

THE MOVEMENT
HARRIET TUBMAN

Points of Interest

As seen in the 360-degree demo video



Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman was born Araminta Ross around 1822 in Dorchester County, Maryland. She was born into slavery and experienced traumatizing violence in her childhood, the effects of which lasted throughout her life. In 1849, when her enslaver was making plans to sell her away, she decided to claim her freedom. She fled north by herself, aided along her perilous route by agents of the Underground Railroad.

For the next decade, Tubman traveled back to Maryland thirteen times, directly guiding about 70 other people to freedom as well as giving instructions to many more. During the Civil War, she worked for the United States Army as a nurse, spy, and soldier, becoming the first American woman to lead a military operation during the Raid on Combahee Ferry in 1863. Despite her wartime contributions, she was granted neither a pension nor recognition from the government. Yet, she unselfishly devoted the next five decades fighting for civil rights, women's suffrage, and advocating for aid to the homeless, sick, and elderly.

Harriet Tubman's final words before she passed away in 1913 at the age of 91 were: "I go to prepare a place for you."



Harriet Tubman



Niagara Falls

The Niagara Falls were formed some 10,000 years ago at the end of the last major ice age. As glaciers gradually melted, they formed the Great Lakes, which emptied into what is known today as the Niagara River. Over time, erosion by the water currents caused rock layers to collapse, forming the Falls. Three individual waterfalls comprise the Niagara Falls: the Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side of the border, and the American Falls and Bridal Veil Falls on the American side. Due to the enormous volume of water that makes its way over the cliffs, the Falls experience relatively severe erosion. This results in the cliff edge receding approximately one foot per year. As a result, the Falls would have looked noticeably different back in 1856.



The Niagara Falls as depicted in 1857



As a train crosses the Suspension Bridge, the Niagara Falls can be seen in the distance



Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge

When this bridge was completed in 1855, it became the first railway suspension bridge in the world. John A. Roebling was the bridge's architect—he would later become more well-known when he designed New York City's Brooklyn Bridge. The Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge spanned the Niagara River at its narrowest point, which still measured an impressive 821 feet across. It featured two levels: the top level allowed trains to cross safely while the bottom level was meant for pedestrian and carriage use. Three different sets of railroad track were laid on the bridge to accommodate the different track gauges (width between wheels) used by the three railroads that crossed at this point. The Suspension Bridge stood until 1897 when it was replaced by the Lower Steel Arch Bridge, which was renamed the Whirlpool Rapids Bridge in 1937. This bridge still stands today and is used as a regular US-Canada border crossing.



Monteagle Hotel

Since the Niagara Falls were first seen by European colonists, they have drawn considerable interest from tourists. In fact, until the Statue of Liberty was constructed in 1886, they were often regarded as the symbol of the United States and the so-called “New World.” As travel by train became an increasingly affordable form of transportation in the mid-1800s, the Niagara region became much more accessible. Rising tourist traffic led to the rise of Niagara’s tourism industry. When the Monteagle Hotel opened in January 1856, its marble halls, mineral baths, and gilded furnishings made it the grandest building in the area.



The Monteagle Hotel as seen in THE MOVEMENT: HARRIET TUBMAN



The Suspension Bridge and Witmer's Mill (left) visible in this image from the late 1850s



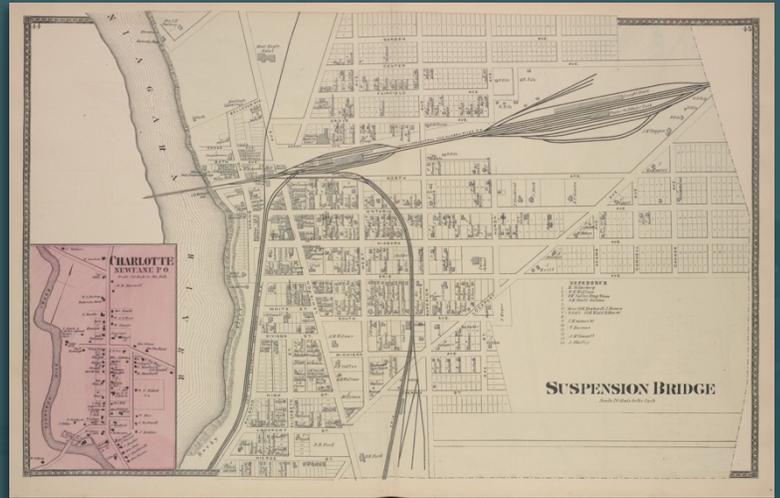
Witmer's Mill

In many historical images of the Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge, there is a noticeable building just to the south along the cliffside. This was Witmer's Mill, owned and operated by Christian H. Witmer. It had been built by Augustus Porter some decades prior—Porter was in fact the first European to have settled in the region. The mill was built to process grain, and it was powered by a water wheel that was set along the riverbanks 250 feet below and connected back to the main structure.



