

Owner/Manager (Share contact information Y N)

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Application Preparer (Enter only if different from contact above.) (Share contact information Y N)

Name: Jim Blackwell, Chair
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Privacy Information: The Network to Freedom was established, in part, to facilitate sharing of information among those interested in the Underground Railroad. Putting people in contact with others who are researching related topics, historic events, or individuals or who may have technical expertise or resources to assist with projects is one of the most effective means of advancing Underground Railroad commemoration and preservation. Privacy laws designed to protect individual contact information (i.e., home or personal addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, or e-mail addresses), may prevent NPS from making these connections. If you are willing to be contacted by others working on Underground Railroad activities and to receive mailings about Underground Railroad-related events, please add a statement to your letter of consent indicating what information you are willing to share.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom to nominate properties, facilities, and programs to the Network to Freedom. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Response to this request is required for inclusion in the Network to Freedom in accordance with the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act (P.L. 105-203).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 25 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Coordinator, National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, NPS, 601 Riverfront Drive, Omaha, Nebraska 68102.



SITES:

In addition to the responses to each question, applications must also include the following attachments:

- 1) Letters of consent from all property owners for inclusion in the Network to Freedom (see sample in instructions)
- 2) Text and photographs of all site markers
- 3) Original photographs illustrating the current appearance and condition of the site being nominated
- 4) Maps showing the location of the site

S1. Type:
 Building Object District (neighborhood)
 Structure Landscape/natural feature Archeological site

Other (describe): Gateway Park and Riverwalk (the Park has a fountain, benches, etc. and the Riverwalk has sidewalks, boardwalk, benches, boat dock and parking lots on each end with wheelchair access)

S2. Is the site listed in the National Register of Historic Places? Y N
 What is the listing name?

S3. Ownership of site:
 Private Private, non-profit (501c3) Multiple ownership
 Public, local government Public, state government Public, federal government

S4a. Type(s) of Underground Railroad Association (select the one(s) that fit best)
 Station Assoc. w/ prominent person Rebellion site Legal challenge

Escape community Rescue Kidnapping Maroon

Destination Church w/active congregation Cemetery
 Transportation route

Military site Commemorative site/monument historic district/neighborhood

Archeological site Other (describe)



S4. Describe the site's association and significance to the Underground Railroad. Provide citations. Timelines are encouraged.

Using Thomas Garrett's October 27, 1856 letter to Eliza Wigham, including the story of Harriet Tubman's most recent escape shortly after hearing it directly from her, is the best way to document this daring escape as Harriet Tubman could not read nor write – she left no diary, no written records, only interviews and this one was while she was still escaping north. The attached transcribed letter by Thomas Garret contains the known details of the escape. The letter, transcribed by the researcher, from photos of the actual letter located on-line at: <http://www.haverford.edu/library/special/aids/tpcope/> courtesy of Haverford College Library, Haverford, PA, Quaker Collection, Thomas P. Cope Family Papers, Coll. No. 1013 follows the narrative.

Harriet was able to find the girl that Garrett never mentions by name, but today, after years of research by many historians, the girl is known has been identified as “Tilly” – the name noted by Sarah Bradford in her 2nd biography of Harriet Tubman, Harriet, The Moses of Her People (1886).² After finding Tilly, Tubman knew that a steamship voyage to the north to Philadelphia would be too dangerous and costly as she would need \$500 in bond to secure the passage. So, Harriet booked a Steamboat voyage up the Nanticoke to Seaford, Del. instead, traveling first in a southern direction, and then across the Chesapeake Bay to the Eastern Shore and up the Nanticoke.



² Sarah Bradford, Harriet, The Moses of her People. New York: Gro. Lockwood & Sons, 1886. pgs. 57-61. See notes in S7, S10, and S11.



The earliest map of the Chesapeake was printed in 1612 as made by Captain John Smith after his voyage of 1608. The map notes the early name for the Nanticoke area, named after the Native Americans located up river - Kuskarawaok. The relationship of the Seaford area to the map is marked by the black dot.

Garrett wrote, "When the boat arrived at Seaford, she (Harriet) boldly went to the hotel and called for supper and lodging". The Sidewheeler Steamboat *KENT*'s schedule indicates that the *KENT* was the steamer due to sail on Tuesdays (in this case, probably October 21st) down the Chesapeake Bay from Baltimore and up the Nanticoke River almost forty miles to Seaford, Delaware stopping at several small towns and villages situated on high ground along the way.



NOTICE	
On and after Wednesday , the 1st October, the Steamer <i>KENT</i> , Capt. A. R. FIELDS, will run her trips as follows:	
Monday	— Leave Denton for Baltimore at 7 o'clock, A. M.
Tuesday	— Leave Baltimore for Seaford at 7 o'clock A. M.
Wednesday Night	— Leave Baltimore for Denton at 12 P. M.
Thursday	— Leave Denton for Baltimore at 12 M. (Friday—Layday.)
Saturday	— Leave Baltimore for Denton at 7 o'clock A. M.
FARE —To Denton and Landings on Choptank River, \$2.00	
Round Trip Tickets, 3.00	
To Seaford and Landings on Nanticoke River, 2.50	
To Hooper's Straits, 2.00	
Meals extra.	
All Freights must be Pre paid.	
C. K. CANNON, CTR.	

The next morning, after spending the night in the hotel, a pair of slave dealers tried to arrest Harriet and Tilly, but the Landlord (probably John L. Colbourn who was enumerated in the 1850 and 1860 U.S. Census as the Landlord/Inn Keeper) intervened on their behalf and they were allowed to continue on. (image on page 11)

Shrewdly, Harriet had previously asked for, and received, a letter of passage from a steamboat Captain when she was traveling south from Philadelphia to Baltimore. The letter of passage stated that Harriet was a free Black woman from Philadelphia. With this identification letter, she showed her letter to the Captain of this Steamboat in Seaford, who knew the Captain on the Philadelphia to Baltimore route, who then wrote them a pass to travel north. This thinking ahead saved the day.



A W A K E

DOV

RAILROADS & STEAMBOATS

FALL ARRANGEMENT.
Between, New Castle, Wilmington and Philadelphia.

CHANGE OF TIME

On and after Monday, Oct. 29th, 1856, passenger trains will leave as follows:

TRACES	A. M.	P. M.
UP TRACKS.		
Bridgeville, for Philadelphia,	7.15 and 4.00	
St. Johnston, "	7.25	4.15
Farmington, "	7.44	4.25
Freeman's Corner, "	7.48	4.45
Milford Junction, "	8.00	5.05
Frederick, "	8.15	5.25
Conterbury, "	8.22	5.32
Camden, "	8.25	6.00
Dover, "	8.50	6.25
Leipic, "	9.06	6.40
Seymour, "	9.20	7.00
Townsend, "	9.40	7.20
Middletown, "	10.05	7.45
Mt. Pleasant, "	10.17	8.00
St. Georges, "	10.25	8.15
New Castle, "	11.10	9.05
Wilmington, "	11.40	9.35
DOWN TRACKS.		
Philadelphia, for Bridgeville,	8.20	4.15
Wilmington, "	9.45	5.47
New Castle, "	10.17	6.12
St. Georges, "	10.50	6.44
Mt. Pleasant, "	11.00	6.55
Middletown, "	11.15	7.10
Townsend, "	11.42	7.28
Seymour, "	11.54	7.41
Leipic, "	12.21	8.08
Dover, "	12.44	8.28
Camden, "	1.06	8.55
Conterbury, "	1.15	9.05
Frederick, "	1.25	9.24
Milford Junction, "	2.00	9.30
Freeman's Cor., "	2.10	9.35
Farmington, "	2.20	9.50
St. Johnston, "	2.30	9.50

A train will also leave New Castle for Philadelphia at 7 A. M., and Wilmington for New Castle at 2.50 P. M.

Trains for Baltimore, leave Wilmington at 12.20, 3.00, A. M., 5.42 and 8.15 P. M.

