839 and 1840. In January 1839, according to Garrison biographer Henry Mayer, Garrison told his associates of a

(continued)

In terms of this Multiple Property Documentation Form submission, eight property types can be identified. (See Section F: Associated Property Types, p.) The predominant architectural type associated with the Underground Railroad is the dwelling. These houses fall into two principal categories of property types related to their relationship to the movement: houses where fugitives were harbored (Property Type 1: "Properties that Harbored Fugitives on the Underground Railroad") and houses where fugitives themselves lived (Property Type 3: "Properties Where Fugitives Lived in Massachusetts"). Fugitives with houses of their own frequently harbored other fugitives, and these dwellings are classified as part of Property Type 2 ("Properties Associated With Persons Active in the Underground Railroad"). Fugitive dwellings that exist in an enclave with other properties associated with African Americans can be categorized as Property Type 7 ("Properties Associated with Fugitives Living in an Enclave or an Afro-Indian Community") as well. Many of the properties associated with prominent persons active in the Underground Railroad but who did not harbor fugitives (Property Type 2) are also dwellings; however, their architecture does not evince a direct relationship to the fugitive experience.

Dwellings Where Fugitives Were Harbored
Houses where fugitives were harbored on their flight had no specialized functions or requirements that obliged architectural adaptation. Existing private spaces within these homes were sufficient for the temporary lodging or concealment of fugitives. Traditional practices respecting the privacy of the home afforded enough protection in the majority of instances even after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which permitted slave catchers with certain proofs to obtain search warrants. In the most celebrated cases of attempted fugitive captures, the houses themselves were the protective entity, along with people willing to confront the authorities. Pursued by slave catchers in 1850, William Craft hid in his Boston cabinet shop until he was forced to flee with his wife to the Southac (now Phillips) Street home of Lewis Hayden for protection. Hayden's house was a highly visible fugitive harbor where Harriet Beecher Stowe was once introduced to thirteen "newly-escaped slaves of all colors and sizes" harbored there. Boston Vigilance Committee records identify 77 fugitives sheltered, clothed, fed, and otherwise aided in Hayden's home between March 1850 and August 1857, and there were no doubt many more unnamed whom the Haydens assisted in their Phillips Street

(continued)

home. English abolitionist George Thompson visited Hayden with William Lloyd Garrison while the Crafts were hiding there and with others arranged for their escape to England. He reported that "windows [were] barricaded and doors double locked and barred . . . [with] Lewis Hayden, his young son and a band of brave colored men armed to the teeth and ready for the impending death struggle with the United States Marshall and his armed posse."[103] Although the Hayden house bears no physical evidence of the obstacles put in place to protect the Crafts, it is at least possible that some fugitive harbors, documented currently or discovered in the future, may reveal signs of having been modified in some way for other fugitives.[104]

If a house was raided, a sought-after fugitive would have been at risk whether or not there was a hiding place. In particularly busy and vulnerable locations, subtle alterations that would improve connections to more private sections of the house are plausible. A friend of Simeon Dodge, a well-known abolitionist in Marblehead, recalled that Dodge sheltered fugitives under the watchful eyes of "pro-slavery spies," and that he constructed a secret trap door for those in his care to use in case law officers raided his home, still standing at 236 Washington Street.[105] Even in the most extreme instances, fugitives relied on those who were committed to protect them. Vigilance was the first line of defense, followed by blocking entry to the house. When the need arose, a fugitive was removed from the situation. There are many accounts of ingenious escapes under the veil of darkness, in disguise or secreted in loads of hay, onion barrels, and false-bottomed wagons. When all else failed, as in the case of Arthur and Lucy Cooper in Nantucket (1822), a defiant antislavery mob encircled the house, drove back the catchers, and spirited them and their children out a window and to a place of greater safety.[106]

The private sections of houses—kitchens, pantries, and bed chambers—were off-limits to strangers and in general would have been adequate hiding places; social convention would have prevented uninvited guests from venturing past public areas in the front of the dwelling. The son of Natick abolitionist Edward Walcott recalled often coming down to breakfast to discover "strange black faces in the back kitchen." He was cautioned not to say anything about it.[107] Mrs. George S. Hillard was reputedly "in the habit of putting the fugitives in the upper chamber" of the house she and her husband shared on Beacon Hill in Boston. Once she found that one of her charges had pulled down the window shades for fear of being seen. She reassured him that there was little danger of his being seen from the street, but he felt more of an urge for caution than she did.[108] In

(continued)

a number of accounts, fugitives required some nursing to be able to complete their journeys. Some were ill from long voyages and poor conditions; others were injured from whippings and gunshot wounds; most were hungry and exhausted. Their caretakers were highly sympathetic to their hardships and desired to provide them with every possible comfort. Sarah Bradstreet's earliest memory of seeing a fugitive in her parents' house in Danvers (**4 Putnam Court, MHC #213**) was in the front chamber where she witnessed their treatment of his infected lash wounds. She later wrote that "he was nursed by my parents for two weeks and then went away." The next was spoon-fed broth by her mother. Another was "nursed and passed on."[109]

Cellars and attics were utilized if the need was felt for greater secrecy and protection. Methodist minister and suffragist Anna Howard Shaw (1847-1919) wrote that as a child she heard a noise in the coal-bin at her home on High Street in Lawrence in 1857. "I investigated an discovered a negro woman concealed there. . . . My mother wisely kept me close to her for several days, until the escaped slave my father was hiding was safely out of the house and away."[110] In Boston newly arrived fugitives were housed in the attics of the **Lewis Hayden House** and the office of the *Liberator* until they could be moved to other places.[111] These two locations were perhaps the most important entry points to the Underground Railroad in Massachusetts. There was no secrecy about these places, and it was unlikely the attics were rude hiding places.