Village of Bellevue

The Village of Bellevue, New York was incorporated in 1854. After the Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge was completed, the town became interchangeably referred to simply as “Suspension Bridge.” In its early years, the town mostly comprised hotels, shops, and other tourism-related buildings. This town was later merged with the Town of Niagara Falls (located immediately adjacent to the waterfalls) in 1892, becoming the City of Niagara Falls, New York.



A map of “Suspension Bridge” from 1875



A map of the Niagara region from 1892



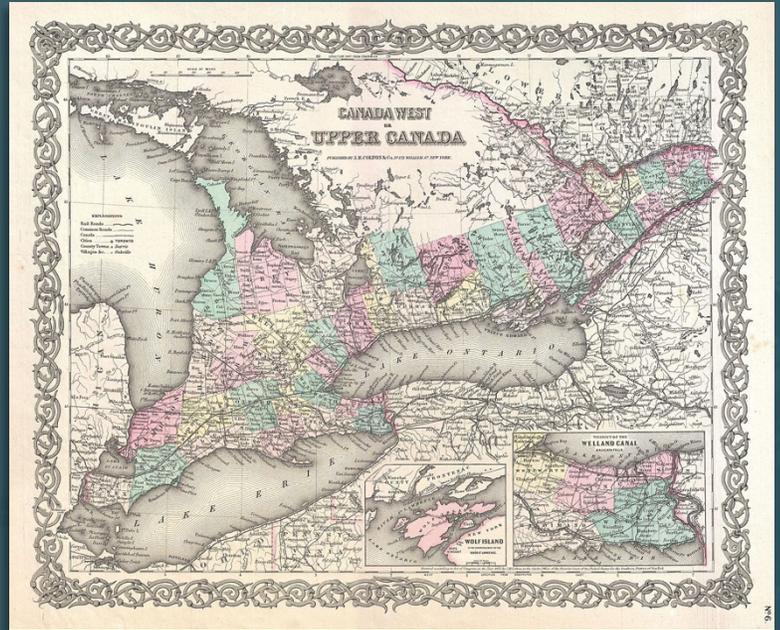
Town of Clifton

On the Canadian side of the Suspension Bridge was the Town of Clifton. This town was officially formed in June 1856 when the Villages of Elgin and Clifton were merged. The first European settlers had founded the Village of Clifton in 1832. In 1881, the town was renamed to the Town of Niagara Falls, later becoming the City of Niagara Falls, Ontario in 1904.



British Colonial Canada

While the United States won independence from Britain in 1783, the Canadian provinces remained within the British Empire. Niagara Falls was located in Upper Canada (renamed Ontario in 1867), where many loyalists fled after the American Revolutionary War. In 1834, slavery was officially abolished throughout the empire, including Canada. This act made Canada an appealing destination for freedom seekers. Over the next few decades, an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 people crossed the northern border. Once across the border, they had “shook the lion’s paw,” a metaphor for being welcomed by the British Empire. Settled in their new homes, Black Canadians helped to build and develop their communities, finally free from slavery.