Trains for Wilmington and Philadelphia, leave Baltimore at 8.45, 11.05, A. M., 5 & 6.51, P. M.

A Freight Train will run once each way daily, Sundays excepted.

Persons wishing to obtain Cars to load, must give at least TWO DAYS' NOTICE, previous to the time they are required.

A STAGE will leave Conterbury on the arrival of the morning Train, for Denton and Easton, Md., arriving at Easton the same evening. Also leave Easton in the morning to connect with the 5.05 P. M. train from Milford Junction.

A STAGE connects at Bridgeville with the morning train up and evening Train down, for Georgetown, Berlin and Sewer Hill.

D. A. SANBORN,
Sept. Del. R. R.

cc21-47

CHANGE OF TIME.

With these passes now in hand, Harriet and Tilly went to the newly laid train tracks a few miles north and booked train passage to Camden, Delaware. The letter does not say, but William and Nathaniel Brinkley were well known Conductors on the Underground Railroad in Camden and may have been the reason Harriet and Tilly booked their passage only to Camden, below Dover and only about half way to Wilmington, home of Thomas Garrett. In William Still's the Underground Railroad, William Brinkley's letter of March 23, 1857 is transcribed. Only five months after the Tilly escape, Brinkley, a phonetic speller, writes that "...Harrett, a woman that stops at my house when she passes tow and throw yau..." But there are no specific documents that say that she had stopped on that particular night in October. There is only the knowledge that William and Nathaniel Brinkley had helped her previously and that she had booked her train passage to their hometown of Camden. She, therefore, may well have used the Brinkleys to help her continue to take Tilly north.

Locally, the train ride to Camden part of the letter raised the most questions by area historians. In October of 1856, there was no railroad in Seaford. It would not arrive in Seaford until December of that year. This one fact raised many questions about the entire story. However, research in old newspapers and also the Pennsylvania Railroad answered the question quite well. As seen in the schedule to the left, the "Delaware State Reporter" of Dover, Delaware, Oct 24, 1856 edition, printed the train schedule of October 20, 1856, which demonstrates that trains were running from the next town north, Bridgeville, only six miles away from Seaford, twice a day - 7:15 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The train had not yet

reached Seaford – but it was close. Close enough to even walk. Had the laying of tracks continued at a similar rate as that of the immediate past, it could easily have been at least to Cannon's Crossroads and maybe even Ross' Station at the Governor William H. H. Ross Plantation. So this question is no longer relevant. The train was nearby if it was not exactly in Seaford itself. It was so close that they could have walked or taken a carriage. Even it were to take the 4 p.m. train. The two would have had no problem making it to the train and heading north to Camden, just as documented by the Garrett letter.



At Thomas Garrett's house in Wilmington, after telling the story of the escape and securing some monies to buy some shoes worn out by travel, and to help fund future escapes, she took her leave of Thomas Garrett and continued on to take Tilly north to her beloved fiancé. Garrett noted in his letter what he admired most about Harriet Tubman when he wrote, "But the strangest thing about this woman is, she does not know, or appears not to know, that she has done anything worth notice! May her Guardian continue to preserve her many perilous adventures."



In the apparent space of but a few days, Harriet had brought Tilly south down the Chesapeake from Baltimore by Steamboat and up the Nanticoke River to Seaford, Delaware and then by train to Camden, Del. and then by carriage to Thomas Garrett in Wilmington.

Then, and this is one of the most important parts of the Tilly escape from a historical perspective - with the story fresh in his memory, Thomas Garrett sat down and wrote his letter of October 27, 1856 to Eliza Wigham in Scotland, that provides the validation of this bold escape. Having used a steamboat for an escape would have been daring and unique, but sailing south first in order to go even further north, is truly unique. Seaford, being in the slave state of Delaware and Sussex County, that was always able to muster enough votes in the Delaware State Legislature to keep slavery in the state until the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, which the state legislature also voted against until 1903! Delaware was one of only two states that still had legal slavery at the passage of the 13th Amendment making slavery illegal in all the states of the United States. This little town called Seaford, was a dangerous place to "boldly" go to the hotel and "call for supper"! Harriet Tubman needed all her wits to carry off this escape. And she did!

According to William Still, in his book, The Underground Railroad, slaves wanting to escape from Sussex County at the headwaters of the Nanticoke, where Seaford, Delaware is located, were helped by other local conductors but they are unknown. No one knows the details of the Underground Railroad in this area even to this day. Their secrets were too dangerous to reveal. The slave owners of the past had so much power to force the necessary silence. But luckily, at least some histories of the Underground Railroad were kept when William Still wrote down details of the escapees' lives in slavery, when he interviewed them while they were passing through Philadelphia on their way further north, frequently to Upstate New York or Canada. These interviews included over twenty escaping slaves from the Nanticoke Headwaters and seven of that number who came from Seaford itself.

This daring escape, "the Tilly Story", is the only known documented escape led by Harriet Tubman at the headwaters of the Nanticoke that borders her home county of Dorchester, Md.

Courtesy of the Haverford College Library (Quaker Collection Thomas P. Cope Family Papers, Coll. no. 1013 Garrett's letter is transcribed here: (Note: In the original, some transcribers have indicated that the date is Oct. 24th and others the 27th. The 27th,



however, seems to fit with other dates mentioned in the letter. Garrett mentions receiving the money for Tubman on October 18th, a Saturday. He then indicates he saw Tubman and gave her the money on “the sixth day past” which is the Quaker form of Friday, so the 27th was selected until further analysis shows differently. (The date of October the 24th, a Friday (“On sixth day last [Quaker form for Friday], less than a week after I received thy letter and money, Harriet came into my office & addressed me..”) thus according to Garrett, writing on Monday October 27th, Harriet arrived in his office on Friday (last), which was “less than a week” after he had received the money for her (on Saturday, October 18). This fits the escape timing well with the Baltimore to Seaford steamboat scheduled on Tuesdays, in this case Tuesday, October 21st. Then spending the night in Seaford, the 21st. And leaving for Camden by train on the 22nd. Then making it to Wilmington and Thomas Garrett by the 24th. Garrett’s letter to Wigham follows:

Wilmington, 10 - 27 - 56

My dear friend, E. Wigham,

Thy esteemed favor on 9th month, was handed to me by J.M. McKim on the 18th of this month, also £5.0 designed for that noble woman, Harriett Tubman, forwarded by thee. As I had not heard of her for several weeks past, I left a letter at the Anti-Slavery office with Wm Still, informing her of the handsome donation I had just received for her - On sixth day last, less than a week after I received thy letter and money, Harriet came into my office & addressed me thus-“Mr. Garrett I am here again, out of money, & with no shoes to my feet, & God has sent me to you for what I need”. I said- Harriet, art thou sure thou art not deceived, I cannot find money enough to supply all God’s poor. I had five here last week & had to pay 8 dollars to clothe & forward them. She said, “Well, you have got enough for me to pay for a pair of shoes, & to pay for my own & a friend’s passage to Philadelphia.” Then she said, “I must have 20 dollars more to enable me to go down to Mary Land for a woman and three children-” She said she had paid her last copper that morning to a coloured man that had brought her, & a delicate female – a house servant – some 30 odd miles in his carriage. I then told her that the Good Spirit had put it into the heart of a kind friend in England to send especially for her £5.0, so that she would have enough for all her present wants without calling on her Philadelphia friends for aid. She said, “I thank you very much. I was sure I could get money from you, but I did not expect so much.” – The history of this trip was remarkable, & manifested great shrewdness. This girl was a slave in Baltimore, and was engaged to be married to a slave 8 years since. For some reason his master determined to sell him to go south, a friend very kindly informed him of fact. He went to see the object of his affections, bid her farewell, and left. He arrived safe in the interior of New York, and after being absent more than 7 years, furnished Harriet with some money, & she went to Baltimore in pursuit. After considerable search she found the woman & brought her away. She had gone to Philadelphia with the captain of a steam boat, trading through the Delaware and Chesapeake canal, & had taken the precaution to get from him a certificate of her being a resident of Philadelphia, & free. She knew she could not bring a strange woman from Baltimore to Philadelphia, either by railroad or steam boat, without giving bonds in 500 dollars, and therefore took passage for herself & companion to Seaford, on the eastern



