

# MASSILLON & THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD



Mandy Altimus Stahl  
Archivist  
Massillon Museum

# Slavery in America

- Slavery in America began in 1619, with the arrival of African slaves in Jamestown, Virginia.
- They were treated like indentured servants at first
- Treatment worsened and slaves wanted to escape
- The British Empire ended slavery in 1833, making Canada a slavery-free country

# Ohio Freedom Networks

- Though slavery was the law of the land, Quakers did not believe in human bondage. Isaac Russel wrote from a southern state to Thomas Rotch in 1816:
- “I can have little satisfaction in remaining long in this state when abominable slavery is tolerated with all its concomitant evils, evils which I witness with disgust and dismay.”
- Thomas Rotch worked on a variety of committees through the Quaker Church to plan for the care of fugitives and freed African Americans.

# Proposed Anti-slavery Convention

**THE PROPOSED CONVENTION.**  
**LETTERS FROM FRIENDS.**

Response from Massillon.

Here is a word to the purpose from our friends at Massillon. To be sure it did not come so soon by a fortnight as it ought to have done, but it makes us too good-natured for fault-finding. How long must we wait for the friends in other places to give their opinions?—*Ed Bugle.*

MASSILLON, July 28th, 1849.

FRIEND JOHNSON: In obedience to the invitation extended through the Bugle to the Young Men and Women of this State for the holding of a Convention, we now, although at a very late moment, return a hasty response to the call. We are few in number, but still our hearts are in the cause. We feel that there is a great, very great work for us to do. We would propose holding it in Salem immediately before or after the Friends' Yearly Meeting, as there will probably be more Young persons collected then from a distance, than at any other time or place.

Yours in behalf of the oppressed.

<i>Julia M. Shreve,</i>	<i>Mary Ann Russell,</i>
<i>Sarah T. Fisker,</i>	<i>Harriet Steese,</i>
<i>Etiza C. Guild,</i>	<i>Jennette Newton,</i>
<i>Betsy M. Cowles,</i>	<i>Chas. R. Shreve,</i>
<i>Cornelia Cowles,</i>	<i>C. Wister Shreve.</i>

☞ The Executive Committee will no doubt give due weight to the suggestion above made as to the time for holding the Convention, if it is to be held at all. Our own conviction, however, is, that a later period would be better.

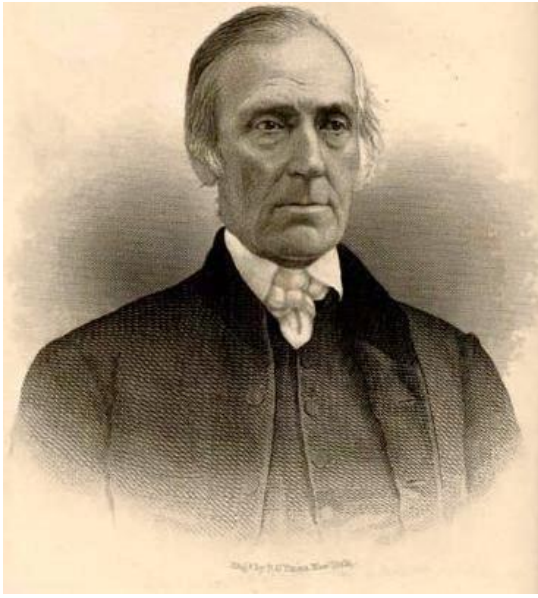
Proposed by Massillonians  
To be held before or after the  
Friends' Yearly Meeting in Salem,  
Ohio

## Important Massillonians listed:

- Betsey Mix Cowles
- Mary Ann Russell
- Harriet Steese

*Anti-Slavery Bugle* (Lisbon, Ohio)  
August 4, 1849

# Freedom Networks




- As early as the 1810s, freedom networks were established in Ohio.
- Levi Coffin coined the term “underground railroad” in 1831
- Quakers, who believed in freedom and equality, made up many of the Massillon & Kendal families who assisted fugitive slaves





