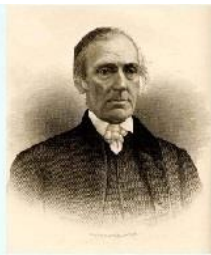




1. Hall Of Free Discussion



2. Spring Grove Cemetery



3. Freedom Grove

Mill Rd
Miles Rd
33



4. Wesleyan Cemetery



6. LaBoiteaux Woods



32. Mt Healthy Christian Church

Mt Healthy

32

31



7. Six Acres B & B

Compton Rd

28 29

McMakin

Compton Rd

Arlington Memorial Gardens Cemetery

27

26



8. Twin Towers



31. Free Meeting House

25

24

22 23

21

National "Network to Freedom" Listing: Charles Cheney site

Galbraith Rd

19 20

20

20

North College Hill

Galbraith Rd



10. Farmers College



29. Dr. Scott Home

Hamilton Ave

Daly Rd



13. Jonathan Cable

West North Bend Rd

18

College Hill



14. Wilson house



27. Rachel Nelson

13

12

11

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16

Cedar Ave

National "Aboard the Underground Railroad" Listing: Samuel and Sally Wilson Home



15. Ohio Female College



26. Robert Duncanson

National "Network to Freedom" Listing: Escape of 28 Corridor

Glenview Ave

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Kirby Rd

Spring Grove

Grove

Winton Rd



16. Cedar Ave. Mary Jane French

Colerain Ave

Mt. Airy Forest

Northside

Cemetery National "Network to Freedom" Listing: Spring Grove Cemetery 2



17. William Cary

National "Network to Freedom" Listing: Wesleyan Cemetery

Hamilton Ave

Spring Grove Ave

I-74

Wesleyan Cemetery 4

3

I-75

Mill Creek

1



CHARLES CHENEY

21. Charles Cheney



20. Cary Cottage



18. Crawford Home

HAMILTON AVENUE – ROAD TO FREEDOM

1. Hall of Free Discussion site (current site near the Mill Creek Bike Trail across from Dane Avenue in Northside) – James C. Ludlow, an abolitionist and son of Colonel Israel Ludlow (Israel was one of three surveyors sent to survey the Miami Purchase responsible for plotting the city of Cincinnati. Arriving in Northside in 1790, he was among the first pioneers to settle in the community), built the Hall specifically to provide a space for open discussion of controversial topics. Following restrictions imposed as the result of the 1834 Lane Debates, (held at Lane Seminary, Walnut Hills, OH) some abolitionist seminary students taught classes at the Hall to black students, while others briefly taught there prior to moving to Oberlin College. Abolitionist speakers such as Rev. Lyman Beecher (Harriet Beecher- Stowe’s father) and Theodore Weld were popular.

2. Spring Grove Cemetery – Here are buried the noted Quakers, Levi and Catherine Coffin. Levi has been attributed with helping over 3,000 slaves escape to freedom. Known as “The President of the Underground Railroad,” he moved to Cincinnati in 1847 from Indiana, opening a store which sold only items not produced by slave labor. Salmon Portland Chase also buried here, known as the “attorney general for fugitive slaves.” He defended pro-bono those slaves that were recaptured and the abolitionists that tried to free them. Chase served as Secretary of the Treasury under Pres. Lincoln and was a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Other documented abolitionists include: Henry Boyd, Edward Harwood, Samuel and Sally Wilson and John and Elizabeth Coleman.

National Parks Service “Network to Freedom” Listing

3. Freedom Grove, Mill Creek Restoration project - Trees planted here memorializes “where slaves would exit using the Mill Creek as their guide.” Following a large waterway would confuse any dogs that were following them as well as providing cover.