shore of Maryland, in the steamboat, & delivering the Captain her passport from Philadelphia to Baltimore, and he, knowing the captain of the boat that took her to Baltimore, was prevailed on to give her a certificate, also. When the boat arrived at Seaford, she boldly went to the Hotel & called for supper & lodging. Next morning when they were about to leave, a dealer in such stock attempted to arrest them, but on showing the captain's certificate, the landlord interfered & the women went to the railroad & paid their passage to Camden, some 50 miles below here, & then came up in private conveyance. I asked her if she was not frightened when arrested. "Not a bit," she said. She knew she would get off safe, & now I hope by this time she has taken the girl to her long lost lover. But the strangest thing about this woman is, she does not know, or appears not to know, that she has done anything worth notice! May her Guardian continue to preserve her many perilous adventures. The piece cut out of the Trenton New Jersey Gazette, giving a history of the slave heroine who returned to a slave state & rescued 7 of her children & grandchildren is not the person I have given you history of. I happened to be in Philadelphia when that woman was there with her children. She was also a noble woman. Harriet's health much improved since I last saw her. She now looks as though she might be able to perform good service in the cause for years to come. Our whole country is agitated at present about Politics, whether Buchanan or Fremont will be elected President. No one can certainly tell, but I think most likely Buchanan will be. But no matter which is elected, the slavery agitation must continue till slavery is abolished. The South is becoming bold and insolent towards the North, & towards the advocates of freedom. If the North once becomes fairly aroused, they have the power to dictate terms, but I fear that slavery may not be abolished here without Civil War. Slaves still continue to follow the North Star when favorable opportunity offers. My list of such now numbers 2028. Nothing gives us more pleasure than to have an opportunity to assist them on their way.

I hope your Anti-Slavery efforts will be continued, as I can assure you that the slaveholders & their apologists on this side of the water are anxiously watching what is going on with you. I am no politician, & therefore need not to say any more on that subject, as you can learn from our papers all about what is going on here. You will no doubt conclude that there never was a more contemptible or unjust government on earth than ours at the present time, not only in respect to Kansas and Nebraska, but also to Central America. Walker, in his marauding expeditions, is discouraged by the name called Frank Pierce & all his understrappers, more especially, Southerners. If a rupture take place between the North & the South, then, and not till then, will the South discover their weakness, for the majority of the whites at the South are poor, & do not hold slaves, & in reality are opposed to slavery, but dare not to express their honest convictions on the subject, for the penalty would surely be expulsion from their houses, or imprisonment, till they would agree to Southern views respecting slavery. There is now no freedom of speech or of the press in any southern state, except little Delaware & here only in Wilmington. There is about as much anti-slavery feeling here as in Boston, and quite as freely expressed. I can have published in one paper at least anything I wish on the subject of slavery, as I always put my name to what I write.

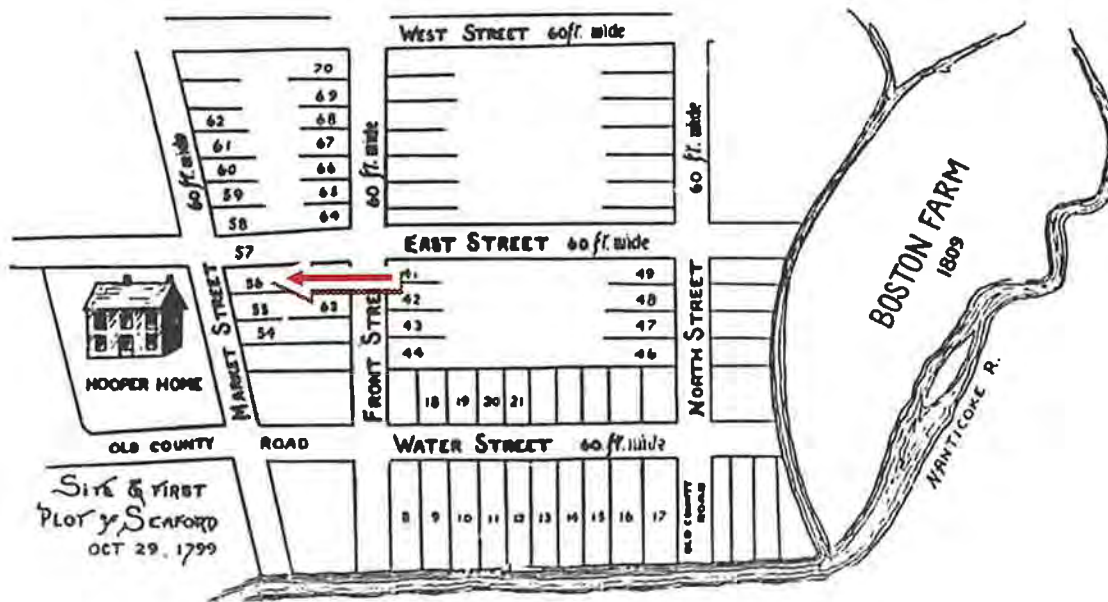


When time & opportunity offers, a line from thee or any other of our anti-slavery friends in Europe will be gladly received by your friend, & the friend of Humanity, without regard to religion, country, or colour.

Thomas Garrett

S5. Provide a history of the site since its time of significance to the Underground Railroad, including physical changes, changes in ownership or use.

The Nanticoke Headwaters area was explored by Captain John Smith in the summer of 1608. It started being settled in the third quarter of the seventeenth century. Probate records indicate that slaves were in the area in at least the first half of the eighteenth century. By the time the town of Seaford was plotted in 1799, slavery was well entrenched. In this plotting, below, the hotel would be on lot 56 at the top left of the triangular block. The triangular block is the site of the present Gateway Park. The Riverwalk would be the wharf just west of the Market Street Bridge and starts below the handwritten 1799.



According to Robert B. Hazzard, a contemporary local historian of the period who wrote The History of Seaford (written in the 1870s but not published until 1890), the area was plotted in 1799 and a minister, Solomon Prettyman originally built a “fine dwelling” early in the 1800’s at this location at the top left of the hill in a triangular shaped block. In this area of Delmarva, due to the flatness of the land, a slight slope for most parts of the country can be identified as a “hill” here. Hazzard noted that it was a two story house called “Solomon’s Temple.” It became a tavern after his removal to Wilmington.



Later, the tavern changed hands from time to time but may well have been called "the Colbourn" during the time of this escape, as the only Inn Keeper/Landlord in the Seaford area in the U.S. Census of both 1850 and 1860, was a John L. Colbourn. Before this decade, there were some smaller places to stay that sometimes might be called a "hotel" like the Swiggett, and Mrs. Martin's house. Both of these were basically homes with enough room to accommodate some boarders. They were also located in basically the same area, but were located more toward the bottom of the hill. By the 1850s, there are no records, no indications that either of those hotels/residences were still in business. The only record of a hotel in Seaford in this decade is that of one John L. Colbourn as seen on page 817, of the Northwest Fork Hundred, dwelling # 140, in the town of Seaford in the 1860 Census. As can be seen below, Colbourn lived there with his wife and family probably in separate quarters and the guests stayed in the "Hotel" accommodations of the probably quite large home.