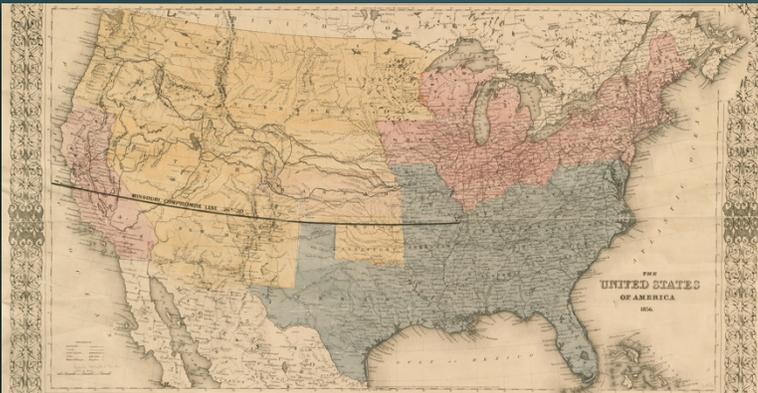


A map of Upper Canada from 1855



United States

In 1856, the institution of slavery was holding strong in the American South. Since the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850 to appease Southern slaveholders, the North was no longer safe for freedom seekers: this law enabled slave catchers to kidnap formerly enslaved and free people of color and send them into slavery. Conductors on the Underground Railroad like Harriet Tubman had to guide people north of the border, to Canada, for true freedom.



A map of the United States from 1856 showing free states in red and slave states in blue



31-Star United States Flag

The 31-star flag was used by the United States for seven years: from 1851, after California was granted statehood, to 1858, when Minnesota was admitted to the Union. Three presidents served under this flag: Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, and James Buchanan. This was the thirteenth iteration of the United States’ “stars and stripes” since the nation was founded.



The 31-star flag used from 1851-1858



Joe Bailey

Josiah "Joe" Bailey was 29 years old when he fled from enslavement in 1856. He had been enslaved by William Hughlett in Talbot County, Maryland, and was considered to be a valuable worker.

However, after Joe experienced a particularly vicious beating at the hands of his enslavers, he set his heart on escape. Yet, despite the violence he would endure if he stayed, this could not have been an easy decision for him to make, as he left behind his wife, Ann Maria, and three children: Ellen, little Ann Maria, and Isabella. Not only would this guilt have weighed heavily on him during his journey north, but Hughlett had placed a massive \$1500 bounty on his capture and safe return.

As he had a distinctive scar under his left eye, Joe became increasingly anxious over the course of the journey of being recognized and apprehended. As the train approached the Suspension Bridge, he froze with fear, no matter how hard Tubman tried to cheer him up.

But when the train reached the Canadian side, Joe was quickly overcome with the realization of what had happened, rejoicing loudly and passionately. "Glory to God and Jesus too," he exclaimed, "one more soul is safe!"



TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.—Ran away from the subscriber, on Saturday night, November 15th, 1856, **JOSIAH and WILLIAM BAILEY**, and **PETER PENNINGTON**. Joe is about 5 feet 10 inches in height, of a chesnut color, bald head, with a remarkable scar on one of his cheeks, not positive on which it is, but think it is on the left, under the eye; has intelligent countenance, active and well made. He is about 28 years old. Bill is of a darker color, about 5 feet 8 inches in height, stammers a little when confused, well made and older than Joe; well dressed, but may have pulled kearsey on over their other clothes. Peter is smaller than either the others, about 25 years of age, dark chesnut color, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high.

A reward of fifteen hundred dollars will be given to any person who will apprehend the said Joe Bailey and lodge him safely in the jail at Easton, Talbot co., Md., and \$300 for Bill and \$800 for Peter.

**W. R. HUGHLETT,
JOHN C. HENRY,
T. WRIGHT.**

Trappe, Talbot co., Md.. Nov. 18th, 1856. n22-9t*1

Newspaper advertisement placed in the Baltimore Sun after Joe, William, and Peter escaped



William Bailey

William "Bill" Bailey was Joe Bailey's older brother. In 1856, he was 32 years old and was enslaved by John Henry in Talbot County, Maryland. After Joe committed to escaping Maryland, Bill agreed to go with him, as he likewise could no longer bear the abuse of his enslavers. Like Joe, Bill had a family of his own that he was forced to leave behind: his wife and four young children.

branches of the human family. Some of his letters, embracing his views, plans and suggestions, were so encouraging and sensible, that the Committee was in the habit of showing them to friendly persons, and indeed, extracts of some of his letters were deemed of sufficient importance to publish. One alone, taken from many letters received from him, must here suffice to illustrate his intelligence and efforts as a fugitive and citizen in Canada.

HAMILTON, C. W., August 9th, 1856.