4. Wesleyan Cemetery - Chartered in 1843, Wesleyan was the first integrated cemetery in the Cincinnati area. This cemetery contains the remains of 2 reputed abolitionists; Zebulon Strong, and Rev. Henry Hathaway, documented abolitionist John Van Zandt and played an integral role in the successful escape of one of the largest groups on fugitives documented in this area. Abolitionist Zebulon Strong had two homes along Hamilton Avenue frequently used as stops on the Underground Railroad. John Van Zandt was apprehended in 1842 south of Lebanon, OH, transporting a wagonload of escaping slaves from Walnut Hills, OH, and sued by their owner under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. He was defended by Salmon P. Chase. The case, Jones v Van Zandt, made it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court but Van Zandt died a pauper in 1847 due to fines imposed earlier by the lower court before the trial was over. It was one of Chase’s largest legal defeats. Van Zandt was immortalized as the character John Von Trompe in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Rev. Henry Hathaway built his home, “Hathaway Hall,” on the banks of the Ohio River in West Covington. Said to have been an important stop on the Underground Railroad, a tunnel connected the house to the Ohio River, where fugitive slaves would be rowed to the Ohio side. In Levi Coffin’s book, *Reminiscence*, he relates the story of John Hatfield, Deacon at the Zion Baptist Church, who assisted John Fairfield, in transporting the group of 28 escaping slaves Fairfield brought across the Ohio River out of Cincinnati. Hatfield procured a coach and disguised the group as a funeral procession of free black people on the way to the Methodist (Wesleyan) Cemetery. Instead of going to the cemetery, the group traveled past and on to College Hill where they took refuge for the night. The group made it to Canada. More than 600 Civil War Veterans of both races are buried at Wesleyan. **National Park Service “Network to Freedom” Listing—for John Van Zandt and Escape of the 28 funeral decoy**

5. Escape of the 28 Corridor- after the group of 28 slaves passed Wesleyan (above) they traveled onto College Hill using the route/roads of Kirby, Glenview and Belmont Avenues near Rev Cables house—see **#13 National Parks Service “Network to Freedom” Listing**

6. Ravine to Freedom – On either side of Hamilton Avenue lie deep ravines which provided deep shadow and foliage. The ravine in LaBoiteaux Woods Preserve was designated by the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center as the “only documented and undeveloped Underground Railroad slave route” in the area.

7 Zebulon Strong/Six Acres Bed & Breakfast – 5350 Hamilton Avenue This was the second house built by Zebulon Strong, the first being a brick house at 5434 Hamilton Ave (***Private Residence***). The brick house was used as a safe house while 5350 contains several hiding places. The slaves would come up the east ravine, and would hide in a brush pile in the gully under some discarded sacks. The Strong children would play around the brush pile, leaving food. After dark one of the Strong men (son Elon) would take their wagon, with a false bottom, and would transport the slaves out Belmont Avenue to the next station, a brick house at the corner of Colerain and Springdale Roads. The Strongs were related to the Carys.

8. Twin Towers – The ravine ending at the stone wall of Twin Tower’s driveway was used in hiding escaping slaves during the day and moving them through College Hill after dark. A tunnel under the original retaining wall led to General Samuel Fenton Cary’s house (youngest son of Wm.

Cary) which was located where the upper parking lot is now. The tunnel and wall collapsed shortly after Twin Towers was built, (in the early 1900’s) necessitating a new retaining wall.

9. Skillman/Strong Store site– The Skillman/Strong grocery store and house were built on the east side of Hamilton Avenue south of Hamilton and Hillcrest Avenues, near Zebulon Strong’s original home. The families intermarried and both were involved with helping escapees to the next station.

10. Farmers’ College (current site of CRC and Aiken High school) – Some of the Quaker youths, along with the faculty, hid slaves in the bell tower. Dr. Robert H. Bishop, president of the college was an ardent abolitionist. The college was founded by Freeman Grant Cary, eldest son of William Cary, and a graduate of Miami University. Future president and abolitionist, Benjamin Harrison, studied here. Rev. Dr. John W. Scott, (**see # 29**) taught physics and chemistry. **Ohio Historical Society Listing**

11. Daniel Flamm property - 5822 Belmont – An additional half floor basement for concealment was built into this frame building. ***Private residence***

12. “The Oaks” – 5907 Belmont Avenue This stately mansion was built around a smaller house. Behind the home was once an acetylene shed, with a concealed hiding place. ***Private residence.***

13. Jonathan Cable – A Presbyterian minister, his family once lived north of 6011 Belmont Avenue. Levi Coffin wrote about the deeds of Cable, who procured clothing and gave slaves shelter in his house. He is seen in this photograph as the tall man in the back row. The man with the top hat is Levi Coffin; they are with some of those they helped to escape.