Page No. 817

SCHEDULE I - Free Inhabitants of North Carolina in the Census of 1860 of Delaware enumerated by me, on the 1st day of June 1860, for Seaford Post Office Seaford COUNTY DE

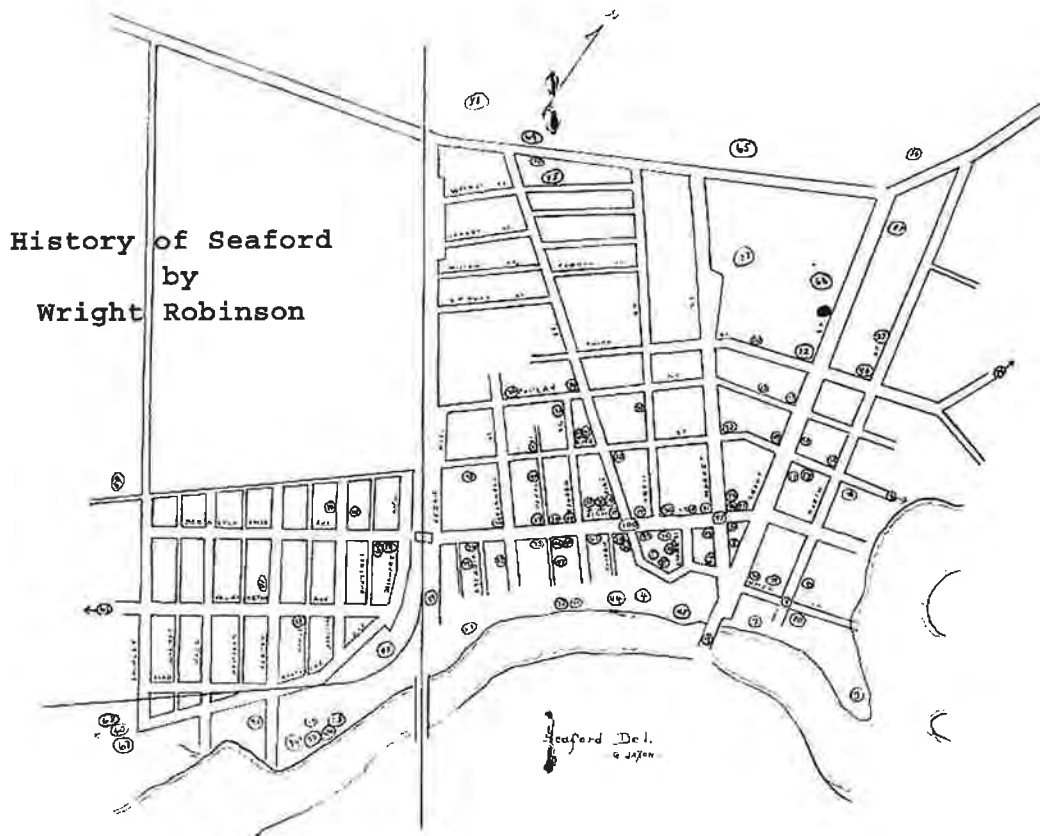
No. of Family	No. of Inhabitants	Name of every person whose usual place of abode on the 1st day of June, 1860, was in this family.	Sex and Age			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Color or Race	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			M	F	Under 15		\$	Value of Personal Estate			
		Mr Jones	39	m		Sailor			Virginia		
		Mary	34	f					Del		
		James E.	10	m					Del		
		Samuel G.	1	f					Del		
132	132	Mr. Pope	31	m		Sailor			"		
		Emma	23	f					"		
		Mary B.	4	f					Del		
		Stephen	2	f					Del		
		John	5	f					Del		
139	139	Mr. Colbourn	30	m		Sailor	1500		Del		
		Charlotte	35	f					"		
		John	10	m					"		
		Virginia B.	6	f					"		
		Leah	4	f					"		
		Elizabeth Pope	26	f					"		
139	140	Mr. Colbourn	61	m		Retiree	2000	2000	"		
		John	61	f					"		
		Mary	37	m		U. S. Quartermaster			"		
		David	34	m		Sailor			"		
		Car L.	22	m		Sergeant			"		
		Anna B.	10	f					"		
		John	13	f					"		
		John	11	m					"		
		Mr. Colbourn	22	m		Franklin			"		
140	141	Mr. P. Colbourn	32	m		Quartermaster	1500	1500	"		
		Emma	29	f					"		
		Mary	25	f					"		
		Leah	16	f					"		
		John	13	m					"		
		Emma	11	f					"		
		John	8	m					"		
		Elizabeth	14	m		Affirmative			"		
		Priscilla Cannon	31	m		Bar tender			Delaware		
		John	29	m		Attorney			Del		
		John H. Marshall	31	m		Quartermaster	300		Del		
		Mr. Colbourn	35	m		Quartermaster	1500	1500	Del		
		Michael Holroy	33	m		Sailor			Delaware		
		James Adams	35	m		Sailor			Del		
		John Murphy	38	m		Sailor			Delaware		
		Oliver	20	f		Sailor			Del		

No. white males 22 No. colored males 0 No. single men 22 No. blind 0
No. white females 17 No. colored females 0 No. deaf and dumb 0 No. insane 0



On this page, we know that this hotel with John L. Colbourn, Landlord, is on Market Street as fits the map, as dwelling #139 belongs to Hugh Martin, who has his own interesting story that will be related shortly.

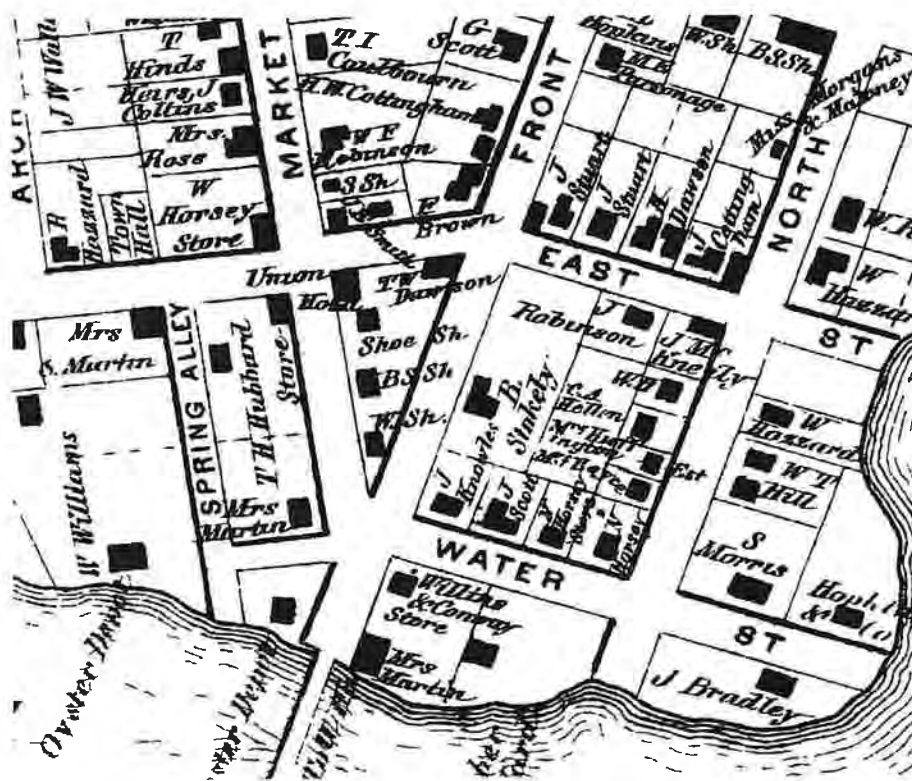
Since we know the Landlord/Innkeeper in both census was John L. Coulbourn, it is reasonable to extrapolate that when Garrett wrote, "Next morning when they were about to leave, a dealer in such stock attempted to arrest them, but on showing the captain's certificate, the landlord interfered & the women went to the railroad & paid their passage to Camden... ", he probably was referring to Coulbourn as the Landlord. There is no way to know this for sure without having been there and witnessing the near catastrophe. But this is very strong evidence to promulgate the theory that Coulbourn interceded and acted as a mediator in this case. He had to have been respected enough by the two slave traders that they backed off their attempt to arrest Harriet Tubman and Tilly and allowed them to travel on north.