Outwardly, houses revealed nothing about their status as fugitive harbors for the Underground Railroad. They represent the full range of architectural periods and types. Many dated earlier than the beginning of the Underground Railroad, but others were constructed during the antislavery movement. Abolitionists embodied a gamut of ages and lifestyles. Their dwellings varied in scale and pretension, as well reflected the cultural diversity of fugitive assistants. Some of the Commonwealth's most elite citizens participated in the abolitionist movement, as well as some who were much less wealthy, including other fugitives who had settled in Massachusetts and established households. In this way, the architecture of the homes of fugitive assistants ranges from Colonial-era, center-chimney dwellings such as the **Collamore House** (1713) in Pembroke or the **Jenkins House** (1765) in Andover, to the fashionable, two-story, Greek Revival-style **Francis E. Bigelow House** (about 1840) in Concord.[112] While Bigelow's house was high style, he was a blacksmith whose real estate was valued at three thousand dollars in 1850. In New Bedford, Andrew Robeson helped finance the *Liberator*, sheltered and employed the fugitive David W. Ruggles in the late 1830s and early

(continued)

1840s, and was part of a fugitive assistance network that moved fugitives from that city to Fall River and beyond. With real property valued at $78,600 in 1850, Robeson was at least as if not more apt to assist fugitives than Bigelow. George and Susan Hillard on Beacon Hill, with real property estimated to be worth $9,300 that year, employed and assisted numerous fugitives; George Howland in New Bedford hired fugitives and sold property to others and, with real estate worth an estimated $200,000 in 1850, was among the wealthiest men in that city, itself one of the wealthiest in the world.[113] The modest one-story **Greek Revival cottage** (1840) of Leominster shoemaker **Jonathan Drake** and his wife Frances was probably one of the most active stations in the Fitchburg area.[114] On the north slope of Beacon Hill, the African Americans Lewis Hayden and John P. Coburn (**2 Phillips Street, MHC #4101**) owned 4- and 3 ½ -story brick houses, respectively (built between 1825 and 1840) where they boarded fugitives.[115] These houses are representative of the brick townhouse style popular in Boston in the Federal period and illustrate the quality of life enjoyed by independent blacks in the city. Farmhouses also harbored fugitives, such as the wood frame **Alvan Ward House** (about 1790) in Ashburnham, with its two-story, center-passage plan, and the **Ross Farm** (about 1830; **123 Meadow Street, MHC #153**) in Northampton, with a two-story, side-passage plan.[116] No one building, period, or style defines the type, which indirectly was another advantage in preserving the secrecy of the Underground Railroad.

In most instances, fugitive harbors were probably intended only for temporary lodging. In all but a few instances so far documented, fugitives' visits were of short duration, lasting until a new fugitive harbor was identified and it was safe for them to continue along the route. A spare room in the back or upper story of the house would have been put into use, with the host family being vigilant in protecting the identity of their guests. In this way the houses themselves were the hiding places, rather than particular areas of concealment constructed within. Some fugitive harbors were more threatened than others, and some fugitives were more hotly pursued or felt more at risk. Bronson Alcott of Concord wrote in his diary, "Our friend the fugitive, who has shared now a week's hospitalities with us (sawing and piling my wood), feels this new trust of Freedom yet unsafe here in New England, and so has left this morning for Canada."[117] The Alcott house is extant (**455 Lexington Road, listed as the Wayside, MHC #171, NRHP 1977, NHL 1985, Minute Man National Historical Park NRD NHL 1966**). Each instance had its unique set of conditions. Yet for the humane reasons people volunteered their homes as fugitive harbors, it is likely that uninhabitable spaces,

(continued)

New streets were plotted along with the lots, and an architecture evolved that maintained the growing regularity of the landscape. Land was still an expensive commodity in cities, and at the lower end of the economic scale it was parceled out in small amounts to be affordable. On Beacon Hill and in Cambridge this resulted in a complex pattern of streets, alleys, and terraces as the rears of lots were further subdivided to squeeze more housing in and generate more revenue from the real estate. This more precise planning often created what are now considered quaint architectural enclaves, but it also resulted in excessive crowding.

Later houses responded to the restricted dimensions, narrow frontages, and concealed inner lots of the intensifying urban landscape. The "first" **John P. Coburn House**, located on what is now known as **3 Coburn Court**, is a distinctive example of affordable housing constructed in the West End in the 1830s. It is a two-story, wood frame dwelling with a high basement and attached to its neighbors with brick walls on the front and rear. The house, only 800 square feet, is sited at the rear of the house fronting on 24 Southac (Phillips) Street and accessible only by a narrow passageway between buildings. Coburn, a used clothes dealer, purchased the house in 1835. Also a founding officer of the New England Freedom Association, he paid one-third of James Scott's bail following Scott's arrest in the Burns case.[121] A similar dwelling is the **George Putnam House**, built 1826-27 on **Belknap (now Joy) Street** on Beacon Hill's north slope. In 1850, when the black hairdresser and Garrisonian abolitionist George Putnam moved his family to Salem, he rented this three-story, two-bay brick house to Robert Johnson, who had escaped slavery in 1829. Johnson purchased the house in 1853. These small houses illustrate the depressed value of real estate in the areas where many of the free blacks and fugitives resided. Most black property owners and tenants could afford only limited amount of space and amenities.[122] Technological advances, such as stoves and, later, central heat, were slow to be introduced.