# Ohio Freedom Networks

**\$150 REWARD**



**RANAWAY** from the subscriber, on the night of the 2d instant, a negro man, who calls himself *Henry May*, about 22 years old, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, ordinary color, rather chunky built, bushy head, and has it divided mostly on one side, and keeps it very nicely combed; has been raised in the house, and is a first rate dining-room servant, and was in a tavern in Louisville for 18 months. I expect he is now in Louisville trying to make his escape to a free state, (in all probability to Cincinnati, Ohio.) Perhaps he may try to get employment on a steamboat. He is a good cook, and is handy in any capacity as a house servant. Had on when he left, a dark cassinett coatee, and dark striped cassinett pantaloons, new--he had other clothing. I will give \$50 reward if taken in Louisville; 100 dollars if taken one hundred miles from Louisville in this State, and 150 dollars if taken out of this State, and delivered to me, or secured in any jail so that I can get him again.

**WILLIAM BURKE.**  
*Bardstowen, Ky., September 3d, 1838.*

- Fugitive Slave Act of 1793
- Fugitive Slave Act of 1850
- Kidnapping free African-Americans
- Runaway slave ads in newspapers

Cornell University

**FreedomOnTheMove.org**

# Opposition to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850

## Fugitive Slave Act.

The Citizens of Stark County opposed to the Fugitive Slave Bill, passed by Congress at its late session, are requested to meet at Canton,

*On Saturday the 2d of November, 1850,*

At 10 o'clock a.m. to give an expression of their sentiments in relation to that act, and to adopt such measures as will aid in erasing it from our statutes. The law is an outrage upon the spirit of the age, and we hope to see a large and enthusiastic meeting of those in favor of its repeal.

H Griswold, Wm Hatcher, Wm Dillon, Mahlon Wileman, Lewis Morgan, John Scott, H P Dunbar, J Whiting, Daniel Raffensperger, Aaron Van Syce, James Allen, Madison Reynolds, Abraham Ream, P Hugus, J Saxton, S C Frey, F J Meyer, Thomas Goodman, Wm Bryce, E P Grant, John Laird, Geo Reynolds, Samuel Pease, Jos H Painter, H B Hurlbut, J Steese, J Werich, R Partridge, Thomas C Shreve, Fred T Hurxthal, Ephraim Chidester, B Headly, S Hunt, G W McMillen, A Underhill, S Hawk, M Williams, George Miller, Frederic Hookway, S J Miller, W B Whitaker, H Willenbare, T Finklen, Jonathan Miller, A W Bigger, J S Everhard, C R Skinner, L M Hart, V Mallett, C B Cummins, P P Cam, T R Richmond, Jacob Diehl, David Rodgers, Charles Stewart, George Archer, J A Hoffman, Wm Breed, J Crooks, David Moteland, T P Abbott, Wm F Clay, John Lowe, Charles Martin, D P Summers, C Shumay, T P Reed, G T Reed, A W Whiting, E Leland, H M Curtis, Abr Chesnutwood, Geo Starr, A C Wales, J W Underhill, R H Folger, John Bender, James Brannan, Jno Schertzer, Jeremiah V Schertzer, D G Bigger, Jos Ulrich.

## Signed by Important Massillonians:

- John Scott
- Samuel Pease
- HB Hurlbut
- Fred Hurxthal
- Ephraim Chidester
- S. Hunt
- Frederic Hookway
- Charles Skinner
- Thomas P. Reed
- G. T. Reed
- Arvine C. Wales
- J. W. Underhill
- Robert Folger

*Canton Repository, October 1850*



## Great Anti-Slavery Conventions!!

GARRISON, DOUGLASS, WALKER, FOSTER,  
and others will attend meetings as follows:

Twinsburg, Monday and Tuesday, 23d  
and 24th of August.