Before the coming of the railroad later in December of 1856 the hotel area was considered the center of town according to local editor and historian, Wright Robinson, in A History of Seaford, map p. 13 – 14 noted the intersection of High and Market as the center of town in 1850. The hotel was located just a couple hundred yards north of the Nanticoke River where small businesses operated out of shacks and sheds and boat builders built schooners that sailed the Chesapeake and sometimes the Atlantic Coast, or



sometimes, even the entire Atlantic. The area where the hotel and other businesses and trades were located was more at the top of the hill. But below the hotel, a few small businesses also existed for a while and then went out of business and someone else took their place and that process continued until the 1990s. Toward the third and fourth quarter of the 19th century, at various times, a shoe shop, a blacksmith shop and a wheelwright's shed were located next to the local jail behind the Hotel going downhill toward the bridge that was first built in 1832 as a toll drawbridge. The bridge was owned by a Capt. Hugh Martin, which is one way that we know that John L Colbourn was the landlord of that particular Hotel in the 1850s and not some other unidentified one that was not enumerated in 1860. In that census, Colbourn's neighbor was none other than Capt. Hugh Martin, who lived in a very well-known house, on the opposite side of the road on Market St., slightly down the hill. From this location, he could watch the bridge from his house to make sure that everyone, and everything, paid their toll as they crossed his bridge. The toll bridge was later purchased by the state of Delaware. After being a free public use drawbridge for more than a half century, many local old-timers still referred to it as "the toll bridge" into the twentieth century.



The name of the hotel changed from time to time, or at least the owners did, and by 1868, it would be called "the Union Hotel" in the Pomeroy and Beers Delaware Atlas of that year. It can be seen at the top left of the triangular block. Possibly the name was changed during the Civil War and it continued on for a while. Later, the hotel was called



“the Coulbourn” possibly being owned by one of the sons or relatives of John L. Colbourn.

After a fire destroyed the building, it was replaced in 1894 by a much larger, grander building, “The Hotel Sussex”. This was considered the very nicest hotel in the area during its heyday. But, like the Coulbourn, flames would take it also in October of 1952. It was demolished, the ruins removed, and then replaced by a gas station that was not successful and the area fell into years of decay until the 1990s.

The City of Seaford formed a citizens’ committee in the 1990s when the property became a total eyesore and asked for the group to suggest the best options for this area, as it really was the entry to downtown Seaford. It was decided that the site should be made into a public area owned by the City of Seaford – a park. Civic groups contributed, private individuals, and government programs contributed as well. It was called “Gateway Park” and opened to the public in 1996.

A central fountain and gathering area is at the core of Gateway Park.



A very attractive small park, with a public area, large sweeps of dark green grass, with a fountain centerpiece, all of which still serve as a beautiful entrance to the downtown area of Seaford. The local downtown area has also now seen considerable improvements through the Main Street Program.

Gateway Park serves multiple purposes. First, it is just a place to relax and enjoy the sounds of the fountain. But, the park also features Kick-Off nights for health programs such as Breast Cancer Awareness with lights of pink for that month and Autism Awareness with lights of blue. There are several “Concerts in the Park” in the summer as well. It also serves as the center of the car show during the Nanticoke Riverfest and the registration point for the “Float-in” where several hundred “tubers” float down the river every July, enjoying the joys of a river passage in the inner tubes.

The name “Gateway Park” was just a committee agreed-upon-name for the new park. Seaford is Delaware’s natural Gateway to the Chesapeake and, perhaps, that was the reason the name was chosen. But, in this case, the park seems to have been the “Gateway to Freedom” for Harriet Tubman and the young slave girl, Tilly- a remarkable coincidence. (Photos attached)

The Riverwalk, where ships of many types, including steamships, would come in and tie-up, is below the Gateway Park with sidewalks and decking that passes along the Nanticoke with grass, trees and benches that can be seen below as it is today.



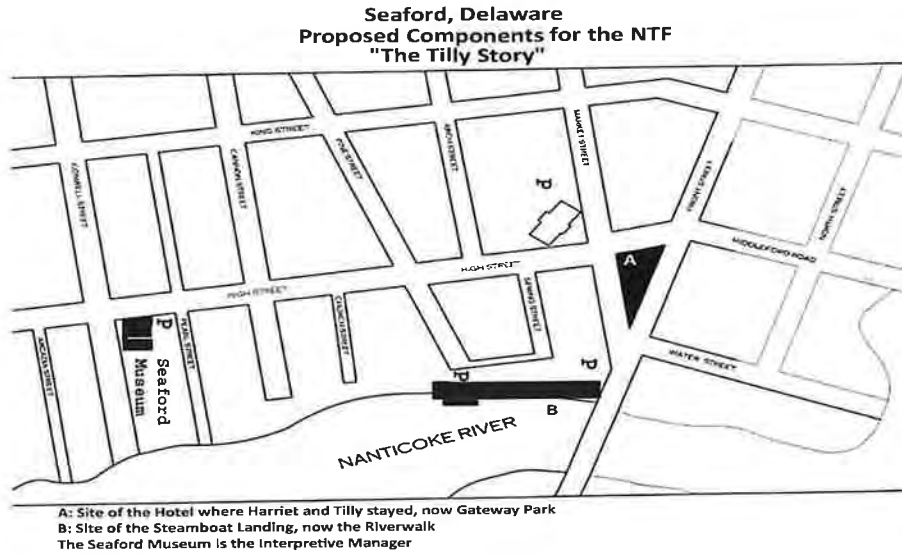


In this late 19th century photograph, a steamboat, the *Tangier*, can be seen coming in to port in the area where the Riverwalk presently is located. Sometimes steamboats would also tie up further up the river, on the other side of the Market Street Bridge, but only if they were small enough to make it through the opening. The *Kent*, like the *Tangier* below, is an intermediate sized steamboat that probably had a beam in the thirty feet range – too large to pass through the drawbridge.



At each end of the Riverwalk, there is public parking with wheelchair access to assure everyone's ability to enjoy the river. There are several children's fishing tournaments held there in the summer with prizes donated by the community. There is still some port activity in Seaford but mostly below the railroad bridge where much of the business actually started in the 19th Century. Tugs and barges still navigate the narrow river today as the sailing vessels and steamboats of yesteryear. But today, lighted buoys help lead the way even if only for the yachts that use the marina across the river in Blades as their "home port". Below are the locations of the components of the NTF Nomination.





- A. Being the City of Seaford Gateway Park;
- B. Being the City of Seaford Riverwalk
- C. The Seaford Museum, the Interpretive Manager location a few blocks from the park
- P. Indicating where parking is available. All areas are handicapped accessible.

S6. Describe current educational programs, tours, markers, signs, brochures, site bulletins, or plaques at the site. Include text and photographs of markers.

There are no historical markers or signs at this time only "Welcome" signs that state: "Welcome to Seaford, Gateway Park" like the one below. (Other photos of the nominated areas are attached)



Informal inquiries have been made to members of the Delaware UGRR Byway Committee and The Delaware State Archives about inclusion into the byway at a later date and the placement of a state historic marker about the Tilly escape on this site following its acceptance into the NPS Network to Freedom. Should these sites gain acceptance into the N T F, there is little doubt that money could be raised to provide an interpretive signage describing the escape and /or receive a state historic marker. Having a state marker would still be a primary goal, as their markers are readily found online and



would yet be another method to advertise/celebrate this unforgettable escape through our town. Interpretive signage will become a reality!



The project's Interpretive Manager, the Seaford Museum, seen above, is but a short 5 block or less walk or drive and has its own parking lot for easy access. During this research, other information about the Underground Railroad in the Seaford and Nanticoke Headwaters area has been uncovered. Upon the completion of the new Maritime gallery that is currently under construction, the museum will increase and balance its exhibit about slavery. Right now, the infamous Patty Cannon, runaways, the Gov. Ross Plantation slave quarters, etc., are the core of the exhibit. Now by adding the local UGRR information and especially with Harriet Tubman and "the Tilly Escape" occurring through Seaford's downtown, several nice "Victories" can be added to the exhibit. The Seaford Museum is located at 203 High St., Seaford, DE 19973 and is one of the finest small town museums anywhere.