Mr. Wm. Still.—Dear Friend:—I take this opportunity of writing you these few lines to inform you of my health, which is good at present, &c. * * * * *

I was talking to you about going to Liberia, when I saw you last, and did intend to start this fall, but I since looked at the condition of the colored people in Canada. I thought I would try to do something for their elevation as a nation, to place them in the proper position to stand where they ought to stand. In order to do this, I have undertaken to get up a military company amongst them. They laughed at me to undertake such a thing; but I did not relax my energies. I went and had an interview with Major J. T. Gilson, told him what my object was, he encouraged me to go on, saying that he would do all he could for the accomplishment of my object. He referred to *Sir Allan McNab, &c.* * * * * * I took with me Mr. J. H. Hill to see him—he told me that it should be done, and required us to write a petition to the *Governor General*, which has been done. * * * * * The company is already organized. Mr. Howard was elected Captain; J. H. Hill, 1st Lieutenant; Hezekiah Hill, Ensign; Robert Jones, 1st Sergeant. The company's name is, Queen Victoria's Rifle Guards. You may, by this, see what I have been doing since I have been in Canada. When we receive our appointments by the Government. I will send by express, my daguerreotype in uniform.

My respects, &c. &c.,

ROBERT JONES.

HEAVY REWARD.



TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.—Ran away from the subscriber, on Saturday night, November 15th, 1856, Josiah and William Bailey, and Peter Pennington. Joe is about 5 feet 10 inches in height, of a chestnut color, bald head, with a remarkable scar on one of his cheeks, not positive on which it is, but think it is on the left, under the eye, has intelligent countenance, active, and well-made. He is about 28 years old. Bill is of a darker color, about 5 feet 8 inches in height, stammers a little when confused, well-made, and older than Joe, well dressed, but may have pulled keasney on over their other clothes. Peter is smaller than either the others, about 25 years of age, dark chestnut color, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high.

A reward of fifteen hundred dollars will be given to any person who will apprehend the said Joe Bailey, and lodge him safely in the jail at Easton, Talbot Co., Md., and \$300 for Bill and \$300 for Peter.

W. H. HUGHLETT,
JOHN C. HENRY,
T. WRIGHT.

When this arrival made its appearance, it was at first sight quite evident that one of the company was a man of more than ordinary parts, both physically and mentally. Likewise, taking them individually, their appearance and bearing tended largely to strengthen the idea that the spirit of freedom was rapidly gaining ground in the minds of the slaves, despite the

efforts of the slave-holders to keep them in darkness. In company with the three men, for whom the above large reward was offered, came a woman by the name of Eliza Nokey.

As soon as the opportunity presented itself, the Active Committee feeling an unusual desire to hear their story, began the investigation by inquiring as to the cause of their escape, etc., which brought simple and homely but earnest answers from each. These answers afforded the best possible means of seeing Slavery in its natural, practical workings—of obtaining such testimony and representations of the vile system, as the most eloquent orator or able pen might labor in vain to make clear and convincing, although this arrival had obviously been owned by men of high standing. The fugitives themselves innocently stated that one of the masters, who was in the habit of flogging adult females, was a “moderate man.” Josiah Bailey was the leader of this party, and he appeared well-qualified for this position. He was about twenty-nine years of age, and in no particular physically, did he seem to be deficient. He was likewise civil and polite in his manners, and a man of good common sense. He was held and oppressed by William H. Hughlett, a farmer and dealer in ship timber, who had besides invested in slaves to the number of forty head. In his habits he was generally taken for a “moderate” and “fair” man, “though he was in the habit of flogging the slaves—females as well as males,” after they had arrived at the age of maturity. This was not considered strange or cruel in Maryland. Josiah was the “foreman” on the place, and was entrusted with the management of hauling the ship-timber, and through harvesting and busy seasons was required to lead in the fields. He was regarded as one of the most valuable hands in that part of the country, being valued at \$2,000. Three weeks before he escaped, Joe was “stripped naked,” and “flogged” very cruelly by his master, simply because he had a dispute with one of the fellow-servants, who had stolen, as Joe alleged, seven dollars of his hard earnings. This flogging, produced in Joe’s mind, an unswerving determination to leave Slavery or die: to try his luck on the Underground Rail Road at all hazards. The very name of Slavery, made the fire fairly burn in his bones. Although a married man, having a wife and three children (owned by Hughlett), he was not prepared to let his affection for them keep him in chains—so Anna Maria, his wife, and his children Ellen, Anna Maria, and Isabella, were shortly widowed and orphaned by the slave lash.