Oberlin, Thursday 26th.

Richfield, Saturday and Sunday 29th and  
30th.

Medina, Sunday and Monday, 30th and  
31st.

Massillon, Tuesday and Wednesday, 1st  
and 2d of September.

Marlboro, Thursday and Friday, 3d and  
4th.

Salem, Saturday and Sunday, 5th and 6th.

↪ The big tent will be put up at Rich-  
field, Marlboro, and Salem; and at other  
places if the weather should not be favorable  
to a grove meeting.

↪ Garrison and Douglass will attend  
*all* of these meetings, *one* of them remaining  
during all the sessions.

↪ The meetings at Twinsburg and  
Massillon will commence at 2, P. M., those  
at Richfield, Marlboro, and Salem at 10, A.  
M., that at Oberlin at 9½ A. M., and the one  
at Medina at 7, P. M.

All the sessions subsequent to the first,  
will commence at 10 A. M. and 2 P. M.

SAML. BROOKE,

*Gen. Agent.*

# Ohio Anti-Slavery conventions in Massillon & Twinsburg

## Major players

- William Lloyd Garrison
- Frederick Douglass

*Anti-Slavery Bugle*

(Lisbon, Ohio)

August 13, 1847

# Lucretia Mott visits Massillon, 1847



# Robert Folger



# “Mysteries of Ohio’s Underground Railroad” by Dr. William Siebert (1898)

## List of conductors in Massillon

- James Austin
- James Bayliss
- Jehial Fox  
*(president of the Kendal Community)*
- Isaac Bowman
- Charles Coffin
- Matthew and Samuel Macy
- Isaac Robinson  
*(an Indian doctor who married an African-American, Rachel)*
- Irvine and Richard Williams
- Charles Grant  
*(black conductor)*
- William Moffit
- Robert Folger  
*(Nephew of Lucretia Mott. Robert’s father, pioneer Mayhew Folger, likely also participated)*

## **Known stations:**

- **Hiram Wellman house**

414 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE, still standing  
(unsure who owned it during its time as a station)

- **Robert Folger house**

4<sup>th</sup> Street NE

- **James Bayliss house**

Formerly Lincoln Way, now 4<sup>th</sup> Street SE, still standing

- **Spring Hill**

Off of Wales Road, still standing

- **Moffit Heights**

Two cellars near William Moffit's barn on Millersburg Road,  
west of Massillon

# Routes to Freedom in Ohio

- West Virginia (Virginia at the time) across the Ohio River (often with the assistance of Quakers, such as Thomas Rotch)
- Massillon to Hartville or Limaville, then to Ravenna or Hudson, then northwest to Cleveland to embark to Canada
- Since not every escape was documented, it is hard to say how many fugitives escaped. Some scholars say 40,000, while others say 100,000

# Ohio Freedom Networks

- Little documentation exists, as assisting fugitive slaves to freedom was illegal, thus evidence in letters or ledgers was dangerous.
- Rotch-Wales papers in the Massillon Public Library archives
- Original scans, searchable text, transcriptions:  
[MassillonMemory.org](http://MassillonMemory.org)







Always indicated to use  
the correct  
type of  
material. The correct  
type is shown



# George Duncan letter

Cambridge August 17<sup>th</sup> 1840  
Dear Friend  
I arrived safe  
in Cambridge Genoa County  
where I put up at a Mr. Hunt's where I  
regide and I am feeling extremely  
well by the people and I have just met  
with Thorton Taylor and we shall start  
for Canada in about 1000 weeks I want  
if you would be so kind to assist Edy in  
getting her as soon as she can and not let  
I Sprigg know the roads she takes  
I wish you to direct her to Mr. William  
Baker in Suffolk Portugal and for him  
to direct her to Mr. William K. Smith in  
Cambridge Genoa County and I will have  
Edy get some of Mr. Hunt's letters to bring  
her on to Mr. K. Smith in Cambridge  
and she will go with her and get her  
and offered for Canada she will stay  
with Mr. K. Smith until I can get her to Canada  
I think if Sprigg were here he would  
not give me for I am with the yankey people  
and they are against Quakers & Slavery but  
it is better to keep her to prevent