Most dwellings were built, and then continually adapted, to function as multiple dwellings. If any one characteristic emerges that links these Beacon Hill buildings, it is that property owners rented out space in their houses for either commercial gain or to subsidize the cost of home ownership. Certain black homeowners on Beacon Hill are known to have added an extra story to the tops of their houses. In these cases it was apparently done to create more rooms for boarders, some of whom were fugitives. Boardinghouses also functioned as fugitive harbors, such as the three-story, brick **Lewis Hayden House** on **66 Phillips Street**, who was known to have harbored as

(continued)

many as 13 fugitives at one time in his attic, which was contained within a mansard roof added above the third story of the house.[123] The several north slope sites of the boardinghouses of John R. Taylor, none of which are extant, also operated in this manner. Clearly, one distinctive architectural element of the African American presence on the north side of Beacon Hill is the manner in which these prototype row houses were enlarged by their black owners to accommodate tenants and boarders (including fugitives) in their households. It can be conjectured that they would have personalized them as well, perhaps introducing decorative features that recalled their southern or African heritage.[124] Applied decoration, furnishings, ritual arrangements, and ceremonial features may have been present; however, no vestiges of these features have survived in pictorial representations or narrative accounts, much less in surviving buildings so far as is known.

This strategy was not unique to the blacks in Boston; every marginalized cultural group in the city employed it, and none had a direct impact on its architecture. Neither was it unique to Boston or the period; rather, this is an enduring condition of urban life. Nevertheless, this strategy was an important aspect of the black urban community during the period of the Underground Railroad because it both allowed free blacks to live independently and created a milieu in which fugitives could easily enter and hide from external authorities. Census statistics indicate that Boston's black population grew at a relatively slow rate during the height of the Underground Railroad years in the 1850s and 1860s. However, even taking into account the movement of fugitives to Canada after the Fugitive Slave Act, historians and others have long argued that census records consistently undercounted minority populations. Such undercounting might have been especially pronounced on the north slope of Beacon Hill, with its narrow streets connected by a largely hidden maze of courts and places and with fugitives harbored in its warren of buildings and rooms along them.

Working-class whites and blacks mingled in the same neighborhoods, at times in the same buildings, in both large and small Massachusetts cities, but in architectural terms the character of those neighborhoods differed outside Boston. In older towns that had grown into cities, independent blacks lived in enclaves with architecture that reflected the genre of lower-class, affordable housing typical of those towns. As these places grew more populous and urbanized, the physical segregation of races was impractical: while there were large concentrations of people of color in the densely settled west ends

(continued)

Contemporary Sources
One source is abolitionist newspapers, including the *Liberator*, published in Boston from 1831 through the end of 1865, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, published in New York City, and perhaps several dozen local newspapers throughout Massachusetts that were inclined to report on abolition and the presence of and aid to fugitives and issues surrounding them. The so-called "clerical abolitionists" published several abolitionist newspapers, including the *Massachusetts Abolitionist* and the *Emancipator*, edited by Charlemont native Joshua Leavitt; David Ruggles, who moved to Florence in 1842, was a correspondent for this newspaper. One should not overlook African American newspapers in particular, such as *Freedom's Journal*, the *Colored American*, the *Mirror of Liberty*, and the *North Star* (later *Frederick Douglass' Paper* and by 1859 called *Douglass' Monthly*). Henry Bibb's *Voice of the Fugitive*, published in 1851-52, is online at http://www.paperofrecord.com but contains little if anything about Massachusetts fugitives and assistants. Still, though none of these papers was published in New England, Falmouth native Charles B. Ray was agent and correspondent for the *Colored American*, Boston native William C. Nell was for a short time on the editorial staff of the *North Star*, and Connecticut native David Ruggles edited *Mirror of Liberty*. All of these serials are in the collections of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester.

Chief among contemporary published sources are fugitive narratives. At least thirty were written and published by at least twenty-four fugitives who spent some time in Massachusetts (five published after 1863).[135] A number of these persons traveled through numerous towns and cities, and many of them can be read online at "North American Slave Narratives, Beginnings to 1920," a project of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries (http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/about.html). When completed, the Web site will include all two hundred narratives and biographies of fugitive and former slaves published in English up to 1920.

Researchers should make an effort to corroborate these published narratives whenever possible in other primary sources, most of which are unpublished. For example, the 1840 federal census, city directories, local newspapers, and vital statistics (specifically, birth records) document Frederick Douglass's presence in New Bedford during the years his autobiography indicates as well as his lay preaching at a small church on Second Street in the city (some sources, such as censuses, are available on line at http://www.ancestry.com, a fee-based site; Massachusetts vital records are available to members at New England Historical Genealogical Society's website, as are the 1855

(continued)

and 1865 state censuses enumerations of people of color.). Assessors records show that Leonard Black lived in the home David Walker once occupied on Belknap Street on the north slope of Boston's Beacon Hill; such records, compiled yearly, often document the presence of short-term residents when such other records as decennial federal and state censuses and city directories (which identify only householders but not household occupants) do not. Thus, if a researcher knows the name (or alias) of a fugitive, such primary sources as these are useful to consult; one can then sometimes determine if a dwelling he or she inhabited has survived. Another potentially useful contemporary primary source is overseer of the poor records. In view of the fact that fugitives tended to arrive with few or no resources, it is possible that they called upon local managers of poor relief for aid. In New Bedford, it happens that these records identified, at least in some cases, those who were "runaway slaves."

One key unpublished source is the records of Massachusetts vigilance committees, where they existed. Irving Bartlett transcribed and published the records of the 1846-47 Boston committee in *New England Quarterly* (see the bibliography); the Bostonian Society has issued those of the 1850-61 committee in a cloth facsimile edition. The locations of Anti-Man-Hunting League affiliates are known, and researchers in those towns should check for the existence of records—either in local repositories or in the papers of known officers, which may have been passed down in families. Whether local vigilance committees existed is not yet known, but that the Boston Vigilance Committee encouraged their creation is documented in an 1854 letter from Frances Drake to Theodore Parker. "We recd a circular relative to the formation of a Vigilance Committe [*sic*] in our town, which should have been responded to before this," she stated. "We have handed the circular to those who take a lively interest in the fugitive & will render such aid as may be required. Still they do not feel moved to organize as a committee. Husband bids me say, that we wish to be considered as a standing committee for the aid of fugitives, under any & all circumstances– (we had the honor of sheltering Shadrach while his persuers [*sic*] were searching for him)."[136] Records of local antislavery societies are probably worth consulting as well.

