

LINCOLN'S SPRINGFIELD: THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD



Spring Creek Series

Richard E. Hart
Springfield, Illinois

**Lincoln's Springfield
The Underground Railroad**

Front Cover Photograph: Springfield African-American Railroad Conductor, William H. K. Donnegan The photographer is unknown.

Back Cover Photograph: .

Through its programs and publications, the Sangamon County Historical Society strives to collect and preserve the rich heritage of the Sangamon Valley. As both a destination and a crossroads of American expansion, its stories give insight into the growth of the nation.

All proceeds from the sale of this pamphlet will benefit the Sangamon County Historical Society.

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Lincoln's Springfield: The Underground Railroad
Spring Creek Series.
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Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

FORWARD

The history of the Underground Railroad in Springfield has been a well-kept secret, just like the names of many of the conductors who guided escaped slaves to their freedom. Anyone reading about the Railroad in Illinois will know that Springfield has been noted on maps as a stop. However, very little detailed information is available about the stations located in the city. References to the Railroad can be found buried amongst biographies, newspapers and histories of the city. Through his research, Richard Hart has assembled these fragments of information together to present a better understanding of the Underground Railroad in Springfield. From the well-known abolitionists of the community of Farmington to the relatively unknown African-American conductors of Springfield, the stories of men who risked their lives for this cause are profiled here. The story of the Underground Railroad in Springfield can now be told.

Curtis Mann

Watermills of the Sangamo Country, Curtis Mann, Under the Prairie Foundation, Popular Series # 1, 2004, pp. 18-19.

1866 and 1869 Springfield City Directory.

The Public Patron, Springfield, Illinois, May 1898, p. 3.

The Sociogenesis of a Race Riot, Springfield, Illinois in 1908, Roberta Senechal, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1990, pp. 43-46, 96, 99, 131, 136, 138-39, 169-71, and 174.

The Springfield Race Riot of 1908, Deepak Madala, Jennifer Jordan, and August Appleton,
<http://library.thinkquest.org/2986/Killed.html>. Other interesting web sites concerning Donnegan and the 1908 Springfield Race Riot are: Ruth Ellis's Tale of Two Cities: A Modern Fairy Tale in Black & White,
<http://www.keithboykin.com/author/ruth1.html>. Under God, The Dark Side of Lincoln's Home: Springfield Riot (August 1908), Toby Mac and Michael Tait, Bethany House, http://www.cbn.com/special/BlackHistory/UnderGod_Springfieldriot.asp.

Brown was listed as living at the same address in 1873, 1874 and 1875. *1873-74 City Directory*. *1875 City Directory*.

1881 History, p. 736.

This photograph was taken by Springfield photographer Frederick W. Ingmire and is from the collection of Lance Ingmire, Pittsford, New York.

1881 History, p. 736. *Unpublished manuscript of William Ray Wood*, 800 1/2 South Spring Street, Springfield, Illinois, undated, pp. 1-2, Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, Springfield, Illinois.

Journal, September 4, 1906.

1870 United States Census.

The Namesake Town: A Centennial History of Lincoln, Illinois, Raymond Dooley, editor, Lincoln Centennial publication, p. 33: "Memoirs of African American Harriet Dyer Brummel." Harriet Dyer Brummel was the sister of Billie Dyer, the subject of the story *Billie Dyer and Other Stories* by William Maxwell.

1850 United States Census.

1860 United States Census, p. 454. *1860 Springfield City Directory*.

1870 United States Census. *Springfield City Directory, for 1869-70*, R. L. Dudley & Co., Publishers, Springfield, Illinois, Daily State Register Steam Printing House, 1869.

Lincoln Daily Courier, Lincoln, Illinois, September 3, 1900. They lived on West 8th Street at the time of Harriet's death on March 5, 1897. At the time of Aaron's death on September 2, 1900, he was living at the corner of 10th and Madison Streets. Their funerals were conducted from the African Methodist Episcopal Church at 910 Broadway and they were buried in Union Cemetery, Lincoln, Illinois. Death Record, State of Illinois Department of Public Health, Springfield, Illinois.

Billie Dyer and Other Stories, William Maxwell, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1992, pp. 6-7.

Oak Ridge Cemetery Records, 1441 Monument Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62702. Jamieson Jenkins is buried in Lot 16, Block 5. William Donnegan is buried in Lot 83, S 1/2, Block 5. Henry Brown is buried in Lot 118, Block 5.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

For a number of years I have been curious about the possible presence of the underground railroad in Lincoln's Springfield. As a child on Sunday afternoon drives west of Springfield, my parents pointed out the small village of Farmingdale and told me that there had once been an underground railroad station there. I later learned that in the 19th century, Farmingdale was known as Farmington and that indeed its reputation as an active station on the underground railroad could be documented.

The story of the underground railroad at Farmington began on October 25, 1833, when a colony of fifty-two New Englanders, many of them abolitionists, arrived at Springfield after a ten-week journey from St. Lawrence County in upstate New York. The *Sangamo Journal* reported on their arrival.

Emigrants are coming by thousands into Illinois and from all quarters of the Union. On Friday last fifteen large wagons from St. Lawrence County, N. York, loaded with emigrants, arrived in our village, and drove up in front of the market house, in grand style. These emigrants had been about ten weeks on the journey, and enjoyed good health during the time. They design to settle in Sangamo County--to which we bid them welcome.

The day following their Springfield arrival, the colony moved eight miles west to the Sangamon River village of Sangamo Town. They spent the winter there and in the spring moved a few miles west to an open prairie where they settled, purchased farm land and established the community of Farmington.

The colony was representative of the New England strain of early Illinois settlers who in the 1830's and 40's settled in a random pattern of dots across the central and northern Illinois prairies. Their customs and culture contrasted sharply with that of the earlier settlers in Central Illinois who had come from the upland South. In addition to being farmers, some of them were teachers, ministers, abolitionists and conductors on the underground railroad. In September 1837, seventeen men of the colony expressed

indemnify ourselves against any of the above proceedings that may have been conjured up in this association;

That we deem it an injury to our present established schools, and that it will hinder the energy of those who are willing to aid, and have already aided in the support of our respective schools; and that we do not wish to give our aid in any measure that will hinder our progress that has already begun;

That we, as a portion of the colored population, representing its claims, feel a deep, very deep interest, in our schools, and think it the only sure way to redeem ourselves from the bondage we are now in, sympathize with our race, and will do every thing that is in our power to educate our children by our exertions, and without the boldness to ask aid from the people of the State;

And that in examining the Minutes of the Association, we notice an article proposing to establish a press, which will be attached to the Institution, and put into operation as soon as the amount of funds necessary for its support can be raised. In regard to this we can say, that it reminds us of the bill which was handed into the Legislature two years ago--coming, in part, from the same source; and consequently we do not feel willing to embark in any such enterprize; ner shall we.

After reading the above, what patriot, as he is called, can enlist in the resolutions which that Association have gotten up, without the consent of any persons but themselves?

James Reynolds,	David Callyhan,
Gilbert Johnson,	Isaiah Chambers,
Michael Millington,	Wm. McCoslin,
John Handsom,	J. W. Hill,
Aaron Dyre [Dyer],	A. J. Petete,
John Lee,	Spencer Donnigan,
Andrew Broadwaters,	James Hendrix,
William Lee,	Wm. Donnigan,
Patterson Bannister,	George Burras,
Benjamin Williams,	James Blanks.

Illinois Capitol Illustrated, Illinois State Register, 1898, p. 148.