any kind of a bustle you see with her  
how to conduct matters perhaps better than  
I can tell you and I may at the time  
probably that I can satisfy you for your  
trouble I am ever with the greatest respect —  
Yours &c George Duncan  
P.S. I shall myself take it upon me  
to send her to Mr. Taylor I shall let my love  
to Mr. Taylor if you can  
I wish you not let me know that  
you are in the city and myself in the city (or Mr. Taylor)  
P.S. Edy I must write a few lines  
particularly to you your mother is well  
she has been so conducted in and I hope  
well continued you have my desires  
my greatest care is for you I wish you not mention  
anything to Thorton's wife respecting her  
I am ever  
Yours with affection  
George Duncan  
I wish you to set out with Thorton  
as possible

# Slave Catcher Incident at Spring Hill

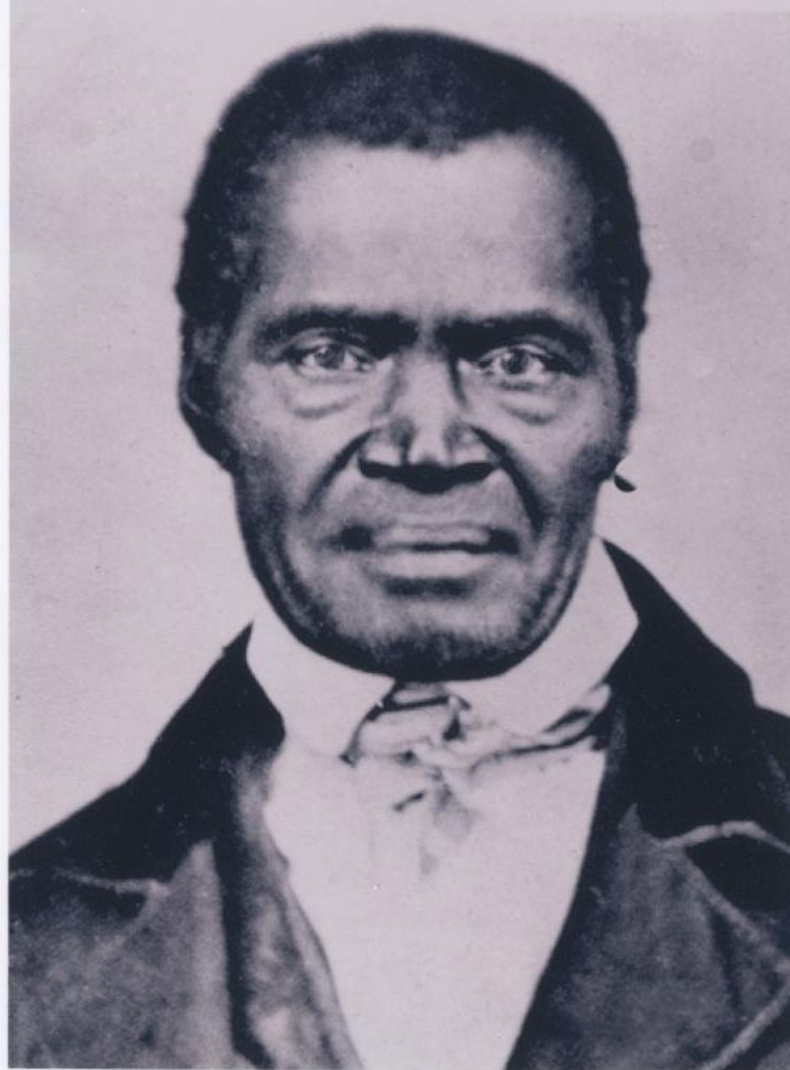


# James Bayliss Home



# Jacob Gaskins

1792-1871



# Anson Pease Family



# Manumission Papers Kent Jarvis deeds 1830s

BC 2.101.4

To whom it may concern:

Be it known that I John Hendrick of the County of Brooke and State of Virginia, for diverse good causes and considerations me therunto moving, have released, liberated, manumitted, and set free, and by these presents do hereby release from slavery, liberate, and manumit, and set free, my Negro man named Samuel Fuller, being of the age of thirty and upwards, the sixth day of August last past, and able to work and gain sufficient livelihood and maintenance; and in the said Negro man, named Samuel Fuller, I do declare to be henceforth free, manumitted and discharged from all manner of servitude or service to me, my Heirs, Executors, and Administrators forever.

In Testimony whereof I have hereunto set my Hand and Affixed my seal this 7<sup>th</sup> day of November A.D. 1835.

Witness, Sealed and delivered in presence of

John Hendrick

State of Virginia,  
Brooke County, ✓ Be it known that on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of November 1835 personally appeared before the Subscriber, a Justice of the peace and for the said County, John Hendrick, above named, and acknowledged the foregoing Manumission to his Negro man, Samuel Fuller to be his act and deed.

In Testimony whereof I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal, this day and year last above mentioned.

Hester Congleton

(left)  
Samuel Fuller, slave of John Hendricks, Brooke County, Virginia (now West Virginia)  
There is a Samuel Fuller listed in Hartford, Ohio in 1860

(right)  
Matilda Ann Weaver, mulatto slave of John Colvill, Franklin County, Virginia

Virginia  
Franklin County, At  
Matilda Ann Weaver, a bright mulatto girl, aged eighteen years five feet two and a half inches high, with a scar immediately over her left eye is the daughter of Nelly Champ who was liberated by the last Will & Testament of John Colvill de<sup>d</sup> in the year 1806. as appears from the certificate of Mears Showalter. Registered the 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov. 1835

Witness  
Chas. Clark  
Justice of the peace  
for said County 3

Seal  
S. P. Ball c. r. c.

Virginia  
At a Court continued and held for Franklin County the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of November 1835  
Matilda Ann Weaver, a free mulatto girl appeared in Court with a copy of her register made by the clerk of this Court which is ordered to be certified as correct.

In Testimony whereof Thomas Allen Edball clerk of the Court of the County aforesaid have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of Nov<sup>r</sup> 1835 and in the 60<sup>th</sup> year of the Commonwealth

S. P. Ball c. r. c.



# Crowd-funding to Purchase Isaac Cunningham's Wife, Matilda

Subscription for the Redemption of the Wife of Isaac Cunningham to be paid to Hoffman & Hutchins with Let of donors, & refunded in case a sufficient amount is not raised  
Nov. 5th 1847

A. M. Brown paid	3.00	Cash (Hutchinson)	25
W. H. Howe	3.00	Little boys	16
David Comstock	1.00	H. A. Smith (Ship)	1.50
R. S. Brown paid	1.00	Charles Watson	10
Edmund J. Smith paid	50	Fideler	10
W. C. Spang	50	Harrison	15
M. M. Thomason	50	Jenudha Crowell	12.25
Samuel Gordon	50	Mary Ann Crowell	12.25
W. F. Deeds paid	1.00	Ellen Wallad Crowell	2.5
Alfred Pennington	50	Harriet Crowell	2.5
Charles Brown	1.00	Chancery, Adams	0.4
A. F. Brown	1.00	Sharon Clark paid	2.75
E. H. Brown	1.00	Benjamin Lutter paid	50
M. B. Brown	1.00	S. B. Berry paid	50
W. P. Sealy paid	50	Ed. Brown	3.00
J. H. Schumore paid	25	J. H. Wing	1.11
Solomon Sage	25	J. G. Clarke	50
Thomas Howe	1.00	Erwin Lyman	7.00
Elijah Ballard	50	Missotamia	7.00
William Lavel	50	Henry Crowell	50
Henry Huntington	1.00	J. Schumore	25
Wm. G. Stone	2.00	Green Parry	15
W. H. Massey	50	Ant but up	27.37
John Taylor	50		
John Reynolds	1.00		\$44.00
Le. J. Pittkin	1.00	N. Weeks	1.00
James H. Hunter	50	Job Griffin	1.00
James S. Morgan	50	H. E. Knapp	50
Willard Crowell	37.50	W. Ham	1.00
G. H. Latimer	50	W. D. Hawkins	50
John Smith	50	Edward French	50
John H. Knapp	50	Charles Ballard	52
	27.37	P. Haskell	25
		Ben. Williams	25