Another contemporary source is the correspondence of documented fugitives and fugitive assistants. For example, the papers of Sydney Howard Gay, Wendell Phillips, and Theodore Parker exist as a body, at Columbia University's Butler Library, at Harvard University's Houghton Library, and at Harvard Divinity School's Andover-

(continued)

Harvard Theological Library respectively. Both Gay's and Phillips's are cataloged and indexed by name of correspondent. Much of William C. Nell's correspondence has been collected and published. The editorial project that produced the five-volume *Black Abolitionist Papers*, edited by Peter C. Ripley, also produced a much more extensive microfilm version that includes a good deal of correspondence.[137] Yet the correspondence of other key Underground Railroad persons, such as Lewis Hayden, Austin Bearse, and many individuals active on a local level, has survived only in small quantity and is dispersed among many collections.

Retrospective Sources

After the Underground Railroad ceased to operate, numerous sources emerged in an attempt to document it. Because of the character of memory, all of them should be used with a critical eye, and corroboration in other sources should be sought for the details they offer.

Unpublished sources include both modern-day oral accounts as well as modern-day and historical correspondence of townspeople not descended from assistants or fugitives. As Kammen cautions, researchers need to analyze the sources of all such claims and should be sensitive to the possibility—if not the likelihood—that the claims put forth about Underground Railroad associations in such sources are based on hearsay.

Chief among retrospective sources are those that may be considered primary, some of them published and some not. Among published accounts are fugitive narratives, assistants' accounts in book, article, and newspaper form, and some obituaries. The most reputable published retrospective accounts dealing with Massachusetts are William Still's *Underground Railroad* (1871) and Austin Bearse's *Reminscences of Fugitive Slave-Law Days in Boston* (1880). Still's book (available online at http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x6776.xml) is based on accounts recorded during the 1850s and includes transcripts of letters Still received from fugitives; the accounts in Bearse's book are corroborated in other sources.[138]

Civil War pension applications and county probate records are also retrospective sources that are primary and may be useful in identifying or corroborating fugitive identities. In New Bedford, for example, depositions in pension records revealed that both John L. Wright and Wesley Furlong, both in the Massachusetts 54th Volunteer

(continued)

Infantry Regiment along with fugitive William H. Carney Jr., were fugitives. Probate records in the same city in a few instances indicated that children of decedents were born in slavery, though such is not always an indicator that parents were fugitives; they may have purchased their own freedom before coming to the North.

A final type of source is the published retrospective accounts of nonparticipants, such as Wilbur H. Siebert, Marion Gleason McDouglass, and R. C. Smedley.[139] Of these, Siebert's works have long been regarded as the principle source on Underground Railroad, and they are the most relevant to Massachusetts. They are based largely on a circular he and his assistants sent to reputed fugitive assistants and letters sent to others, first in the 1890s and again, for monographs on specific states, in the 1930s. Siebert, a professor of European history at Ohio State University for more than forty years, compiled the responses he received into notebooks for each state and gave them to the Harvard College Library in 1939. Another set of materials is in the collections of Ohio Historical Society. His published works present Siebert's synthesis of these responses. Massachusetts Underground Railroad researchers would do well to consult Siebert's research base, preserved in the Harvard notebooks.

Some of those who answered Siebert's queries were themselves Underground Railroad participants. Elizabeth Cooley, living at 62 Phillips Street on Beacon Hill in Boston in 1897, told Siebert's project that she had escaped slavery in January 1851 and that "she had hidden out two years, when she finally got away from Norfolk, Virginia, on a boat which took her to Boston. She had been a seamstress and had an easy time, but had wanted to be free from her childhood days." Cooley also told Siebert about Eliza Baines, "a colored woman at Portsmouth, Virginia, who worked for captains of vessels. She was able to learn from them their times of sailing. She harbored fugitives and got numbers of them on board boats sailing for Boston and New Bedford. Once when a party of slave-hunters came to her house to find runaways, she outwitted them by hiding the slaves between the rows in her garden and spreading sheets over them. When some of her fugitives had been put safely aboard for the North . . . she went about singing 'It's all right, halleluja, glory to God.'" Cooley may have been the "Mrs. Cooly & child" and "Mrs. Cooley & daughter" whom the Boston Vigilance Committee reimbursed Lewis Hayden for boarding, first in February 1852 and again in April of the same year. The 1855 state census records Elizabeth Cooley, age thirty-two and fifteen-year-old Marianna Cooley at the 83 Phillips Street boardinghouse of Virginia native William Manix, who had boarded numerous other fugitives at his 83 Southac (Phillips) Street boardinghouse. At the same

(continued)

That white men were primarily responsible for this work also has plagued Underground Railroad research. Frances Drake complained of it in her own time in a letter about the Leominster Female Anti-Slavery Society to Boston's Maria Weston Chapman. "It is perfectly astonishing to hear really intelligent people ever saying, 'I wonder what those few women think they can do to abolish Slavery.' 'I don't think it is womans sphere to be making such efforts to accomplish that which belong not to them, but to men high in office.' And everything of this kind we have to reply to almost daily, to such people. I lend your letter, in many instances it has not failed to convince them of their error," Drake wrote.[148] Researchers need to be constantly mindful of such biases in historical sources—and of the possibility that, given the assumption that few primary sources exist to study the Underground Railroad, they may persist in the sources of the current day.

Notes

1 *A Narrative of Thomas Smallwood (Coloured Man)*. . . (Toronto: James Stephens, 1851), 17 n.