Springfield African Methodist Episcopal Church, east side of Fourth Street, between Gemini (Carpenter) and Madison Streets. 1858 Sides Map, Wooden rectangle and small wooden rectangle at rear: Name: "African Church". Lot 2 and S. 1/2 of Lot 3, Cook's (Edwards?) Addition. *1881 History*, p. 588: "...the colored children were compelled to attend school in a shanty in the rear of the African church, on North Fourth street" *Journal*, September 6, 1859, p. 3, cl. 1. *Journal*, April 21, 1860, p. 3, cl. 1. *1860 Springfield City Directory*.

1871 History of Springfield, Illinois, John Carroll Power, p. 49: references Starne and Shutt's Mine known as the West End Shaft. *1872 Perspective Map of Springfield, Illinois*, Beck & Pauli, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The West Coal Shaft is marked with the number 39 on the map index.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Journal, January 22, 1850, p. 3, cl. 1.

Journal, January 23, 1850.

Minutes of Session and Church Register, Second Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1835-1867; these records are archived at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Walnut and Edwards Streets, Springfield, Illinois.

Washington Star, February 12, 1861. *Memories of Lincoln*, Thomas D. Jones, New York, Press of the Pioneers, 1934, p. 16. Monaghan, *Diplomat*, p. 28.

811 Jefferson according to the 1875 City Directory. *Babeuf's Directory of Springfield, Illinois for the Year 1875*, Third Edition, Compiled and published by Julius Babeuf, Springfield, Illinois, Illinois Journal Company, Printers, 1875 pp. 90, 160 and 162. (Hereinafter referred to as "*1875 City Directory*.") *Gould's Springfield Directory for 1873-4*, Springfield, David B. Goluld & Co., Publishers, Journal Company, Printers. (Hereinafter referred to as "*1873-4 City Directory*.") *Directory of Springfield, Sangamon County, , by Township, For the Years 1874-75*, Compiled and Published by Julius Babeuf, Springfield, Illinois Journal Co., Printers, 1874. (Hereinafter referred to as "*1874-75 City Directory*.")

On Monday, November 8, 1852, Springfield African Americans met and adopted a resolution saying "...we must speak in bold terms." The resolution opposed the Wood River Colored Baptist Association's proposal for separate, state-funded colored schools, and stated that they would not ask for state funded support for separate, colored schools. The resolution was signed by 20 Springfield African American men, including Aaron Dyer and William Donnegan.

Springfield, Nov. 8, 1852.

At a meeting of the colored citizens of this city, on the 8th instant, after having deliberated over the matter concerning our interests, common schools, etc. had occasion to notice the following, which we must speak of in bold terms; and which, after a vote was taken, was unanimously adopted:

The undersigned having just noticed an article written for the paper entitled, the "Western Citizens," by the "Wood River Colored Baptist Association," and also the Minutes of the same, wish to make the following reply:

Whereas the "Wood River Colored Baptist Association," having met at Jacksonville, Illinois, devised ways and means for the purpose of establishing a system of common school education, under the cloak of the colored people of the State of Illinois;

We, as a portion of the colored people of this State, in Springfield, do not desire any such system of common school education, under the name of one distinct sect or denomination; nor will we join in with it; nor give our support to it; but will do every thing that is in our power to

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

their strong opposition to slavery by signing Elijah P. Lovejoy's call for Illinois' first anti-slavery convention to be held at Upper Alton on October 26th. Four of the Farmington signers, attended the convention. At least four of the colony, Dr. John Lyman, Stephen Child, Luther Ransom and the Rev. Billious Pond, and several of their neighbors, Jay Slater and the Rev. Thomas Galt, became active conductors on the underground railroad at the Farmington station.

In 1841, Samuel Willard, a 20 year-old Jacksonville, Illinois abolitionist, had his first experience in assisting a runaway slave move north on the underground railroad. Willard's written account of that adventure, entitled *My First Adventure With a Fugitive Slave: The story of it and how it failed*, acknowledged that he was not familiar with the Farmington station on the underground railroad at that time. "It seemed to my father [Julius] that the easiest thing for us would be to take her [the fugitive slave] to some one on the line of what was known as the Under-Ground Rail-Road. But we knew nothing about it. In later adventures of this sort we went direct to what was then called Farmington, now Farmingdale, near Springfield. ... My father, as well as myself, helped many fugitives afterwards."

Two years later, Willard, who was now a student at Illinois College, successfully assisted a fugitive slave move along the underground railroad from Jacksonville to Farmington. His written account entitled *My Second Adventure with A Fugitive Slave: and how it was won*, told of secreting runaway slave Jack out of Jacksonville and on to the Farmington underground railroad station.

"A few days later the conductors of the Under-Ground R.R. were ready. Lewis knew the way to Laurie's so I went with him one night to take the negro over the next stage. We had to come back to the Movastar bridge, and then to take an oblique course across fields thru groves and thickets to a certain school-house a mile or more east of the town, on the old railroad track and near the high road to Springfield. On the way Jack sighed and said, "it's a long way to Canada!" We assented. Once a little noise in the bush near us startled him:

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

out came his pistol and I heard the click of the cocking. When we struck the railroad, we were near the rendezvous: there were my father [Julius A. Willard] and [William] Chauncey Carter on horses, leading a third horse for the negro: he was soon mounted and the trio were on the way to Farmington; while two over-tired men trudged back to College, but I had to meet my classes next day as usual."

As a result of this activity, Samuel was arrested and charged with assisting in the escape of a runaway slave. His case went to the Supreme Court and he eventually plead guilty and was fined \$1.00.

In a later written reminiscence, Samuel Willard identified the Rev. Bilious Pond, Dr. John Lyman and Luther Ransom as among his active allies on the Sangamon County underground railroad. Helen Blankmeyer's 1935 history, *The Sangamon Country*, contains a brief account of the underground railroad and also identifies the conductors at the Farmington station.

In Sangamon county there were at least two of these [underground railroad] stations near Farmingdale. Dr. John Lyman and a few of his neighbors (including Jay Slater, Stephen Child, Luther Ransom, Rev. Billious Pond, Rev. Gault, and probably others), agreed to help each other hide any slaves brought to them, and to take them further on their way to freedom.

So who were these men that Willard and Blankmeyer deemed conductors on the underground railroad at Farmington?

Dr. John Lyman, a New England doctor, was born on April 2, 1780, at Lebanon, New Hampshire. He married there to Martha Storrs and attended medical lectures at Dartmouth College. He practiced of early Illinois settlers who in the 1830's and 40's settled in a random pattern of dots across the central and northern Illinois prairies. Their customs and culture contrasted sharply with that of the earlier settlers in Central Illinois who had come from the upland South. In addition to being farmers, some of them were teachers, ministers, abolitionists and conductors on the under-

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

former, and became famous as a supporter of abolition. In Boston in 1837, Phillips delivered an address rebuking those who upheld the mob murder of Elijah P. Lovejoy. Phillips' address became one of the most famous speeches in history for its protest against mob rule. Unyielding in his opposition to slavery, Phillips gave up his law practice in 1837 to join William Lloyd Garrison's group of abolitionists. He fought courageously against any individual, institution, or law that he thought prevented abolition. Phillips favored ending slavery even at the cost of breaking up the Union. He severely criticized the Lincoln's administration during the Civil War.

Past & Present of the City of Springfield & Sangamon County, Illinois, 1904, Joseph Wallace, V. 1, p. 220.

Zebina Eastman, *History of the Anti-Slavery Agitation, and the Growth of the Liberty and Republican Parties in the State of Illinois*, in *Discovery and Conquests of the North-west, With the History of Chicago*, R. Blanchard, Wheaton, 1879, p. 671.