14. Samuel and Sally Wilson house – 1502 Aster Place – A staunch abolitionist family, the Wilsons moved to College Hill in 1849, purchasing land and a small log cabin from Freeman G. Cary. The current Greek Revival house was built around the cabin at that time. Their daughter, Mary Jane, was an original teacher at the Ohio Female College and two of their sons attended Cary’s Academy. Harriet Nesmith, Joseph Gardner, D.M. Wilson and Mary Jane Wilson Pyle all were very involved with the Underground Railroad and this house served as a station for at least four years. In 1892 Harriet wrote a letter to Professor Wilbur Siebert at Ohio State University detailing her family’s activities and those of other College Hill residents’ participation. **National Parks Service “Aboard the Underground Railroad “Listing *Private residence***.

15. Ohio Female College – Now demolished and the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center built on the site, Supreme Court Justice John McLean served as the first president of the Board of Trustees. Samuel F. Cary also served on the board. Judge McLean was anti-slavery and was a dissenting opinion in the infamous 1857 Dred Scott v. Sanford Supreme Court decision.

16. East Cedar Ave. - was the center of the black community in early College Hill. Small wooden cottages were built for the black servants who worked for the wealthy families in the community. This area contained many free black families and former slaves. An example of the latter is this photo of Mary Jane French. The College Hill Colored school was located near the intersection of Cedar and Piqua Avenues. Near this crossroads was the (Colored) Christian Church of College Hill whose pastor was Rev. Laban S. Locker, the first black minister in Ohio ordained in the Christian Church. Laban was the father of Jesse D. Locker who lived at 1210 Cedar Ave. Jesse was a much loved lawyer and six term Cincinnati city councilman. He was president of the Hamilton County Bar Association of Negro Lawyers. Appointed by Pres. Eisenhower in 1953 to be the U. S. Ambassador to Liberia, he died in Monrovia in 1955. His public funeral was the largest in the city’s history and he is the only person to lie in state in Cincinnati City Hall.

17. William Cary site/ Hodapp Funeral Home – 6041 Hamilton Avenue – William Cary was the primary land owner of College Hill. An abolitionist and one of the founders of the College Hill Presbyterian Church, Cary built a saw mill and brick kiln on his property. His was the first brick home in College Hill and contained hiding places. His well-educated sons were responsible for Cary’s Academy, Farmer’s College and the Ohio Female College.

18. John T. Crawford site (current site Pleasant Hill Academy)– When Crawford died in 1880; he left his estate “for the sole uses of an asylum and home for aged and worthy colored men, preference to be given to those who have suffered slavery.” Crawford was a Union spy/soldier that had been captured, and was aided in escape by an elderly black man. In gratitude he willed his estate and 18.5 acre farm, which became the Crawford Home in 1888. **Ohio Historical Society Listing**

19. LaBoiteaux/Cary Cemetery – corner of Hamilton and Galbraith Roads - Buried here are the remains of several American Revolutionary War veterans and the neighbors of Christopher Cary, brother of William Cary.

20. Cary Cottage – 7000 Hamilton Avenue – This brick home was built by Robert Cary from land he purchased from his father after he returned from the War of 1812. Robert was the father of the Cary sisters, Phoebe and Alice, poets. Alice wrote stories for the National Era, an abolitionist paper which also published Harriet Beecher Stowe. Open to the public. Site has both a **National Historic and Ohio Listing**

21. Charles Cheney site (currently the site of the Heritage Park) - From Connecticut, Cheney

established a mulberry grove here for the cultivation of silkworms. With his brothers, he founded the Mulberry Grove Silk Growing and Manufacturing Company, which grew to be the Cheney Brothers Silk Mills in Manchester CT that lasted for over a century. During his decade here, he was active with the Underground Railroad, and with the anti-slavery Liberty Party, and became friends with Salmon P. Chase and John Van Zandt. His son Frank wrote about the family’s Underground Railroad activities. This included a free Black conductor, James Dunlap, who drove freedom seekers to the next station north in the Cheney wagon. Cheney developed the Cincinnati and Hamilton Turnpike, and was able to hire tollgate keepers who were known to be friendly to the movement of fugitives. **National Parks Service “Network to Freedom” Listing**