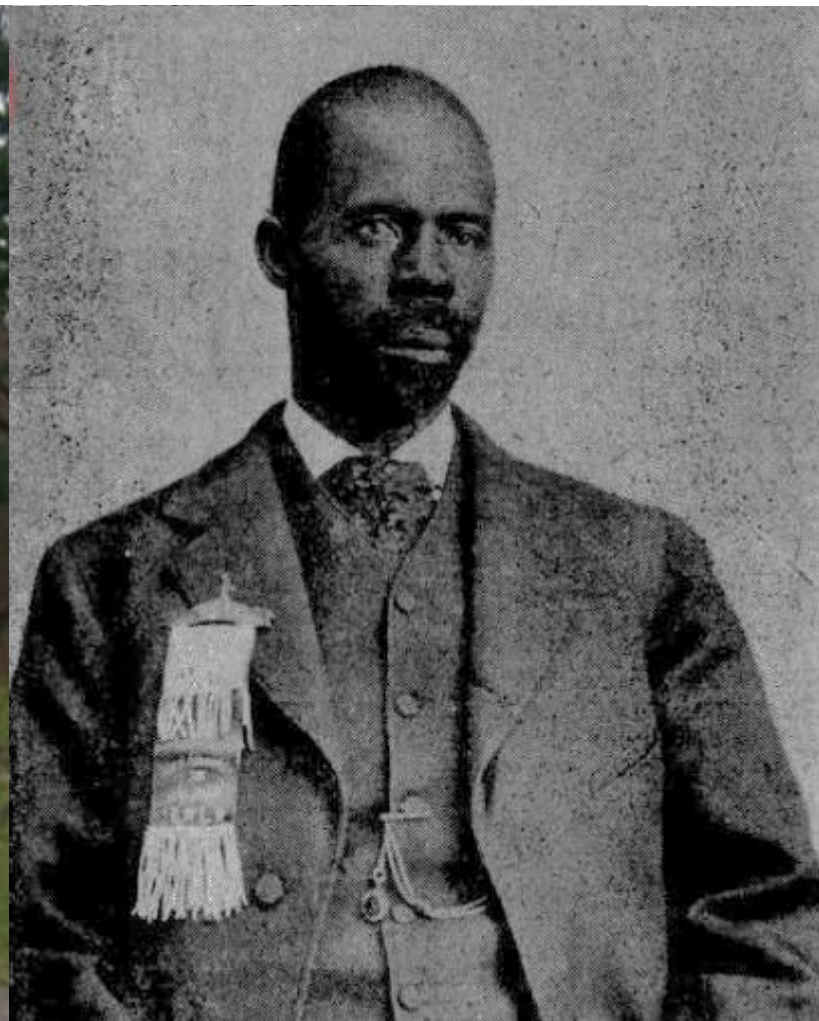
- \$600 for Matilda, owned by Alex B. Nichol, Nashville, Tennessee
- Promised Isaac that he could buy his wife for the same price that Nichol had paid for her \$600
- Nichol turned down offers of \$1,000 for Matilda so that Isaac Cunningham had time to raise the money to buy his wife
- Payments had to be made by December 15, 1847
- \$3 was given by Massillonian James Monroe Brown
- Just discovered Matilda Cunningham, living in Bloomfield, Ohio, addressed an anti-slavery meeting about her experience as a former slave (*Anti-Slavery Bugle*, New Lisbon, Ohio 1850)