Jamerson Jenkins recorded his Certificate of Freedom with the Sangamon County Recorder of Deeds, Deed Record Book 4, p. 21, on March 28, 1846.

State of North Carolina
Wake County this 12th April 1838

Dear Sir certify that the son of the above Nancy Jenkins was known by me to be a freeman of colour and further certify that I gave him a permit to leave this Country for him to make a visit to Gilford County some time in the summer of 1835.

Ezra Gill
1850 United States Census, p. 194. *1860 United States Census*, p. 122. *Williams' Springfield Directory, City Guide and Business Mirror, for 1860-61*, Compiled by C. S. Williams, Springfield, Illinois, Johnson & Bradford, Booksellers and Stationers, West Side of Public Square, 1860. (Hereinafter referred to as "1860-61 City Directory.") *Springfield City Directory, For 1857-'58*, compiled by B. Winters, & Co., published by B. Winters & Co., Springfield, S. H. Jameson & Co., Printers, Republican Office, 1857. (Hereinafter referred to as "1857-58 City Directory.") *Power*, p. 303. *Historical Base Map, Lincoln Home, Springfield, Illinois*, Edwin C. Bearss, Division of History office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, November 30, 1969, pp. 84-86. On April 9, 1861, William LaRue Flourville, the son of William "Billy the Barber" and Phoebe Florville, married 17 year-old Nancy Jenkins, the daughter of Jameson and Elizabeth Pelham Jenkins. *Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1763-1900*, 00001245 Sangamon, Illinois State Archives, website: <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/marriage.html>

Herndon's Informants, Letters, Interviews, and Statements about Abraham Lincoln, Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis, editors, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1998, p. 597. Jesse W. Weik interview of Margaret Ryan, October 27, 1886, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Weik Papers, box 2, Memorandum Book 1.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

debt owed Speed, Lincoln reported that the debt was to be paid from all rent due a Mr. Jewett after the previous January 12th. Lincoln wrote, "The rent is for the house Ransom did live in just above the Globe [the Globe Tavern where the Lincoln's then lived]..."

The reference to "Ransom" is most likely Luther N. Ransom and the reference to "Jewett" was probably Benjamin F. Jewett. A review of the records of the Sangamon County Recorder of Deeds records reveals that on March 3, 1838, Benjamin F. Jewett purchased property at the northwest corner of First and Washington Streets, just three blocks northwest from the Globe Tavern. Would that be "just above the Globe"? Was this Ransom's boarding house referred to in the 1841 handbill for the runaway slaves?

In August 1844, Luther's wife, Zerviah, died, and Luther and his two sons moved to Utopia, Ohio on the Ohio River. There he joined a group of 250 Frenchmen who were members of a communal society known as the Fourierite Association. He married there and he and his new wife had one child, Albert. In December 1847, the Ohio River flooded and a very large brick building, owned and occupied by the Fourierites, was flooded and collapsed killing 100 persons, including Luther's wife and two eldest children. Albert survived.

In 1848, Ransom and his baby son left the Fourierites and joined the Shakers at Lebanon, Ohio. He remained with the Shakers until August, 1859, when he and his son, Albert, moved west to Lawrence, Kansas, where Luther lived until his death in July, 1872.

The Underground Railroad, Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois, 1901, transcribed by Kim Torp. <http://genealogytrails.com/ill/undergroundroad.html>

Minutes of Session and Church Register, Second Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1835-1867, records in possession of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Illinois. (Hereinafter "Minutes of the Second Presbyterian Church.")

Speech of Clinton L. Conkling to the Members of the Presbyterian Synod of Illinois, Springfield, Illinois, October 19, 1916, pp. 8-9, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

The Story of Westminster, Frances Fowler Allen, Springfield, Illinois, October 7, 1956, p. 6.

Power, p. 788.

Here I Have Lived, Paul M. Angle, The Abraham Lincoln Association, Springfield, Illinois, 1935, p. 27.

Power, p. 788.

The Springfield signers were: Erastus Wright, Z. Hallock, E. B. Hawley, R. P. Abel, Roswell Abel, W. M. Cowgill, Isaac Bancroft, Jr., J. C. Bancroft, Oliver B. Culver, J. B. Watson, J. Stephenson, C. B. Francis, J. G. Rawson, Joseph Taney [Torrey], Edmund R. Wiley, James Pratt, Josiah Francis, Elisha Taber, Geo. N. Kendall, S. Conant, E. and W. Thayer.

Genius.

Wendell Phillips (1811-1884) of Boston, Massachusetts, was an orator and re-

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

ground railroad. In September 1837, seventeen men of the colony expressed their strong opposition to slavery by signing Elijah P. Lovejoy's call for Illinois' first anti-slavery convention to be held at Upper Alton on October 26th. Four of the Farmington signers, attended the convention. At least four of the colony, Dr. John Lyman, Stephen Child, Luther Ransom and the Rev. Billious Pond, and several of their neighbors, Jay Slater and the Rev. Thomas Galt, became active conductors on the underground railroad at the Farmington station.

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Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

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So who were these men that Willard and Blankmeyer deemed conductors on the underground railroad at Farmington?

Dr. John Lyman, a New England doctor, was born on April 2, 1780, at Lebanon, New Hampshire. He married there to Martha Storrs and attended medical lectures at Dartmouth College. He practiced medicine in New Haven Township, Vermont, and during the War of 1812, was an Army surgeon. In 1824, John moved with his family to Potsdam, New York, and in 1833, came to Farmington with the colony of fifty-two. John signed the call for and attended Elijah Lovejoy's 1837 anti-slavery convention at

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Journey to the Underground Railroad in Floyd County, Indiana,

Pamela R. Peters,

<http://www.statelib.lib.in.us/www/ihb/ugrr/pampeters.html>.

Communicants, p. 69.

Genius.

Power, p. 593.

Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln Association, 1953, v. I, pp. 323-324.

The handbill is in the Henry Horner Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

\$200 REWARD

Ran off from the subscriber on Thursday morning, 14th inst, one Negro Woman, named Rittea or Henrietta Jones, with her three children, Martha, Sarah and James. The woman is large and fleshy, of a dark complexion and very sullen countenance; the oldest daughter, Martha is six years old, the second Sarah is 4, and the son James is 2. The children are of a lighter color than their mother.

The husband of Rittea, Nicholas Jones, is a free dark mulatto about thirty-five years old, slightly spotted with the small-pox, about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, and quite impertinent when spoken to. Said Nicholas had a white man at Alton, to carry his family to Carlinville Ill. in a two horse box wagon, covered with white linen or cotton.

I will give One hundred dollars for the delivery of Nicholas in St. Louis, if taken out of the State, or fifty dollars if apprehended in it, or the latter sum if confined in any Jail in the United States, so that I can get him. I will also give One hundred dollars for the delivery of Rittea and her children in St. Louis, if taken out of this State, or fifty dollars if apprehended in it, or the latter sum if confined in any Jail in the United States so that I can get them. In addition to the above reward all reasonable expenses will be paid by me.

St. Louis, Mo.

JOHN FINNLY.

P. S. Since the above was written I have been informed that Nicholas, his wife and three children were seen at L. N. Ransom's boarding house, at Springfield Ill., on yesterday morning.

Springfield, October 18th, 1841.

On May 18, 1843, Abraham Lincoln wrote a letter to Joshua F. Speed, part of which addressed business matters. In explaining his attempts to collect on a

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

My Second Adventure with A Fugitive Slave: and How It Was Won, Samuel Willard, typewritten manuscript, no date, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Manuscript Section, Springfield, Illinois.