2 Samuel J. May, *Some Recollections of Our Antislavery Conflict* (Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co, 1869), 144, 296-97.

3 Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Macmillan, 1898), and Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1936), the latter of which includes a fold-out map of routes in Massachusetts reaching into adjacent states; Larry Gara, *The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1961), 18, 91-92.

4 At any early point in this scholarship, Harvard historian Albert Bushnell Hart, *Slavery and Abolition, 1831-1841* (1906; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1968), 226-27, objected to the use of the term "Underground Railroad" and offered his own definition: "Once across the border, and sometimes before he reached it, the negro entered upon a concealed and intricate system of routes, to which the name 'Underground Railroad' was commonly applied. The term suggests not only a route, but termini, trainman, and general officials. There was,

(continued)

17 Clayton E. Cramer, *Black Demographic Data, 1790-1860: A Sourcebook* (Westport, Conn., and London: Greenwood Press, 1997), 99-107.

18 On southern New England, see Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 233.

19 Cramer, *Black Demographic Data*, 101, 102.

20 Research has begun in the Berkshire region on fugitive presence and assistance. Work is currently focusing on the site of the Todd homested in Lanesboro, which burned in 1983. Near the homestead was "the gulf," an area of African American settlement through which fugitives are said to have traveled eastward toward Dalton. Susan Denault, reference librarian and acting archivist, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams, telephone to author, 30 March 2004.

21 Rev. W. H. Robinson, *From Log Cabin to the Pulpit; Or, Fifteen Years in Slavery*, 3d ed. (Eau Claire, Wisc.: James H . Tifft, 1913), 11-13, cited in David S. Cecelski, *The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 121, 138; *Narrative of Thomas Smallwood*, 17.

22 John T. Kneebone, "A Break Down on the Underground Railroad: Captain B. and the Capture of the Keziah, 1858," *Virginia Cavalcade* 48, 2 (Spring 1999): 83; William Still, *The Underground Railroad: A Record of Facts, Authentic Narratives, Letters, &c.* (1871; reprint, Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, 1970), 23, includes a letter from Ham and Eggs. Still, *Underground Railroad*, 585-91, stated that Henry Lewey "was fortunate enough to make his way to Canada," but Sydney Howard Gay, in an 8 July 1856 entry in his "Record of Fugitives," wrote of Rebecca Lewey, "Her husband is in Boston; left a son of 15 behind, whom she hoped to get off somehow. Sent to Boston." Gay was then secretary of the New York City Committee of Vigilance. His papers are at Butler Library, Columbia University.

23 Purvis cited in Cecelski, *Waterman's Song*, 135-36.

24 *Personal Memoir of Daniel Drayton, for Four Years and Four Months a Prisoner (for Charity's Sake) in Washington Jail. Including a Narrative of the Voyage and Capture of the*

(continued)

Schooner Pearl (Boston: Bela Marsh; New York: American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1853), 20; "Death of a Martyr," *Republican Standard*, 2 July 1857, 1:2. According to the District of Columbia record of manumissions, William and Lucinda Bush were free people of color; they moved to New Bedford in early December 1849. The Rev. Leonard Grimes of Boston was their nephew.

25 *The Experience of Thomas H. Jones, Who Was a Slave for Forty-Three Years. Written by a Friend, as Related to Him by Brother Jones* (Boston: Bazin & Chandler, 1862), 36. Thanks to Jim Driscoll of the Queens (NY) Historical Society for the information on Cousins was black. Driscoll's search of the Hearnes' Brooklyn City Directory for 1853-54 found that Cousins then had a clothing store and barber shop at 9 Linden Row and was living at 9 Jay Street, the same address at which he was listed in the 1850-51 city directory. Driscoll notes that this section of Brooklyn was an African American neighborhood and the home of the Bridge Street African American church, to which Cousins was connected, as well as the Concord Street Baptist Church, also African American. The 1850 census shows five others within several households of Cousins with North Carolina birthplaces. In a 11 July 1849 letter to his wife reprinted in his several narratives, Thomas H. Jones wrote, "Tell brother Robert H. Cousins that he must pray for me; for I long to meet him one time more in this world."

26 By 1860, according to the federal census, Jones was in Worcester. In 1861 Thomas H. Jones is listed in the Worcester directory as living at 13 Austin Street; in 1862 the directory showed him at 18 Chandler Street. A block apart, the streets run parallel to Park Avenue in the city's seventh ward. In the 1865 Boston census, a Mary Jones with sons of the correct names and ages is shown running a boardinghouse; see fifth ward, household 236, family 374, Massachusetts state census. On 7 September 1867, Thomas H. Jones married Mrs. Anna Campbell in New Bedford; it is listed as a second marriage for both, though it was technically Jones's third. Jones was listed as sixty years old, from North Carolina, and the son of Tony and Grace Kirkwood. Campbell was thirty-three, from Virginia, and the daughter of Matton (?) and Nancy; no surname was shown in the record. At the time of his fourth marriage in 1882 Jones stated his parents names as Henry and Grace with no surname. Thanks to Carl J. Cruz of New Bedford for this marriage data. George B. Richmond of the city's YMCA stated in a letter dated 20 November 1869 that he had known Jones for the "past two years"; see Thomas H. Jones, *The Experience of Thomas H. Jones, Who Was a Slave for Forty-Three Years. Written by a Friend, As Related to Him by Brother Jones* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, 1885), 85.