# FORMER SLAVES IN MASSILLON

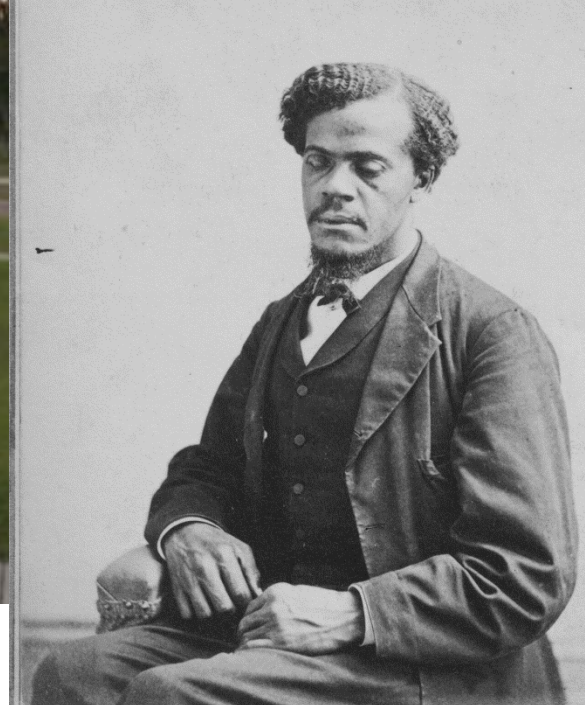
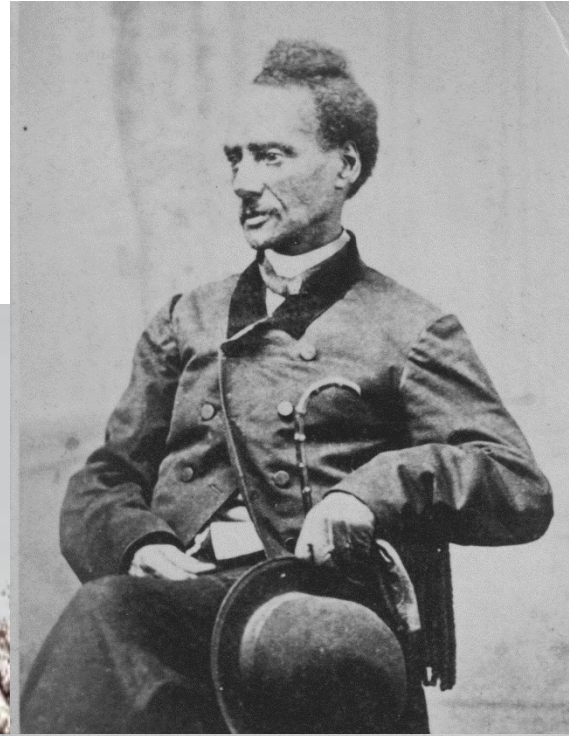
# Gilbert Porter Home