Beecher Hall added to national Underground Railroad network. http://www.ic.edu/admissions/news/news_story.asp?iNewsID=775&strBack=%2Fadmissions%2Fnews%2Fnews_archive.asp

The Martyrdom of Lovejoy. The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom, Wilbur Siebert, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1898. A book review by Samuel Willard published in "The-Dial" of Chicago.

The Sangamon Country, Helen Van Cleave Blankmeyer, Sangamon County Historical Society, 1965, Springfield, Illinois, pp. 126-128.

History of the Early Settlers of Sangamon County, Illinois, 1876, John Carroll Power, Springfield, Illinois, pp. 467-468. (Hereinafter referred to as "Power.")

The Genius of Universal Emancipation, an abolitionist newspaper published by Benjamin Lundy at Hennepin, Illinois, reported on February 26, 1839, that the Sangamon County delegates to the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society annual meeting were: Thomas Galt, L. N. Ransom [*Luther N. Ransom*], E. Wright [*Erastus Wright*], J. W. Little, and John Lyman. Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois, Newspaper Section: a few issues for this period are on microfilm. (Hereinafter referred to as "*Genius*.")

James Asahel Stone (1842-1934) *The Memoirs of James Asahel Stone*, compiled by Marilyn Reed Pierson, North Ridgeville, Ohio, September 2001, from "diary pages typed in 1926-27 by James A. Stone," p. 22, Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, Springfield, Illinois.

The house may be reached by going west on Route 97 (Jefferson Street) from Springfield to Bradfordton; 2 miles from the intersection of Jefferson Street and Veterans Parkway. At Bradfordton, continue west for one mile on Route 97 to the first road on the right (north), Lincoln Trail. The intersection of Lincoln Trail and Route 97 is marked as 5.5 West and 1.95 North, being the distance from the intersection of First and Washington Streets in Springfield. Turn right on Lincoln Trail and go one mile north. The house sits back on the left (west) side of the road.

Power, p. 198.

Communicant Register of Farmington-Farmingdale United Presbyterian Church, Mary E. Stone, typed manuscript, Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, Springfield, Illinois, p. 82. (Hereinafter referred to as "*Communicants*.")

Lincoln Day By Day, A Chronology 1809-1865, Earl Schenck Miers, Editor-in-Chief, Morningside, Dayton, Ohio, 1991, p. 253. (Hereinafter hereinafter referred to as "*Day By Day*").

Day by Day, p. 259. *Power*, pp. 576-577: Marvin B. Pond, born on November 3, 1807, in New York, married there and came to Sangamon County in 1837. In 1839, he moved to Menard County, where he died in July 1871.

Genius.

Farmingdale Presbyterian Church website,
<http://www.farmpreschurch.org/History.dsp>.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Upper Alton. On February 26, 1839, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, an abolitionist newspaper published at Hennepin, Illinois, reported that John Lyman was one of five Sangamon County delegates to the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society annual meeting.

A neighbor described "Dr. Lyman's Underground Depot" at Farmington.

Down the hill near the road and near the branch, he [Dr. John Lyman] had a little shanty, and a family of darkies living in it. It had the name of Dr. Lyman's Under-ground Depot. He was accused of secreting run-away slaves, on their way to Canada. It was said that the southern slave holders offered a thousand dollars for the Dr.'s scalp.

Jay Slater, a farmer, was born on February 25, 1795, in Massachusetts. He was married on March 12, 1826, in Sangamon County, to Lucretia Carman, who was born in 1806, in New York. Jay Slater was a conductor on the underground railroad and his home, a small neat brick house that still stands just a short distance from Farmington, was most likely an active station on the underground railroad.



Residence of Jay Slater on North Lincoln Trail,
Gardner Township, Sangamon County, Illinois

Stephen Child, a farmer and teacher, was a New Englander, born on June 12, 1802, in Waitsfield, Vermont. In 1820,

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Stephen moved to Potsdam, New York, where he taught school. He married Dr. John Lyman's daughter, Hannah, and they had two children while living in Potsdam. Stephen and his family came to Sangamon County in 1833 as a part of the colony of fifty-two and settled near Farmington. John was a conductor on the underground railroad who helped hundreds of runaway slaves move north from the Farmington station. John Carroll Powers' 1876 *Early Settlers of Sangamon County*, described Stephen Child:

Mr. [Stephen] Child was a farmer and teacher all his life. He was an original abolitionist, and as an agent of the underground railroad, he assisted hundreds of colored people in their flight from bondage. He conducted a company of twenty-one at one time. It was his custom to go as far as he could travel in one night and return, but on some occasions he has gone as far sixty miles, and then left them in the hands of friends who would conduct them onward. The last time the writer of this, conversed with Mr. Child, he expressed special satisfaction that he had assisted so many human beings on their way to freedom, and gratitude that he had lived to see the day that there was not a slave in the United States of America.

The Rev. Billious Pond, who acted as the pastor for the colony of fifty-two during their ten week journey from upstate New York, was a New Englander, born on June 26, 1781, in Plymouth, Connecticut. From 1842 to January 1844, Billious was pastor of the Farmington Presbyterian Church. Billious and his son, Marvin, were conductors on the underground railroad. On June 11, 1845, Abraham Lincoln appeared in the Menard County Circuit Court as an attorney for Marvin, who had been indicted for harboring a slave. The jury found Marvin not guilty.

Thomas Galt, a Presbyterian minister, was born on September 12, 1805, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He was educated at Jefferson College in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, and at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania. In 1834, he was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Ohio, and shortly thereafter married Sarah Happer. In the spring of 1835, Thomas and Sarah moved west to Peoria, Illinois where Thomas preached for a few months, and in the autumn of that year

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

ENDNOTES

- Illinois Place Names*, compiled by James N. Adams, Occasional Publications, Number 54, Illinois State Historical Society, Springfield, Illinois, 1969, p. 360.
- Here I Have Lived*, Paul M. Angle, The Abraham Lincoln Association, Springfield, Illinois, 1935. p. 40.
- The Farmington signers were: Peter Bates, Asahel Stone, Azel Lyman, Alvan Lyman, Harroldus Estabrook, Ezra Lyman, Bishop Seely, B.B. More, Jay Slater, H. P. Lyman, Oliver Bates, Stephen Child, O. L. Stone, A. S. Lyman, Joel Buckman, John Lyman, T. Galt.
- The Farmington attendees at the first Illinois anti-slavery convention held at Upper Alton on October 26, 1837 were: C. [Cornelius] Lyman, John Lyman, L. N. Ransom [Luther N. Ransom] and Thos. Galt [Thomas Galt].
- Doctor Samuel Willard was born on December 30, 1821 in Lunenburg, Essex County, Vermont. On the night of November 7 1837, he witnessed some of the events around the pro-slavery mob killing of Elijah P Lovejoy. *The Martyrdom of Lovejoy. An Account of the Life, Trials and Perils of Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy, Who Was Killed by a Pro-Slavery Mob, at Alton, Ill., on the Night of November 7, 1837. By an Eye-Witness*, Henry Tanner, Fergus Printing Co., Chicago, 1881. (Hereinafter referred to as "*The Martyrdom of Lovejoy*.") Samuel contributed several pages to Tanner's book. Samuel and his father, Julius A. Willard, were charged with assisting in the escape of a fugitive at Jacksonville, in 1843, while Samuel was a student in Illinois College. "The National Corporation Reporter," gave an account of this affair, together with a letter from Samuel, in which he states that, after protracted litigation, during which the case was carried to the Supreme Court, it was ended by his pleading guilty before Judge Samuel D. Lockwood, when he was fined one dollar and costs. He enlisted in the 97th Regiment of the Illinois Volunteers on September 5 1862, and acted as the surgeon for the regiment. He resided in Springfield Illinois from October 1863 to September 1870 when he moved to Chicago. Doctor Samuel Willard died on February 9 1913 in Chicago, Illinois. *The Underground Railroad, Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois*, 1901, transcribed by Kim Torp. <http://genealogytrails.com/ill/undergroundroad.html>
- My First Adventure with a Fugitive Slave: The Story of It and How It Failed*, Samuel Willard, typewritten manuscript, no date, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Manuscript Section, Springfield, Illinois.
- William Chauncy Carter was born in New Canaan, Connecticut, on April 2, 1820, and died in Jacksonville, Illinois, on December 9, 1896. At age thirteen, William was brought by his parents to Illinois. In the spring of 1834, the family located on a farm about four miles south of Jacksonville, where his father had purchased 80 acres. William graduated from Illinois College in 1845. For four years, he farmed and taught school near Jacksonville during the winter. He purchased a farm and spent his active life farming. William's barn was an underground railroad station. *Historical Encyclopedia Of Illinois & History Of Morgan County*, Munsell Publishing Company, publishers, 1906.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