(continued)

63 Austin Bearse, *Reminiscences of Fugitive-Slave Law Days in Boston* (Boston: Warren Richardson, 1880), 10-12.

64 "Wm A Dodge" was almost certainly meant to indicate William Bradford Dodge, president of the Anti-Slavery Society of Salem and Vicinity from 1836 to 1839 and at that time the teacher of Salem's "colored school"; in primary sources he is consistently identified as a fugitive assistant. "Smiths the Scotchmen's" refers to either Peter or John Smith, natives of Brechin, Scotland, who with Andover's John Dove established a flax processing factory in the Frye (now Shawsheen) Village section of Andover in 1835. Journal of Rev. Theodore Edson, entry for 19 March 1839, Center for Lowell History, Lowell, Mass.; thanks to Martha Mayo for guiding me to this source and this passage. *The Anti-Slavery Movement and the Underground Railroad in Andover & Greater Lawrence, Massachusetts* (Greater Lawrence Underground Railroad Committee, 2001).

65 On the Smiths and Dove, see *The Anti-Slavery Movement and the Underground Railroad in Andover & Greater Lawrence*.

66 See Appleton, "History of the Railways."

67 Collison, *Shadrach Minkins*.

68 "Basil Dorsey," *Hampshire Gazette* 81, 36, 2 April 1867; Robert Purvis quoted in Smedley, *Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania*, 356-61; Edward H. Magill, "The Underground Railroad," *Friends Intelligencer* 55 (1898): 124-25, 142-44, 159-61, 245, 276-77; Library of Congress, Joshua Leavitt Family Papers, MMC-0893, Library of Congress, and Hugh Davis, *Joshua Leavitt, Evangelical Abolitionist* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), cited in Roger Hooker and Keziah Leavitt House Network to Freedom Application. Thanks to Steve Strimer, Florence (Mass.) History Project, and Bambi Miller, Tyler Memorial Library, Charlemont, Mass., for sharing these materials.

69 See J. C. Lovejoy, *Memoir of Rev. Charles T. Torrey, Who Died in the Penitentiary of Maryland, Where He Was Confined for Showing Mercy to the Poor* (Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1847; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969). In Lovejoy's memoir, composed largely of letters and other primary documents, no account of Torrey's own figure of fugitive rescues is presented. In his funeral sermon, Lovejoy stated that "*hundreds* of slaves" were freed

(continued)

73 George A. Levesque, *Black Boston: African American Life and Culture in Urban America, 1750-1860* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1994), 273-74; *A Narrative of the Adventures and Escape of Moses Roper, from American Slavery* (Philadelphia: Merrihew & Gunn, 1838), 83; *Liberator*, 27 October 1837, reprinted in Levesque, *Black Boston*, 278-79.

74 "Public Meetings," *Liberator*, 14 March 1856, 43:4; New Bedford *Republican Standard*, 6 December 1855, 2:4.

75 New Bedford *Republican Standard*, 14 August 1859, 2:4.

76 Bettye Hobbs Pruitt, ed., *The Massachusetts Tax Valuation List of 1771* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co, 1978); Daniel R. Mandell, "Shifting Boundaries of Race and Ethnicity: Indian-Black Intermarriage in Southern New England, 1760-1880," *Journal of American History* 85, 2 (September 1998): 466. F. W. Bird, Whiting Griswold, and Cyrus Weekes, *Report of the Commissioners Relating to the Condition of the Indians in Massachusetts*, House Report No. 46, February 1849, 6; John Milton Earle, *Report to the Governor and Council Concerning the Indians of the Commonwealth, Under the Act of April 6, 1859*, Senate Report No. 96 (Boston: William White, 1861), 9-10.

77 See Russell M. Peters, *The Wampanoags of Mashpee: An Indian Perspective on American History* (Indian Spiritual and Cultural Training Council, 1987). Peters offers no date for Lewis's arrival or presence in Mashpee, and a survey of the three microfiche copies of that town's vital records has not yielded this information. These records, however, exist only for 1834-99. Records beginning in 1763 through 1834 have either been lost or destroyed by fire, and the three microfiche records for the period after 1834 are in many instances illegible. A record of the marriage of Timothy Pocknet and Leah Lewis, on 4 December 1862, is legible; it states the parents of the forty-eight-year-old Leah as James and Jane Lewis and her marriage to Pocknet as her third. On the same day the son of Leah and James Lewis, also James, age twenty-one, to Elizabeth Gardner Pocknet, was also recorded. This second James Lewis stated his birthplace as Mashpee, so his father James Lewis was probably living in Mashpee at least by 1841.

78 New Bedford *Standard*, 29 & 30 September 1854; and John W. Blassingame, ed., *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews and Autobiographies* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 320-25, reprinted from *Liberty Bell* (Boston, 1858), 29-43; Netta Vanderhoop, "The True Story of a Fugitive Slave: Or the Story a Gay Head

(continued)

85 *History of Springfield, Mass., 1636-1886*, 374, vol. 1, Siebert Notebooks; Hampden Village Center Historic District nomination, Massachusetts Historic Commission files, HMP.1-3.

86 *Old Anti-Slavery Days. Proceedings of the Commemorative Meeting, Held by the Danvers Historical Society, at the Town Hall, Danvers, April 26, 1893, with Introduction, Letters and Sketches* (Danvers: Danvers Mirror Print, 1893), 144.

87 Peter Wheeler and Charles Edwards Lester, *Chains and Freedom: Or, the Life and Adventures of Peter Wheeler, a Colored Man Yet Living. A Slave in Chains, A Sailor on the Deep, and A Sinner at the Cross* (New York: E. S. Arnold and Co., 1839).

88 Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 83; Peter P. Hinks, ed., *David Walker's Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 27, 24-25.

89 Fugitive Evans and his family came from the "lower part of Newcastle County, Delaware," to Schuykill in Chester County, Pennsylvania, where he lived eight months, until he began to feel "not safe there." On 4 March 1847 he came to the office of the Boston Vigilance Committee. The text of Browne's account reads, "March 9th Evans, his wife & child, went to live with Alvan Ward, at Ashburnham. 24 April. Letter on file from Ward saying Evans dissatisfied.— 27 April. Evans came in, & complained that Ward had not paid him according to agreement. 30 April. Wrote to Ward that he should pay Evans for a month & a half at $8.00 a month." See Bartlett, "Abolitionists, Fugitives, and Imposters," 102.