During the research, it was learned that twenty-some escapees from the Nanticoke Headwaters were interviewed by William Still in Philadelphia with four of those specifically mentioning the words "Underground Railroad". Of that twenty-some, seven escapees were from Seaford itself and were interviewed by Still. The museum now has another great story to tell. And one that no one knew existed until now. The museum has had a runaway "REWARD" poster on display for some time. Now, the museum can balance the negative display with a positive note that of one of those men listed on the poster, James Edward Handy, successfully made it to Philadelphia! Like Harriet Tubman and Tilly, Handy and the others went north, went north to Freedom! We do not know how. But we do now know that Seaford's Gateway Park was Tilly's Gateway to Freedom.

S7. Include a bibliography. Discuss historical sources of information and how you used them.

William Still, [the Underground Railroad](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15263/15263-h/15263-h.htm), which can be found in its entirety online <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15263/15263-h/15263-h.htm>. Twenty-some escaping interviewees from the Nanticoke Headwaters (not "Tilly" – but others) were documented by Still. This book was used as a general reference to find that the Underground Railroad did exist here in our location. And that all of the 'Runaways' on a reward poster in our museum actually made it safely to be interviewed by Still and then sent on to Canada or Upstate New York or other states much further north. With this data, the museum will be able to increase our Slavery section to include a much more positive Underground Railroad section.



Thomas Garrett, Oct. 27, 1856 “Letter to Eliza Wigham” (online Haverford Collection <http://www.haverford.edu/library/special/aids/tpcope/#links>). Images of the letter, personally transcribed by researcher, is the entire basis for the story with the exception of the escapee’s name that was not use in the letter. Sarah Bradford, based on her interviews with Harriet Tubman, would later include the same story with slight variations but with the name “Tilly”. That aroused a question in many minds. The researcher will rely on the expertise of Tubman expert, Dr. Kate Larson on using the name “Tilly” herein. It seems to be well accepted as “the Tilly escape” by all experts in the field now. According to Dr. Larson, the similarities in the two stories between Garrett’s contemporary story, written within three days of Tubman’s arrival at his office, and Bradford’s version written 30 years later with slight variations in details, support the conclusion that the unidentified woman is, in fact, “Tilly.”³ See Sarah Bradford, Harriet, The Moses of Her People, New York: Geo. Lockwood & Sons, 1886. (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/harriet/harriet.html>)

The Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society website contains “Pennsylvania Railroad – PRR Chronology (found online at their Society website: <http://www.prrths.com/Hagley/PRR1856%20Mar%2005.pdf>)”. This Delaware Railroad chronology demonstrated that the railroad, which had not reached Seaford during the time of the escape, was so close that Harriet and Tilly could have even walked to it but, more likely, taken a carriage or stage. But the question of the availability of the railroad was a concern in the story as it did not come to Seaford until December of 1856 – six weeks later but the letter clearly states that “the women went to the railroad & paid their passage to Camden”. After finding the train route completion dates and newspaper schedules, the availability of the train to take them to Camden was no longer of historical concern. Three weeks after the schedule noted, the train could have been running even as close as the Ross Plantation one mile north, or Cannon’s Station 4 miles north, but no further than the town of Bridgeville (on Sept. 29th, three weeks earlier), only 6 miles away.

Delaware State Reporter, October 24, 1856. Schedule of the Delaware Railroad, on page one, titled “Change of Time” effective October 20th also notes the train leaving from Bridgeville twice a day: at 7:15 a.m. and 4 p.m. There was even a later train that would have meant they could have walked to the newest stop and arrived in Camden the same evening.

Dr. Kate Larson, June 6, 2013 personal email, “UGRR and the Tilly Story” gave assurances / rationale for the correctness of using the name “Tilly” as the name of the slave girl as Thomas Garrett used no name for the escaping slave in his letter to Wigham.

³See Larson, Bound, pgs 131-133; Garrett, *Letter Thomas Garrett to Eliza Wigham, October 27, 1856*; Bradford, Harriet, pgs. 57-61.



Dr. Kate Larson, Harriet Tubman. Portrait of an American Hero, Ballentine Books, NY, 2004 was also used as background for general UGRR knowledge as well as researching the Tilly story itself (pp.131 – 133).

J. Thomas Scharf, History of Delaware 1609 - 1888, 1888, “History of Seaford Hundred” (available online <http://archive.org/details/historyofdelawar11scha>) for location of hotel.

Pomeroy and Beers Atlas, 1868, a Seaford town map shows the triangle that is now the Gateway Park and where the then -1868- hotel was called the “Union Hotel” but was probably not called that in 1856. In the 1850 and 1860 Census, both demonstrate that only one hotel was located in Seaford – John L. Colbourn, landlord.

W. Wright Robinson, A History of Seaford – map of Seaford’s businesses and description of changes and biographies of early residents. He also noted the center of town being the Hotel. Red Arrow Press, Delmar, Del. 1933. No longer available.

Robert B. Hazzard, The History of Seaford. Hazzard was born abt. 1824 and gives a contemporary recounting of the town’s growth and biographies from its earliest beginnings through the coming of the railroad in December, 1856. UNK publisher, 1890. No longer available.

S8. Describe any local, state, or federal historic designation, records, signage, or plaques at the site.

The only signage reads: “Welcome to Seaford Gateway Park”. And there is one small bronze plaque, attached to the bricks in the back wall of the fountain, that honors the financial donors who contributed greatly to the construction of the centerpiece of Gateway Park – The two tiered fountain.

S9. Is the site open to the public? Describe accessibility conditions.

YES. The site is always open. The curbs at Gateway Park are handicapped accessible. Public parking is located just off Market Street behind City Hall and also toward the bottom of the hill. There is also a parking lot at the bottom of Pine Street that also allows handicapped access to the Riverwalk at that end (west end) of the two hundred yard long Riverwalk. At the Riverwalk, there is a sidewalk, boardwalk and boat dock for river access. Fishing (no license required for youths under 16) is available along the entire Riverwalk with small bluegills, perch and catfish being the favorite targets.

The Interpretive Manager is the Seaford Historical Society that is located at 203 High Street, Seaford, DE 19973, is five blocks west and is currently opened four afternoons a week, Thursday through Sunday, with a small entry fee and free to the public during Riverfest and on “Free Museum” days.



S10. Describe the nature and objectives of any partnerships that have contributed to the documentation, preservation, commemoration, or interpretation of the site.

The City of Seaford (DE) and the Seaford Historical Society have a long standing partnership for assisting one another in various activities whether it is assisting the Seaford Museum to move into its present location at the “old Post Office” or partnering with the summer festival, Riverfest, or “Family Movies at the Gov. Ross Plantation”. In this case, the city is “the owner” of the Park and Riverwalk properties and will continue to care/maintain them as it has in the past. The Seaford Historical Society will serve as the Interpretive Manager for the property through one of its components: The Seaford Museum. The museum researcher has documented the historical accuracy of the story so that both parties, the City and the Seaford Historical Society feel comfortable in publicly interpreting this story as a factual UGRR escape through our town, guided by Harriet Tubman and as related in the October 27, 1856 letter of Thomas Garrett to Eliza Wigham. Several state and national UGRR experts have been part of this collaboration reaching agreement on the facts of the story. The researcher attended the UGRR Conference this past month in Cambridge, MD to discover more about the UGRR on the Eastern Shore and the best books to read and study. The Seaford Museum of the Seaford Historical Society is about four blocks away and is open four afternoons a week for visitors - Thursday through Sunday.

The museum will expand its slavery exhibit content with the new Underground Railroad and the Harriet Tubman escape through Seaford as well as other material that has come forward since the display was originally done. The Seaford Museum will also pursue the placement of a State of Delaware Historical marker at the site on behalf of the City of Seaford, as well as pursue an interpretive sign similar to the Fossil signs that have now been placed at the Gov. Ross Plantation, including the only log slave quarters in Delaware. Also, during Seaford’s summer festivals, Nanticoke Riverfest and AFRAM, a manned booth will be set up that has information about the Tilly escape and the local Underground Railroad information. The museum will also make information/presentations available to bus and school tours. A PowerPoint presentation will be made for civic and educational venues. The local newspaper has already run a story about the Tilly rescue after the presentation to the City Council for owner’s permission. The City of Seaford will continue to own the property and maintain it. The Seaford Museum will be responsible for disseminating and interpreting the story. Both parties are excited about the project and are committed to doing an excellent job.