days in Lincoln, Illinois and grandfather Aaron's underground railroad activities are immortalized in William Maxwell's short story, *Billie Dyer and Other Stories*.

Yes, there were a few brave souls in Lincoln's Springfield who took enormous personal risks to help runaway slaves move north from Springfield on the underground railroad. Lincoln knew these men to be underground railroad conductors as surely as he knew that one of them made his boots and another drove for him on his last Springfield carriage ride. Alas, he did not know that Rev. Brown would lead his horse in his final journey to Oak Ridge Cemetery, but he had to know that his friend Brown was also among those brave souls—African American conductors on the underground railroad at Springfield.

Jenkins, Donnegan and Brown are all buried close to one another in the "Colored Section" of Oak Ridge Cemetery, just across the way from their friend, Abraham Lincoln, and seven miles east of Farmington.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

moved to Springfield. On April 10, 1836, Thomas became the first pastor of the Farmington Presbyterian Church. He and Sarah lived one mile east of Farmington where they set apart three acres of ground for a church and a cemetery, now the Farmington Cemetery. Thomas signed the call for and attended Elijah Lovejoy's 1837 anti-slavery convention at Upper Alton. He was also was one of five Sangamon County delegates to the 1839 Illinois Anti-Slavery Society annual meeting.



Farmington Presbyterian Church and Parsonage

Thomas remained pastor at Farmington until April, 1842, when the Farmington Presbyterian Church split over the issue of slavery. The "Old School" advocates, who wanted a slow resolution of the slavery issue, retained control of the Farmington church. Thomas, a "New School" advocate who wanted the immediate abolition of slavery, resigned his pastorate, and in July 1842 became pastor of the Center Presbyterian Church, a "New School" Presbyterian church. Sangamon County's first anti-slavery convention was held at Center Church.

Coming back to Springfield from those Sunday afternoon drives, I imagined runaway slaves being taken in and hidden at Farmington and then transported in the dead of night to the next stop on the underground railroad. How noble these people were to

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

risk their all for the freedom of another soul and how brave the runaway slaves were to risk their lives to escape slavery. I wondered if there was anyone in Springfield, just eight miles east, who shared this nobility. Was there an underground railroad station in Springfield? If so, who were the conductors and where were the stations located? Was Lincoln aware of its presence?

Perfect answers to these questions will probably never be given. Success of the underground railroad rested upon a strict code of secrecy and it is difficult to find primary source materials on the underground railroad. The name of one underground conductor was often not known to the next conductor along the line. Because of the secrecy, the underground railroad's presence in Lincoln's Springfield has been shrouded in mystery.

Over the years, I have collected information that refers to Springfield's underground railroad. It is often a serendipitous experience as I will find something while researching an unrelated topic. When these random findings are pasted together, a picture emerges that leads one to the conclusion that there was an active underground railroad system in Springfield from at least 1841 until after Lincoln's departure in 1861. The Springfield stations had a close connection with those at Farmington. One station existed near the Globe Tavern at the time that newly married Abraham and Mary Lincoln lived there in 1841. In the 1850s, at least two stations were close to the Lincoln home at Eighth and Jackson. These two stations and two others not as close to the Lincoln home were operated by African Americans who knew and had close contacts with Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln must have known of the underground railroad activities of these African American friends. Yes, there were a few noble souls in Lincoln's Springfield who conducted an active underground railroad system. Here are their stories.

Luther N. Ransom

Luther N. Ransom was born about 1800 in Clinton County, New York. He and his wife, Zerviah, and two children came to Farmington in 1833 with the colony of fifty-two. Luther was Clerk of Session of the Farmington Presbyterian Church from

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

"Billie Dyer's grandfather, Aaron Dyer, was born a slave in Richmond, Virginia, and given his freedom when he turned twenty-one. He made his way north to Springfield, Illinois, because it was a station of the Underground Railroad. ...In Springfield, the feeling against slavery was strong; a runaway slave would be hidden sometimes for weeks until the owner who had traced him that far gave up and went home. Then Aaron Dyer would hitch up the horse and wagon he had been provided with, and at night the fugitive, covered with gunny-sacks or an old horse blanket, would be driven along some winding wagon trail that led through the prairie. Clop, clop, clopty clop. Past farm buildings that were all dark and ominous. Forging shallow streams and crossing bridges with loose wooden floorboards that rumbled. Arousing the comment of owls. Sometime Aaron Dyer sang softly to himself. Uppermost in his mind, who can doubt, was the thought of a hand pulling back those gunnysacks to see what was under them."

Jenkins, Donnegan, Brown and Dyer are known not for their service as underground railroad conductors, but for other events and relationships in their lives.

Jenkins was a Lincoln neighbor, living in the block south of the Lincoln home. On February 11, 1861, he drove Lincoln on his final Springfield trip to the Great Western Railroad depot where Lincoln gave his Farewell Address and left Springfield for Washington.

Donnegan was Abraham Lincoln's friend and shoemaker. He was murdered by a mob in the 1908 Springfield Race Riot, prompting the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Brown did personal work for Lincoln and was summoned to lead Lincoln's horse "Old Bob" in Lincoln's Springfield funeral procession.

Dyer was the grandfather of William "Billie" Dyer, the first African American physician from Lincoln, Illinois. William was the author of a classic World War I diary, and his youthful

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Rev. Henry Brown died at his Springfield residence on September 3, 1906, at age 83. The headline of his obituary read, "NEGRO EMPLOYED BY LINCOLN DEAD...Was of Massive Build and With Rev. W. C. Trevan Led Lincoln's Horses in Martyred President's Funeral Cortege."

Aaron Dyer

African American Aaron Dyer was born a slave in Richmond, Virginia, on November 15, 1818. In 1840 at age 21, Aaron was given his freedom. He came to Springfield, Illinois in 1846.

Aaron "was employed by the underground railway. He drove his horse and wagon at night, taking runaway slaves to the next underground station. When they reached Springfield, where the feeling against slavery was strong, they were fairly safe, although there were times when their masters traced them there and then they would be kept in hiding for as long as three weeks, or until the chase was given up and their masters returned without them. Springfield was a center for the underground railway."