WILLIAM BAILEY was owned by John C. Henry, a large slave-holder, and a very “hard” one, if what William alleged of him was true. His story certainly had every appearance of truthfulness. A recent brutal flogging had “stiffened his back-bone,” and furnished him with his excuse for not being willing to continue in Maryland, working his strength away to enrich his master, or the man who claimed to be such. The memorable flogging, however, which caused him to seek flight on the Underground Rail Road,

Excerpt from William Still's "The Underground Railroad," describing the group's escape from Maryland



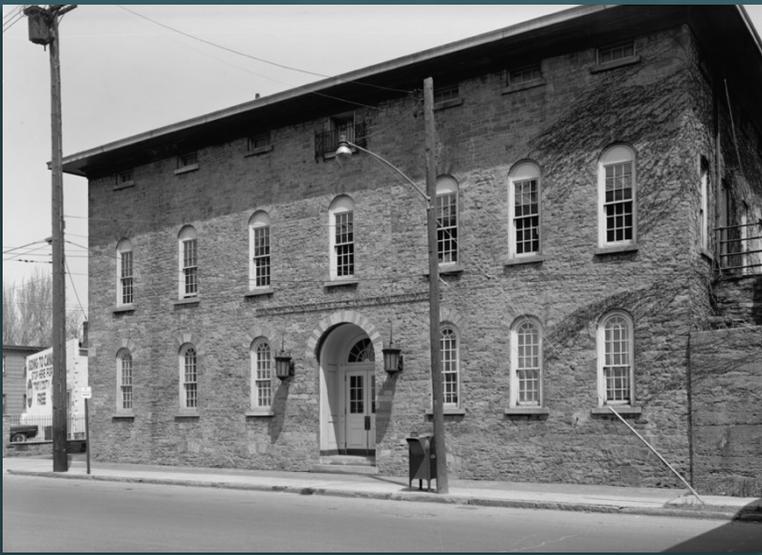
Peter Pennington

Peter Pennington was the youngest member of the group at 25. He had been enslaved by Turpin Wright of Dorchester County, Maryland, probably working in the fields or fisheries. After he and the others reached Canada, Peter eventually ended up in Sarnia, Ontario, where he spent the rest of his life. When he died in 1884, he donated his entire life's savings to the town's churches and the local library. Today, people in the town still celebrate his life and his contributions to their community.



Eliza Manokey

Eliza Manokey had initially fled from slavery in January 1856, over ten months before the group gathered in mid-November. She was around 42 years old when she escaped from her enslaver, Ann Greaves, who had separated Eliza from her free husband and two children. In the months before she was able to join Tubman and the others on their route northward, Eliza was mostly alone apart from some help from local free African Americans, bravely facing the challenges of hunger, climate, and disease.



The U.S. Customhouse built in 1863



Union Train Depot

For freedom seekers traveling to Canada via the Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge, this was the last stop on their journey. As the town grew, attracting more visitors and processing more international commerce, it became necessary to expand the capabilities of the station. In 1863, the U.S. Customhouse was built near the bridge, becoming a hub of activity as more bridges were built across the river and traffic increased. Today, the first floor of the Customhouse building is home to the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center.



New York Central Railroad Locomotive

Although the Underground Railroad does not refer to a physical railway system, trains were used from time to time, including for this particular journey. Harriet Tubman and her group most likely arrived at the Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge around 10:00 AM on the morning of December 1, 1856, onboard a train operated by the New York Central Railroad. The train would have been powered by a standard 4-4-0 locomotive of the era, most likely burning wood for fuel. Tubman and the others would have left Rochester at about 6:00 AM onboard the Emigrant Line, after having received funds from the Rochester Ladies Anti-Slavery Society.



"The General," a standard 4-4-0 locomotive of the era



Railroad Passenger Car

Travel by railroad was becoming increasingly popular by the 1850s. As more track was laid and locomotive technology improved, so did the design of railroad passenger cars. Standard cars measured about 40 feet in length and could carry about 50 people when full—small by today's standards, as modern cars can measure over 90 feet long and carry over 80 people. Most had eight wheels, which were divided into two "trucks" of four wheels each at either end of the car. These trucks could swivel independently, greatly improving a car's ability to travel on curving tracks. Many of these cars had narrow, reversible seating, allowing passengers to face either direction while also allowing cars to be more compact.



The interior of the passenger car as seen in THE MOVEMENT: HARRIET TUBMAN

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