S11. Additional data or comments.

The Interpretive Manager, the Seaford Museum is nearby – only four blocks away. It is located on High Street and has public parking in front and its own parking lot and handicapped entrance (<http://www.seafordhistoricalsociety.com/index.cfm?ref-89265>). The museum tells the history of the town in chronological order starting with the Native Americans through the Sixties by means of displays, exhibits and dioramas. Special topics are handled through rotating exhibits that are normally rotated in three month intervals. There is a small section on slavery that will be expanded to include the



information that has come to light during this research about the Underground Rail Road and Harriet Tubman's bold escape through town. Up to this point, there was no direct knowledge of the UGRR in this area and the Tilly story that mentioned the town was known, but had so much fiction included in the various books where it appeared, that the museum could not include it as no one really knew what the actual truth was. However, with actual photographic pictures of the Garrett letter of October 27, 1856 courtesy of the Haverford College Library (Quaker Collection Thomas P. Cope Family Papers, Coll. no. 1013) in Haverford, Pennsylvania, and the William Still Book, The Underground Railroad in hand, the museum feels comfortable in now adding this part of our history and our heritage to our exhibits.

The Historical Society believes that it is indeed fortunate that, during this research, information was found not only about Harriet Tubman, but also, information about other slaves that had escaped and especially that one of the slaves on the museum's runaway "REWARD" poster was interviewed by William Still in Philadelphia. HE MADE IT! It is not just a great story— It is a Victory to celebrate!

This is a great story. We are very proud of it! The Historical Society and the City of Seaford have full confidence now in its historical accuracy, and are proposing it for inclusion into the NPS' Network to Freedom. Because Sarah Bradford related a different story in her earliest biographies of Harriet Tubman, perhaps due to her inability to totally understand her, or one of Harriet's spells, or just faulty notes, the museum has been hesitant to tell the story or even after transcribing Garrett's letter, to use the name "Tilly" with the escape. With the assurances of Dr. Kate Larson, the pre-eminent Tubman historian, or at least one of only a few, who has generously helped guide the researcher when needed. The nomination is thus doing so – It is "the Tilly Escape: Gateway to Freedom". But, by just having Harriet Tubman and Thomas Garrett (and having actual photographs of his original letter), this is a great story that all our visitors, especially all our school children, need to hear.

Our community's schools are almost half minority and the Board of Directors of the Seaford Historical Society has encouraged the research of more minority-related stories. This is a great story to have - for everyone! The history of Seaford is a common history – shared by all. The town may have been mostly segregated in the past, but on the wharf, where the steamboats would come in and ship building, vegetable packing, and oyster shucking took place, everyone worked – and worked together. This headwaters town was built on the labors of all.

The museum hopes to also find definitive information that will prove that Harriet Tubman went to Camden to be guided north by William Brinkley, a well-known Delaware UGRR hero. Right now, that is only an assumption as she bought tickets not to Wilmington, but to his hometown of Camden. Also, William Brinkley (a phonetic speller) was quoted as writing in a letter of March 23, 1857, only five months later, "Harrett, a woman that stops at my hous when she passes tow and thoug..." The museum relies on the best facts available, and with the present research being finished, this Tilly story will stand on its own merits! Hopefully, a local hero, William Brinkley, can be added to the story with certainty, instead of probability, in the future.

Having the Gateway Park and Riverwalk sites, that are associated directly with the details of this story – "The Tilly Escape, Gateway to Freedom", be a part of the NPS



Network to Freedom, will be a great way to celebrate the town's heritage and the heritage of the Underground Railroad with two of its most famous leaders, Harriet Tubman and Thomas Garrett.



CERTIFICATE OF ACCEPTANCE

Presented to

*Tilly Escape Site, Gateway to Freedom:
Harriet Tubman's Daring Escape Route
through Seaford, Delaware*

The National Park Service has evaluated this SITE as making a significant contribution to the understanding of the Underground Railroad in American history and it meets the requirements for inclusion in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom



Diane Miller

Diane Miller, National Program Manager
Network to Freedom, National Park Service

September 25, 2013



NATIONAL
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD
NETWORK TO FREEDOM

Wilmington, 10 - 27 – 56

My dear friend, E. Wigham,

Thy esteemed favour on 9th month 11th, was handed me by J.M. McKim on the 18th of this month, also £5.0 designed for that noble woman, Harriett Tubman, forwarded by thee. As I had not heard of her for several weeks past, I left a letter at the Anti-Slavery office with Wm Still, informing her of the handsome donation I had just received for her - On sixth day last, less than a week after I received thy letter and money, Harriet came into my office & addressed me thus-“Mr. Garrett I am here again, out of money, & with no shoes to my feet, & God has sent me to you for what I need”. I said- Harriet, art thou sure thou art not deceived, I cannot find money enough to supply all God’s poor. I had five here last week & had to pay 8 dollars to clothe & forward them. She said, “Well, you have got enough for me to pay for a pair of shoes, & to pay for my own & a friend’s passage to Philadelphia.” Then she said, “I must have 20 dollars more to enable me to go down to Mary Land for a woman and three children-” She said she had paid her last copper that morning to a coloured man that had brought her, & a delicate female – a house servant – some 30 odd miles in his carriage. I then told her that the Good Spirit had put it into the heart of a kind friend in England to send especially for her £5.0, so that she would have enough for all her present wants without calling on her Philadelphia friends for aid. She said, “I thank you very much. I was sure I could get money from you, but I did not expect so much.” – The history of this trip was remarkable, & manifested great shrewdness. This girl was a slave in Baltimore, and was engaged to be married to a slave 8 years since. For some reason his master determined to sell him to go South, a friend very kindly informed him of fact. He went to see the object of his affections, bid her farewell, and left. He arrived safe in the interior of New York, and after being absent more than 7 years, furnished Harriet with some money, & she went to Baltimore in pursuit. After considerable search she found the woman & brought her away. She had gone from Philadelphia with the captain of a steam boat, trading through the Delaware and Chesapeake canal, & had taken the precaution to get from him a certificate of her being a resident of Philadelphia, & free. She knew she could not bring a strange woman from Baltimore to Philadelphia, either by railroad or steam boat, without giving bonds in 500 dollars, and therefore took passage for herself & companion to Seaford, on the eastern shore of Maryland, in the steamboat, & delivering the Captain her passport from Philadelphia to Baltimore, and he, knowing the captain of the boat that took her to Baltimore, was prevailed on to give her a certificate, also. When the boat arrived at Seaford, she boldly went to the Hotel & called for supper & lodging. Next morning when they were about to leave, a dealer in such stock attempted to arrest them, but on showing the captain’s certificate, the landlord interfered & the women went to the railroad & paid their passage to Camden, some 50 miles below here, & then came up in private conveyance. I asked her if she was not frightened when arrested. Not a bit, she said. She knew she would get off safe, & now I hope by this time