22. Benjamin Hunt house – 1575 St. Clair – This brick house and its outbuildings served as a station, with hiding spaces in the attic and basement. ***Private residence.***

23. Dr. Alexander B. Luse house site - Dr. Luse was one of the local physicians who would attend to the medical needs of the fugitives. They would stay with him until they were well enough to resume travel. Another local doctor so involved was Dr. Reuben D. Mussey

24. Aiken house site- No longer standing, reputed to be abolitionist the Aikens, had a tunnel leading from a nearby creek into their basement

25. Gilbert Lowe LaBoiteaux/Paul R. Young Funeral Home – 7345 Hamilton Avenue – This 1833 Greek Revival house was once the home of Gilbert LaBoiteaux - mailman, wit, poet, traveler, writer and abolitionist. The LaBoiteauxs of Mt. Healthy were one of this community’s founding families and held anti-slavery views. Gilbert was a patron of the painter Robert S Duncanson.

26. Robert S Duncanson was a self-taught black artist specializing in scenic landscapes and portraits. Many of his works were commissioned by abolitionists: Rev. Charles Avery, William and Rebecca Cary, Freeman G. Cary, Dr. Robert H. Bishop and most importantly, Nicholas Longworth. He boosted Duncanson to national fame by having eight landscapes and two floral vignettes painted on the walls of his family home, now the Taft museum. Duncanson travelled abroad and won international fame, the first African-American artist to do so.

27. Anthony Nelson –Nelson was former Kentucky slave who bought his freedom and brought some of his family to Mt. Healthy. He purchased land from Gilbert LaBoiteaux, and built his house which became a station, his family helping others on their way to Hamilton or Dayton. Rachel Nelson was his granddaughter and was reported to have assisted.

28. Nathan Hastings/Sampson house site –A native of Boston, Hastings hid fugitive slaves in a tool house and wooden shed attached to his house.

29. Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon Scott – 7601 Hamilton Avenue – Built in 1840; this was a station for the Underground Railroad. Scott was a Presbyterian minister and professor who had taught at Miami University and moved to Mt. Healthy, where he taught at Farmers’ College in College Hill. His daughter, Caroline, married Pres. Benjamin Harrison. Still existing are traces of rooms and/or tunnels in the basement

30. Mt. Pleasant Cemetery - The resting place of Jesse Locker (#16).

31. Mt. Healthy Historical Society Museum – 1546 McMakin – Built originally as a community meeting house and was the site of numerous Anti-Slavery Association and Liberty Party conventions in the early to mid-1840s. The museum contains artifacts of early Mt. Healthy life

32. Mt. Healthy Christian Church – 7717 Harrison Avenue – Founded by Pastor David S. Burnet, part of the Cincinnati Burnet family, this church was torn apart by the slavery question. It expelled Aaron Lane (below) for his abolitionist views against the protests of other members and for six years the church stopped holding services. **Ohio Historical Society Listing**

33. Lane Homestead – Hamilton Avenue and Mill Road – The Lane family were outspoken abolitionists and their home was a station. Pioneer John Lane was a blacksmith whose limestone workshop (1814) is still standing. His sons, Aaron and Clark, were active in the Underground Railroad. Clark was successful in the blacksmithing trade and funded the Lane Library in Hamilton, Ohio. ***Private residence***

The sites numbers marked in **Green** have strong oral traditions connected to the Underground Railroad. More research is being done to record these sites

Text and map provided by: Betty Ann Smiddy and Kathy Dahl. Support from the Northside Community, College Hill Historical Society, Mt. Healthy Historical Society, North College Hill Historical Society; Sylvia Rummell descendant of Jonathan Cable; Arlette Merritt descendant of Anthony and Rachel Nelson

For more information visit our website: ***hamiltonavenueroadtofreedom.org***