90 These statistics derive from research for Grover, *Fugitive's Gibraltar*, and the Eleanor Broadhead Papers, MSS 0.595, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Mass.

91 *The Life of John Thompson, a Fugitive Slave, Containing His History of 25 Years in Bondage, and His Providential Escape. Written By Himself* (Worcester, Mass.: John Thompson, 1856), 103, 107-8; on Jacobs, see his "A True Tale of Slavery," *The Leisure Hour* (London), 7 -28 February 1861; on the Jenkins letter, see note 28.

92 May, *Some Recollections*, 128-30; Samuel Ringgold Ward, *Autobiography of a Fugitive Negro: His Anti-Slavery Labours in the United States, Canada, & England* (London: John Snow, 1855), 66-67; *Old Anti-Slavery Days*, 20, 144; Higginson's statement is cited in Mary Thatcher Higginson, *Thomas Wentworth Higginson* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1914).

(continued)

---

100 Roy E. Finkenbine, "Boston's Black Churches: Institutional Centers of the Antislavery Movement," in Jacobs, ed., *Courage and Conscience*, 182, states that sixty members, "including two deacons," left after the Act passed, apparently based on an article in *Pennsylvania Freeman*, 25 August 1853.

101 *Life and Adventures of James Williams, a Fugitive Slave, with a Full Description of the Underground Railroad* (San Francisco: Women's Union Print, 1873).

102 See Vlach, "Above Ground on the Underground Railroad," and Byron D. Fruehling and Robert H. Smith, "Subterranean Hideaways of the Underground Railroad in Ohio: An Architectural, Archaeological and Historical Critique of Local Traditions," *Ohio History* 102, 98 (Summer/Autumn 1993). In a survey to determine the existence of "special features" in houses with "unassailable credentials" as Underground Railroad stations—such as "a place under the floor accessible only by a trap door, a secret space behind a particular wooden panel in the hallway, or an area behind a knee wall up in the attic," as well as "tunnels extending from the cellar of the house to a safe location as much as a hundred yards away"— Vlach found all to be "elements of fanciful legend." He concluded, "The cellars, trap doors, crawl spaces, and storage spaces tucked behind knee walls that all seem so exotic to us today, usually prove to be nothing more than the normal details of the average nineteenth-century house. . . . Contrary to popular legends very few Underground Railroad stations were outfitted with secret hiding places. Most fugitive slaves were sheltered in existing rooms and spaces." In an investigation of seventeen houses with traditions of "subterranean chambers or tunnels" in three northeastern Ohio counties through which two Underground Railroad routes ran from the Ohio River Lake Erie, Fruehling and Smith found no evidence of "architectural constructions intended specifically to conceal slaves or assist their flight" having been incorporated into any of them (116).

103 Grover and daSilva, "Historic Resource Study," 111; George W. Putnam to Siebert, 30 Oct 1893, vol. 2, Siebert Notebooks.

104 Stanley Robboy, e-mail to Horace Seldon, 7 June 2004. Robboy is a former occupant of the Hayden house and a scholar on Hayden. See Stanley W. Robboy and Anita W. Robboy, "Lewis Hayden: From Fugitive Slave to Statesman," *New England Quarterly* 46, 4 (December 1973): 591-612. Thanks to Horace Selden of Boston African American National Historic Site for contacting Robboy; Seldon, e-mail to Grover, 7 June 2004.

(continued)

124 Scholars have recognized this tendency to personalize prototype housing in urban and suburban communities. Kingston Wm. Heath, *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001); Alice Gray Read, "Making a House a Home in a Philadelphia Neighborhood," Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture II, Camille Wells, ed. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986) 192-199. Barbara M. Kelly, *Expanding the American Dream: Building and Rebuilding Levittown* (Albany NY: SUNY Press, 1993)

125 *African American Heritage Trail, Cambridge, Massachusetts* (City of Cambridge, 2000).

126 Street Survey Files, Cambridge (MA) Historical Commission.

127 After coming to New England in 1842 and telling the story of their escape from Kentucky in various places, the fugitive brothers J. Milton and Lewis Clarke came to Cambridge in 1843 and stayed with Boston merchant Aaron Safford, who lived on Prospect Street near Broadway in Cambridge; his house is extant. Safford was a member of the Second Evangelical Congregational Church, known then as "the abolition church." Its pastor was Joseph C. Lovejoy, whose brother was the martyr Elijah Lovejoy, the Alton, Illinois, printer murdered in the antiabolitionist riot there in 1834. J. C. Lovejoy transcribed the Lewis brothers' two fugitive narratives and wrote *Memoir of Rev. Charles T. Torrey* (1847). Safford's wife was Mary Beecher, sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe; it was either she or their father, Lyman Beecher, who brought the stories of Lewis and Milton Clarke to Stowe's attention. In her *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe revealed that she based her character George Harris on Lewis Clarke. See Stowe, *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Boston: John P. Jewett and Co., and Cleveland: Jewett, Proctor & Worthington, 1854), 18-22.

128 Aella Greene, "Well-Known '[Outlaws]' of Westfield, Northampton, Amherst and other Towns—The Chester Branch, A [Bit] of the Way in Vermont," Part 3 of "The Underground Railroad and Those Who Operated It," *Sunday Republican* (Springfield, Mass.), 25 [?] March 1900.

129 "Jerry Warriner's Tavern," *Springfield Weekly Republican*, 31 Jan 1907, 13, in ibid.