In Springfield, Aaron worked as a blacksmith and drayman. His family consisted of his wife, Harriet Welden Dyer, who was born a slave in North Carolina about 1827, and three children all born in Illinois: John, Elizabeth and Aaron. They lived in a small African American residential cluster on the north side of the 300 block of West Washington Street, "between Rutledge and Klein" and "west of Gas Works." Maria Vance, the Lincoln maid, was their neighbor.

In 1877, Aaron and Harriet Dyer moved to Lincoln, Illinois, to be near their daughter and have her family's assistance as they grew older. Their grandson, William, was a neighbor and childhood friend of William Maxwell, who became the noted editor of the *New Yorker* magazine. In a poignant reminiscence of his boyhood days in Lincoln, Maxwell described his friend "Billie Dyer," and in doing so Billie's grandfather, Aaron.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

1834 to 1835. In 1835, Luther sold his property at Farmington and moved eight miles south of Springfield to what is now Chatham. Here he purchased 2,100 acres, laid out the town of Chatham, built a house, organized Chatham Presbyterian Church and hired an abolitionist preacher. Luther appears to have envisioned a New England town on the prairie.

Luther was an early abolitionist. He signed Elijah Lovejoy's 1837 call for an anti-slavery convention at Upper Alton, Illinois, and attended that convention in October, 1837. He was also was one of five Sangamon County delegates to the 1839 Illinois Anti-Slavery Society annual meeting. John Carroll Powers' 1876 *Early Settlers of Sangamon County*, described Luther thus:

"He was an original abolitionist, an uncompromising temperance man, scrupulously honest in his dealings, and it was believed by those who knew him well, that he was honest and conscientious in all he did. His erratic course was regarded more as the manifestations of an unsettled mind than of a depraved disposition."

In 1840, Luther moved to Springfield and by October 18, 1841, he operated an underground railroad station there at his boarding house near the Globe Tavern. Luther's participation in Springfield's underground railroad is evidenced by a St. Louis slave owner's October 18, 1841, handbill offering a \$200 reward for the return of an African American woman, Rittea or Henrietta Jones, and her children, Martha, age 6, Sarah, age 4, and James, age 2, and her husband, Nicholas, a "free dark mulatto." A "P.S." at the end of the handbill stated that Rittea and her family were "seen at L. N. Ransom's boarding house, at Springfield Ill., on yesterday morning."

Samuel Willard remembered that in 1843 Luther, "noted as a very strenuous abolitionist," advised his father, Julius A. Willard, in selecting an attorney to represent them in a case charging them with assisting in the escape of a fugitive slave at Jacksonville.

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

"In preparation for the trial of our case it was necessary to get lawyers to defend us...friends thot it best to have counsel of eminence from outside, my father went to Springfield, taking me with him. We were the guests of Luther Ransom, noted as a very strenuous abolitionist. ...Lincoln was mentioned by L. Ransom, who dismist him with the remark that he did not [have] any reputation, and we wanted a man of note. L. Ransom added that Lincoln was not afraid of a negro case."

Second Presbyterian Church and the Underground Railroad: Erastus Wright

In 1837, 30 members of the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield left the church over the issue of slavery and formed a new church, known as the Second Presbyterian Church (now Westminster Presbyterian Church). Most of the 30 were New Englanders, and their new church was known not only as the Second Presbyterian Church but also as the abolitionist church.

In a 1916 speech to the Presbyterian Synod of Illinois, Clinton L. Conkling, a friend of Lincoln and an elder of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, made these observations.

"After a while a stream of immigrants came from New York and New England. They were anti-slavery in feeling and practice. Springfield became one of the stations of the underground route as it was called, between bondage and freedom; between Kentucky and Missouri, the dwelling of the slave, and Canada, the haven of rest. A Saturday's holiday of one of our own members (family of boys) was once spoiled because during the preceding night the old family horse was used to take a runaway slave to the station further north on this underground route and was not returned in time for the boys to use him."

A 1956 history of Westminster Church states that, "More than one Second Presbyterian home was a station on the Underground Railway, the organization which helped runaway slaves escape to Canada."

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Springfield. Except for four years residence at Galena and Quincy, he lived in Springfield. In 1860, he lived at the northeast corner of 10th and Madison Streets and later at 1530 East Mason Street.

In both Quincy and Springfield, Brown helped runaway slaves move north on the underground railroad. On one occasion, he reportedly gave his own coat and vest to a poor black man.

Many a poor slave escaping by means of the underground railway during the civil war, was upheld on his way by Mr. Brown, who acted as a "conductor" at Quincy and Springfield stations. His idea of the golden rule was illustrated by one instance when he gave his own coat and vest to a poor fellow who was without one.

May 4, 1865 photograph taken in front of the funeral decorated Lincoln Home with Reverend Henry Brown to the left or rear of "Old Bob," and the Reverend Trevan on the right or front of the horse.

Brown was a great admirer of Abraham Lincoln and served him in various capacities until he went to Washington as President. When Lincoln's body was brought back to Springfield in May 1865, Rev. Henry Brown was sent a telegram requesting that he come from Quincy to Springfield for the Lincoln funeral. He and another local minister, Rev. W. C. Trevan, led Lincoln's old family horse "Bob" in the funeral procession.



Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

On August 16, 1908, during the Springfield Race Riot, a mob captured 84 year-old William K. Donnegan, cut his throat and lynched him in a tree in the schoolyard of the Edwards School across the street from his home at the corner of Spring and Edwards Streets. The events surrounding the riot and Donnegan's murder led to the organization of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

... the mob merely changed direction and proceeded to march across the capitol grounds and headed for the home of William Donnegan. He was an elderly long time resident of Springfield. Donnegan was eighty-four years old and a cobbler by trade; a respected resident of the community who owned his own home outside the Badlands and also owned some adjacent properties which were occupied by members of his family. He was known to be a friend and the cobbler of Abraham Lincoln. Donnegan made a small fortune bringing southern blacks to Springfield to find jobs. He had never been accused of a crime. He had however, broken the unwritten mores of being married to a white woman for the last thirty-two years. The mob approached Donnegan's home. When he came out to find what they were up to, they grabbed him, cut his throat, dragged his body across the street, and lynched him in the Edwards School yard. He was still alive when the national guard cut him down, but he died early the next morning. This lynching was the last mob action of the riot.

Rev. Henry Brown

African American Henry Brown was born in Raleigh, North Carolina on April 17, 1823. In 1835, he moved to Ohio, and one year later to Rush County, Indiana, where from 1837 to 1843 he was a farm laborer for a Quaker family. Henry was of immense physical stature, standing six feet three inches and weighing 250 pounds.

Brown studied to become an African Methodist Episcopal Church preacher and was licensed to preach about 1846. He then began an itinerant ministry walking from town to town. He was often refused meals and lodging because of his race. In 1847, he met and married at Paris, Illinois and shortly thereafter moved to

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Erastus Wright was one of the 30 who split from the First Presbyterian Church and organized the Second Presbyterian Church. He was born on January 21, 1779, at Bernardstown, Massachusetts, and came to Springfield on November 21, 1821. He taught school for many years and for ten years served as Sangamon County's school commissioner. Paul Angle described Erastus in *Here I Have Lived*, "Erastus Wright was another personality...To the citizens, his outspoken abolitionism—he was a New Englander—was a strange and dangerous doctrine; while the youngsters found a perpetual source of wonder in the trained elk which he rode and drove in harness."