## 1513 Walnut Rd SE

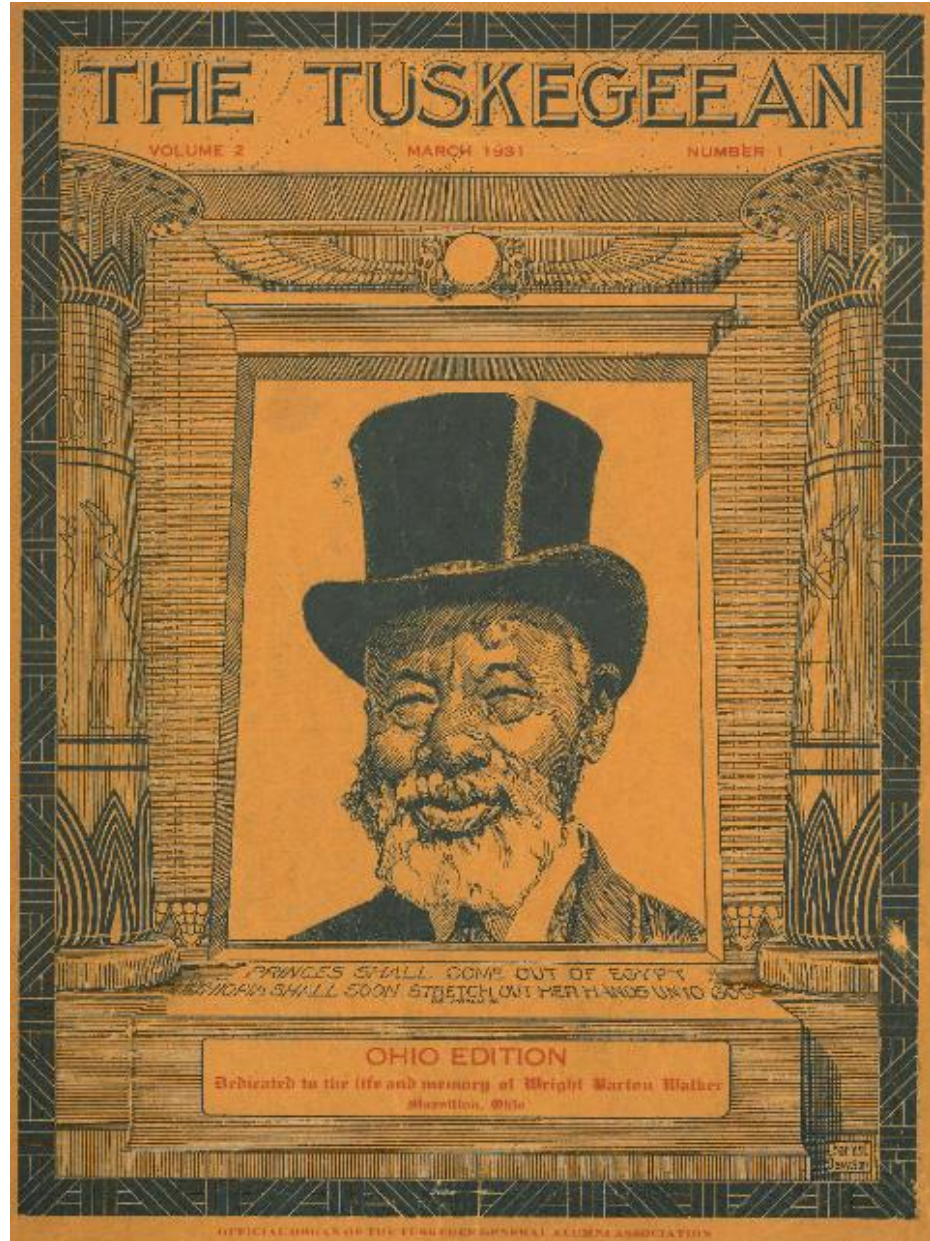


# Jerry Clemmons Home

## 1007 State Ave NE



# Wright Walker (c.1845-1921)





# EQUALITY IN MASSILLON

# Issues of Equality







# John Hall Memorial Industrial School

## January 1904 – September 1905



# End of Slavery in America

- Slavery ended in America in with Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, effective January 1, 1863
- 3 million slaves in Confederate states were given freedom
- *Did not include Union-held Confederate states, nor Union states until the passage of the 13th amendment in December 1865*
- Slaves in Texas were not informed of their freedom until it was announced to them on June 19, 1865
- Juneteenth (June + Nineteenth) is celebrated annually as Freedom Day

# QUESTIONS?



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