(continued)

---

130 Arthur G. Hill to Siebert, 18 July 1896, vol. 1, Siebert Notebooks.

131 Peter C. Ripley, *The Black Abolitionist Papers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 3: 39; *Underground Railroad Resources in the United States: Theme Study* (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register, History and Education, September 2000), 3, 17, 30.

132On the reluctance of fugitives to cite names, see, for examples, Drew, *Narratives of Fugitive Slaves*, 31-32, 45-50, 160-61, 198-233, and others throughout this volume; *John Parker*, *His Promised Land*, ed. Stuart Seely Sprague (New York, 1996), cited in Carol Kammen, "The Underground Railroad and Local History," *Upstate History Alliance Newsletter*, Winter 2002, 4, reprinted from *History News*; Mary E. Hall, 135 High Street, Brookline, 13 January 1897, to Siebert, vol. 1, Siebert Notebooks.

133 Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom*, ed. William L. Andrews (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 196; *Narrative of Henry Watson, a Fugitive Slave* (Boston: Bela Marsh, 1848), 40.

134 Kammen, "Underground Railroad and Local History," 4.

135 They are *Life of William Grimes, the Runaway Slave. Written by Himself* (1824)(1855); *Life and Adventures of Robert Voorhis* (1829); *A Narrative of the Adventures and Escape of Moses Roper, from American Slavery* (1838); *Chains and Freedom: Or, the Life and Adventures of Peter Wheeler, a Colored Man Yet Living* (1839); *Narrative of the Sufferings of Lewis Clarke* (1845) and *Narrative of the Sufferings of Lewis and Milton Clarke* (1846); *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845) (1855) (1881); *Life and Sufferings of Leonard Black, a Fugitive from Slavery* (1847); *Narrative of William Wells Brown, a Fugitive Slave, Written by Himself* (1847) (1848) (1850); *Narrative of Henry Watson, a Fugitive Slave* (1848), *Narrative of Henry Box Brown* (1849); *The Experiences of Thomas H. Jones* (1849); *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (1850); *Narrative of the Life of James Watkins* (1852); *Narrative of the Events in the Life of William Green, (Formerly a Slave), Written by Himself* (1853); *The Life of John Thompson, a Fugitive Slave* (1856); *Narrative of Jane Brown and Her Two Children* (1860); *Narrative of the Life and Labors of the Reverend G. W. Offley* (1860); William Craft, *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom* (1860); Linda Brent [Harriet Jacobs], *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861); John S. Jacobs, "A True Tale of Slavery," *The Leisure Hour* (1861); *Life and Adventures of James Williams, A Fugitive Slave* (1873); James Lindsay Smith,

(continued)

Autobiography of James L. Smith (1881); *Wonderful Eventful Life of Rev. Thomas James, by Himself* (1887); and F. N. Boney, Richard L. Hume, and Rafia Zafar, *God Made Man, Man Made the Slave: The Autobiography of George Teamoh* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990).

136 Frances H. Drake, Leominster, to Theodore Parker, 2 September 1854, Ms. Am. 1590, Boston Public Library.

137 See Wesley and Uzelac, *William Cooper Nell*. The microfilm copy of the Black Abolitionist Papers is available at Lamont Library, Harvard University.

138 Other accounts exist written by assistants active in other regions, including Eber Pettit's *Sketches in the History of the Underground Railroad* (1879), H. U. Johnson's *From Dixie to Canada* (1894), and James Harris Fairchild's *The Underground Railroad* (1895). These may mention fugitives and assistants with Massachusetts associations.

139 Marion Gleason McDouglass, *Fugitive Slaves (1619-1865)* (1891); Smedley, *Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania*; see also *Old Anti-Slavery Days*, which, like Siebert's book, contains reminiscences of both participants and nonparticipants.

140 Elizabeth Cooley, Boston, typewritten account filed under Suffolk County, April 1897, vol. 2, Siebert Notebooks. Cooley's recollection of the date of her escape is somewhat puzzling, though quite commonly reimbursements in Vigilance Committee accounts appear to have taken place well after the dates of assistance. Still, Francis Jackson's accounts at New-York Historical Society indicate that Mrs. Cooley and her daughter were to be sent to New York in 1853; Jackson then crossed out "New York." Manix boarded twelve fugitives between 1 August 1855 and 12 December 1856. He may himself have been a fugitive, for Vigilance Committee records show that he was sent to Canada in 1856. DeGrasse's account books are in the DeGrasse-Howard Papers, 1776-1976, Massachusetts Historical Society.

141 C. F. Atkinson, "Cotton Buyer/41 Mason Building/Boston," 2 May 1898 to Siebert, vol. 1, Siebert Notebooks.

(continued)

142 C. F. Atkinson, Boston, to Siebert, 2 May 1898, vol. 2; Robert S. Brown, West Newbury, to Siebert, 12 April 1935; Rev. William G. Poor, Upton, to Marion La Mere, included in La Mere, "Underground Railroad in Andover, Mass.," (Typescript, 25 November 1934), in vol. 1, Siebert Notebooks.

143 Marguerite Merrill, Amesbury Public Library, to Siebert, 6 and 12 April 1935; Marion La Mere, Andover, 25 Jan 1935 to Siebert, vol. 1, Siebert Notebooks.

144 Siebert, *Underground Railroad in Massachusetts*, 10.

145 Ibid., 12.

146 One of the houses Smith lived in survives on Beacon Hill at 86 Pinckney Street (MHC #4105), but because he and his family occupied the house between 1878 and the mid-1890s, it falls outside the scope of this context.

147 Ibid., 42-45.

148 Frances H. Drake, Leominster, to Maria Weston Chapman, 6 August 1843, Ms.A.4.6A.1 p.86, Boston Public Library.

(continued)

G. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

All properties must be situated within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts during the period of significance.

(end)