Erastus Wright was Springfield's quintessential New Englander and abolitionist. He was "always fearless in advocating its [abolitionist] doctrines." He signed Elijah Lovejoy's 1837 call for an anti-slavery convention at Upper Alton, Illinois. He was also was one of five Sangamon County delegates to the 1839 Illinois Anti-Slavery Society annual meeting. Erastus lived at Wright's Grove, near Jefferson and Walnut Streets, and his home was a station on the Springfield underground railroad.

"[Henry Harrison Biggs] lives in a historical locality...Two hundred feet east was the home of Erastus Wright, the co-worker of Wendell Philips in the establishment of the underground railroad, and the entire neighborhood was known as Wright's Grove."

Wright was a friend of Zebina Eastman, the publisher of the *Western Citizen*, a Chicago based abolitionist newspaper. Eastman stated that he and Cassius Clay visited Erastus in Springfield and described him as a "wealthy client of Lincoln's who served as an agent of the Underground Railroad."

Springfield African American Conductors on the Underground Railroad

Not all of the Springfield conductors on the underground railroad were white, New England abolitionists. At least four

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

Springfield African Americans, Jamieson Jenkins, William K. Donnegan, Rev. Henry Brown and Aaron Dyer, were also active Springfield conductors and assisted many runaway slaves on their trips north to freedom.

Jamieson Jenkins

Jamieson Jenkins, a mulatto, was born in North Carolina about 1810. In the summer of 1835, he was living in Wake County, North Carolina as a freeman, and he was given a permit to visit Guilford County, North Carolina, a Quaker community that was the Grand Central Station of the underground railroad in the South. The Quakers there most likely assisted Jamieson to begin his journey north from Guilford on the underground railroad, across the Ohio River and into Indiana. In Indiana, he married Elizabeth Pelham, a Virginia born mulatto, and in 1844, they had a daughter, Nancy. Sometime between Nancy's birth in 1844 and 1846, Jamieson and his family moved to Springfield, and in the fall of 1848, Jamieson and Elizabeth joined the Second Presbyterian Church, Springfield's abolitionist church.

The Jenkins family consisted of Jameson "Jimison Jarkins," a drayman, his wife, Elizabeth, and their daughter Nancy H., a washerwoman. The family resided in Springfield on the east side of Eighth Street, between Jackson and Edwards Streets, a block south of the Lincoln home

On the evening of January 16, 1850, Jamieson Jenkins assisted seven runaway slaves move 60 miles north along the underground railroad from Springfield to Bloomington. During the week that followed, Springfield's *Journal* and *Register* newspapers printed five confusing and sometimes contradictory reports on the presence of the runaway slaves and called the events that transpired a "slave stampede." It was initially and incorrectly rumored around Springfield that Jamieson Jenkins had betrayed the slaves resulting in their capture.

On January 17, 1850, the *Register* reported that on the previous day Springfield citizens had captured eleven runaway

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

full, so I went back again to where I left the girl. It was now getting on towards daylight. Presently I heard the clatter of horses' feet and the whole company swept by on horses toward town. They had left for the night. But it was too late for us to go on; daylight would catch us before we could get half way to our destination. I says to the girl, "Get down now, and follow me quick." And we came into town right behind our pursuers. I went straight for my brother's house on Carpenter street, [Preston L. Donnegan who lived on the east side of Fourth Street, between Madison and Carpenter, near the African Methodist Church] and called him up. He said: "You'd better get in here quick. My house has been watched all night, and I think they just left."

"So we hustled in, and began to plan how to get the girl out of the city. My brother said that John Stewart was going to take a gang of colored men out to the neighborhood of Lyman's to go plowing."

"That's all right," I said. "now, let us get her up a boy's rig and send her out with them as a boy. None but Stewart need know, and he can tell Lyman all about her." So we rigged her out and sent her to the country in that way in daylight."

"One of our men down near St. Louis that helped run slaves off got shot about this time, and broke our line for nearly six weeks, during which time she remained at Lyman's. Finally he sent word that something must be done. She couldn't be restrained from showing herself, and they were in terror lest she give the whole underground railroad gang away. I sent word to Mrs. Lyman to tell the girl I was going to shoot her. And I did go and hunted the house over for her, shot my pistol off a few times and scared her nearly to death. Of course I couldn't find her, but she was so frightened that when she was told to go into the basement and remain hid she did so.

"After some time we succeeded in getting her out of the country, off towards Canada."

"Oh," said our informant, after relating the above, "I could give you a whole lot of such scrapes. But I'll never forget the night I spent in trying to get that girl away."

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

to be still, and placing my revolver to the dog's head I fired, splattering its brains over my hands. Then I turned to the men who were crowding still closer and shouted that I would kill any four-legged or two-legged dogs that bothered me much more. At this they fell back somewhat. I was going down Fourth street by this time, towards a Methodist church [African Methodist Church on the northeast corner of Fourth and Mason Streets.] that stood there then, and in which there was a meeting that night. It all at once occurred that I might make this useful. I went to a man at the door and told him I was being followed, and asked him in a few moments to open the door widely and close it again, while we slipped around the building and out of sight. I thought the men would think we went in and while they were looking we might escape. And sure enough, that worked! They stopped, and while they were finding out that we were not in the house we doubled on our track as fast as possible, crossed the C & A going west, jumped over a fence and made away for the woods and down where the present O & M track [Probably present day Madison Street] is, towards the old West Shaft. [probably on the west side of Lincoln Avenue near its intersection with Jefferson Street] I was aiming to get to a Mr. Gardner's [Hiram E. Gardner of near Farmington] or Lyman's, [Dr. John Lyman of Farmington] one of our stations near the Beardstown road, west of Bradfordton. As I drew near the bridge over the creek [Spring Creek] west of the city I thought I'd better be cautious, as it might be guarded. So, going off a few rods from the road, I made the girl climb up into the fork of a red-bud tree to wait until I went forward to look for enemies. The woods were full of wild hogs and cows, the latter being quite fierce when they had calves as many of them had, so I told her she must not come down till I came back. Some little distance from the bridge a dog growled at my side. I gave it some meat – I always carried a lunch on such occasions – and soon quieted it. Going cautiously forward I found the bridge at the old mill [Hickox Mill north of the intersection of Veteran's Parkway and Jefferson Streets on Spring Creek.¹ guarded by a dozen with guns. I came back to where the girl was. She said she was afraid and must come down, and in fact did climb down. I made her get up, and again left her, going this time up to the bridge on the Beardstown road [Jefferson Street and Veterans Parkway, Springfield, Illinois]. It was guarded. I tried to find a place to cross but could not as the stream was

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

slaves belonging to citizens of St. Louis. On the same day, the *Journal* reported that fourteen runaway slaves from St. Louis and Kentucky, were discovered in Springfield on their way north. Three men attempted to arrest them, but a fight ensued. Only one slave, a lame negro, was arrested and placed in the City jail.

On January 18, 1850, the *Register* corrected its January 17 report that eleven runaway slaves had been captured. It reported that only eight were caught, and that after publication of the January 17 paper, seven escaped. The remaining slave, the lame negro, was "now in jail." Three days later, the *Register* reported that the captured lame slave had been brought before the Supreme Court upon a writ of *habeas corpus* and released.

On January 22, 1850, the *Journal* published a letter signed "Justice" concerning what he called the "slave stampede in our neighborhood."

We have received a communication in relation to the late "slave stampede" in our neighborhood, of this tenor:

"Rumor may have it, that it was a colored person [*Jameson Jenkins*] who betrayed the runaways last week. But unfortunately the one they accuse of having done so, started north with a part of the same gang the night before the capture. And this rumor was only to prevent, and may be save the "under-ground car" from being upset or overtaken"

"Justice"

On January 23, 1850, the *Journal* printed a letter of response from "A Friend to Justice" which stated that the rumor that the runaway slaves had been betrayed by a local African American [*Jamieson Jenkins*] was false and in fact, the rumor was a ruse "to prevent, and maybe, to save the underground car from being upset or overtaken." Jenkins had in fact gone north by stage to Bloomington with some of the runaway slaves. The affidavit of J. C. Goodhue, stage coach agent, stated, "This is to certify that Mr. Jenkins left for Bloomington on the 16th day of January, 1850 in

**Lincoln's Springfield
The Underground Railroad**

the stage.” The letter reads as follows:

Messrs, Editors:--In your paper of the 22d inst., there is a communication signed “Justice” which refers to the slave stampede in this neighborhood on the 16th, saying “that it was rumored that a colored person had betrayed the slaves, but, unfortunately, the one they accuse of having done so, started north with a part of the same gang the night before the capture; and this rumor was only to prevent, and maybe, to save the underground car from being upset or overtaken. Now, in order to correct public sentiment in regard to that man’s conduct in this matter, I would refer them to the following certificate of the agent of the northern line of stages:

Springfield, January 22, 1850

This is to certify that Mr. Jenkins left for Bloomington on the 16th day of January, 1850, in the stage.

J. C. Goodhue, agent.

A Friend to “Justice”

On August 29, 1851, Jameson Jenkins’ membership in the Second Presbyterian Church was terminated due to his having failed to answer charges of not attending Church meetings and licentiousness.

On February 11, 1861, Jameson Jenkins drove President-elect Abraham Lincoln on his last Springfield carriage ride from the Chenery House at the northeast corner of Fourth and Washington Streets to the Great Western Railroad depot to begin his trip to Washington.

William K. Donnegan

William K. Donnegan, an African American, was born in Kentucky circa 1832, and came to Springfield in 1845. In 1858, he was living on the north side of Jefferson Street, between Eighth and Ninth Streets, just five blocks north of the Lincoln Home. Donnegan was a shoe maker with his shop on the north side of Adams Street, between Seventh Street and the Public Square, just a block east of the Lincoln & Herndon law offices. He made

**Lincoln's Springfield
The Underground Railroad**

to talk about and instructed her to alter her voice, so that if her master heard he would not know her. I knew that the dog-fennel [A strong-smelling European weed naturalized in North America.] all around between me and Ninth street would probably be full of men watching who came to or left my house after night.

When it was dark enough I sallied out with her, talking to Hal loud enough to be heard, and she talking to me about things that happened days before. We started east, I intending to get her into a house in the east of town for awhile. We hadn’t got far when three men passed us, one of whom I recognized as a Springfield man named Emmet. Immediately after passing they had stopped and were holding a consultation. I heard a man say:

“She moves exactly like my girl.”

“No,” said another, “this one’s white.”

“Well, I believe we ought to get her away – I believe it’s the girl I’m after,” was the reply.

I heard Emmet say, “You’d better be careful not to make a mistake. He carries bowie knife and a shooter that will kill at 150 yards, and he’s the kind that uses them.”

“Well, I won’t risk my life for any nigger,” was the reply.

They kept at a distance, but still knew where we went. I couldn’t get the girl taken in at the house to which we went, so thought I’d take her up to the timber near the Converse school, [1437 North Eighth] hoping to escape pursuit there. I went directly north on Ninth street, but they blocked my game, outflanked me and got there ahead. I began to think it was dangerous to get into the woods with those three against me, so I turned down the C & A track [Third Street was the right of way initially for the Alton & Sangamon Railroad and subsequently for a series of other railroads from 1852 to present.] and went over to Third street, and back [south] towards town. The men still followed. Near Carpenter street [Third and Carpenter Streets] a bulldog broke his chain and attacked us, catching hold of the girl’s skirts. She screamed. I told her

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

"I went home at once and found a girl about sixteen years of age and weighing about one hundred and forty pounds. This man Burreas, you understand, lived right by me, and the girl has been left there by mistake in the excitement. I said, "See here, gal, they say that you're in danger of giving us all away, and if you don't do as I tell you, or if you threaten to get us into trouble, I'll shoot you. She replied that she hoped I'd shoot her if she was about to be recaptured. She said that a brother and a sister of hers had been caught again and burned. She was in earnest, too; but smart as she was, she was a fool. She had no judgment; she wanted to see everything. I sent her into the back part of the house and told her to keep out of sight. I stayed around, and in about an hour I saw three men – one red-headed – coming down the street. As they approached, the girl peeped out of a window and exclaimed, "O, that's my young master and his father." I told her to go quick the back way to Burreas' house. She had hardly got out of sight when in came the three inquiring for a wash woman who lived there. I told them there was none there – they must be mistaken in the place. They seemed disappointed, and came on into the kitchen. Finding nobody, and having no excuse, they reluctantly went out again at the front door.

"I knew they'd go to Burreas', and as soon as they left the door I managed to slip back by the back way and come into the kitchen. So, as they entered the house, she left and came into mine. I hustled her into the attic, and told her to go away back and crawl in behind the chimney and stay there till I told her to come out. Well, the men came back and fooled around awhile and left disappointed.

"Now what was to be done was a question. I knew the house would be watched all night. I heard in the afternoon that about thirty men had been engaged about town for that night. A full description of her had been given in the Springfield Register as she looked when she ran away, with an offer of, I think, \$500 for her capture. I knew she was a dangerous girl to keep about the place and finally hit on an expedient. Another girl, almost white, lived near named Hal, who was just about this girl's size and form, but this runaway was quite black. I went down town and got a pair of white gloves and a white false face, which I knew in the darkness would give the impression of whiteness. I told her what to call me, and what

Lincoln's Springfield The Underground Railroad

shoes for Abraham Lincoln.

Recently, Curtis Mann, Manager of the Sangamon Valley Room at Springfield's Lincoln Library, discovered a William K. Donnegan reminiscence published in the Old Settlers Department of the May 1898 edition of Springfield's *The Public Patron*. Donnegan's reminiscence of his 1858 participation in Springfield's underground railroad deserves a complete publication.

"I lived, in those days, on the north side of Jefferson, between Eighth and Ninth streets, in a story and a half house. It is still standing, and I could show you the garret yet in which many a runaway has been hidden while the town was being searched. I have secreted scores of them, I once had seven hundred dollars in gold and silver turned into my lap by the owner of a slave as a bribe for my assisting in his recapture. This took place in my shoe shop on Fourth street. The house is not now standing. Well, could not capture the fellow, and had to return the money; but all the same he was under a pile of leather in that very room when the money was paid.

"One early morning in the summer or spring of 1858, I think it was, George Burreas [George Burras], a barber and a near neighbor of mine, came into my shop somewhat excited and wanted me to go home at once. He said that during the night a wagon had driven up to his house and hurriedly unloaded a runaway slave girl, the driver getting away as quickly as possible, explaining that they had been hotly pursued from Jacksonville, and that their pursuers could not be far away then. He also hurriedly explained that the girl must be concealed carefully and quickly as she was a dangerous character, being hard to manage. What was especially dangerous was that she had an excellent memory and could tell the name of every man, woman and baby along the route. She had come from St. Louis to Springfield. She was liable to give all of them away to authorities by her imprudence. You must recollect that we didn't know another's names. It was best not. When a man unloaded one or more Negroes at my house or at any other station in the night (it was always done then) his name was not asked. But this girl had caught the names and would tell them. So George said I must take her and hide her.