she has taken the girl to her long lost lover. But the strangest thing about this woman is, she does not know, or appears not to know, that she has not done anything worth notice! May her Guardian continue to preserve her from harm in her many perilous adventures. The piece cut out of the Trenton New Jersey Gazette, giving a history of the slave heroine who returned to a slave state & rescued 7 of her children & grandchildren is not the person I have given you history of. I happened to be in Philadelphia when that woman was there with her children. She was also a noble woman. Harriet's health has much improved since I last saw her. She now looks as though she might be able to perform good service in the cause for years to come. Our whole country is agitated at present about Politics, whether Buchanan or Fremont will be elected President. No one can certainly tell, but I think most likely Buchanan will be. But no matter which is elected, the slavery agitation must continue till slavery is abolished. The south is becoming bold and insolent towards the north, & towards the advocates of freedom. If the North once becomes fairly aroused, they have the power to dictate terms, but I fear that slavery may not be abolished here without Civil War. Slaves still continue to follow the North Star when favorable opportunity offers. My list of such now numbers 2028. Nothing gives us more pleasure than to have an opportunity to assist them on their way. I hope you Anti-Slavery efforts will be continued, as I can assure you that the slave holders & their apologists on this side the water are anxiously watching what is going on with you. I am no politician, & therefore need not to say any more on that subject, as you can learn from our papers all about what is going on here. You will no doubt conclude there never was a more contemptible or unjust government on earth than ours at the present time, not only in respect to Kansas and Nebraska, but also to Central America. Walker, in his marauding expeditions, is discouraged by the man called Frank Pierce & all his understrappers, more especially, Southerners. If a rupture take place between the North & the South, then, and not till then will the south discover their weakness, for the majority of the whites at the South are poor, & do not hold slaves, & in reality are opposed to slavery, but dare not to express their honest convictions on the subject, for the penalty would surely be expulsion from their houses, or imprisonment, till they would agree to Southern views respecting slavery. There is now no freedom of speech or of the press in any southern state, except little Delaware & here only in Wilmington. There is about as much anti-slavery feeling here as in Boston, and quite as freely expressed. I can have published in one paper at least anything I wish on the subject of slavery, as I always put my name to what I write.

When time & opportunity offers, a line from thee or any other of our anti-slavery friends in Europe will be gladly received by your friend, & the friend of Humanity, without regard to religion, country, or colour.

Thomas Garrett

the Captain her passport from
Philadelphia to Baltimore & they
renewing the Captain of the boat
that took her to Baltimore, was
prevented or to give her a certificate
also. When the boat arrived at
Seafoot, she boldly went to the
Hotel & called for supper & lodging.
Kept increasing when they were about
to leave, a dealer in such stocks
attempted to wrest them, but on
showing the Captain's certificate
the Landlord interfered & the women
went to the railroad & paid their
passage to Camden some 50 miles
below here, & then came up in
private conveyance. I asked her
if she was not frightened when
assaulted - not a bit she said, she

The “Tilly Escape, Gateway to Freedom: Harriet Tubman’s Daring Escape Route through Seaford, Delaware”

Seaford’s Gateway Park in this case was Harriet Tubman’s “Gateway to Freedom” in October of 1856. In Baltimore, Harriet was able to find the slave, Tilly, the fiancée of an already escaped slave in Canada, and brought her south across the Chesapeake, to Seaford, Delaware by steamboat. The steamboat probably landed at the present site of the City of Seaford’s Riverwalk, like most steamers with passengers. This area was the center of town in the time.

Harriet and Tilly spent the night at the only hotel in town at the top of the hill, where Gateway Park’s fountain is today. They were nearly arrested by slave traders the next morning, but safely continued on their way by train to Camden, Delaware and then by carriage to Thomas Garrett in Wilmington.

Tubman expert, Dr. Kate Larson, referred to the Tilly story in her book, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero, as “one of her most complicated and clever escape attempts”¹. The Tilly Story is especially unique in that Thomas Garret documented the story in detail, as he wrote the letter of Oct 27, 1856 to Eliza Wigham in Scotland, three days after hearing it, while the story was fresh in his mind and in Harriet Tubman’s.

¹ Kate Clifford Larson, Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero. New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. Pg. 131.

¹ Kate Clifford Larson, Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero. New York: Ballantine Books, 2004. Pg. 131.

Harriet Tubman and the Quaker

Her name was Harriet Tubman, born of Harriet Green and Benjamin Ross on the Edward Brodas plantation near Bucktown in Dorchester County, Md.

She was born in 1820 — or 44 years after the Declaration had been adopted.

Harriet Tubman was no immigrant. It has been estimated by authorities that her forebears had been in this country as far back as the middle of the 18th century.

Her people had been in this country certainly in 1776 when the Congress declared that all men were created equal and that all people are endowed by their Creator "with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

And on that momentous occasion of July 4, 1776, bells rang; people cheered; and lots of men were proud and walked with their heads high in the air.

But not the ancestors of Harriet Tubman. This declaration didn't apply to them. Those words about being created equal were mockeries to them. That well-turned phrase about "certain unalien-

able rights" didn't apply to any of her American ancestors.

And in fact, many years later when she was born in a slummy cabin on the plantation of Edward Brodas, the Declaration of Independence was less than a scrap of paper with meaningless words printed on it.

She was a slave, owned by men who could sell her at will; order her to do this and that at a whim, no different from cattle on the plantation.

In the meantime, up here in Wilmington, at around Third and Shipley Sts., lived a man, Thomas Garrett, a Quaker.

This was at a time when slavery was regarded as legal and acceptable even to many highly moralistic people.

But Thomas Garrett happened to be a literal-minded man. He believed in the Declaration of Independence, particularly where it stated that all people have "certain unalienable rights" such as "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Garrett was not alone in his conviction, but there were mighty few who believed as he did — even in Wilmington.



bill frank

So strong was his conviction that he decided to do something about it, even if it was illegal.

You've got to understand Garrett didn't actually go out into the slave country of nearby Maryland or even in slave country of Delaware and entice slaves to escape.

But once they did escape and once they appealed to him for help, he didn't fail them. He harbored them, fed them, clothed them and guided them to freedom along what came to be known as the "underground railroad."

And during his tenure a "conductor" of the "underground railroad" in this part of Delaware, Harriet Tubman, down in Dorchester County, started her heroic and exceedingly dangerous mission of escorting slaves from bondage to freedom.

She, too, used the "underground railroad" and that's how this remarkable black woman met this saintly, stubborn, unselfish white man, Thomas Garrett.

They worked together. They had faith in each other. They risked their lives often together as they jointly and separately violated ownership-of-property laws.

Their story is one of the most dramatic, exciting and inspiring of these parts. Books have been written about Harriet Tubman, some of them extremely fanciful. Not too much has been written in book form about Thomas Garrett.

But the other day in this Bicentennial era, a plaque honoring them individually and jointly was unveiled at what is now known as Spencer Square off King Street, between 8th and 9th, in Wilmington.

A truly moving inter-racial tribute to two heroes of a time when it took guts and patience and vision to be a hero.

If Thomas Garrett could speak to me today, he'd say Harriet Tubman had far more courage than he ever had. After all, he was a member of an outspoken sect, the Quakers, most of whom opposed slavery.

He had practical resources; Harriet Tubman never had. That he was once stripped of

property by a federal court but he regained much of his property.

Also Garrett was one of a group of white men who believed as he believed and who were also part of the "underground railroad" system. Some of them were influential men.

But Harriet Tubman? Her resources were her faith, her courage, her determination to save her people from slavery. She worked by her wits and instinct. Had she been caught, it would have been the end of her. At least \$5,000 had been offered for her capture.

And had she been captured, she well might have suffered the extreme punishment of death. Harriet Tubman was illiterate and hence unable to have read the Declaration of Independence even if it had been presented to her in large letters.

But she believed in what it said about "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

She died a peaceful death in the city of Auburn, N.Y., March 10, 1913.

And at long last, she is to be remembered in Wilmington which she had known as a place of refuge.



The Christian Science Monitor

Crossroads

*The Morning News
Tue June 23, 1976*

\$250 REWARD.—Absconded, or was enticed away from the service of her owner, (Mrs. Josiah Bayly,) on the 21st of this month, a **NEGRO WOMAN**, named **LAURA**, aged about 25 years, of light chesnut color, having a rather projecting mouth and good teeth; is very erect, and in person round and well formed; can read and write with facility, and carried with her a large variety of clothing. The above reward will be paid for her delivery in Baltimore city jail, whether taken within or without the limits of Maryland.

JOSEPH E. MUSE,
Attorney for
MRS. JOSIAH BAYLY.

030-3t*!

"Laura" or "Tilly"



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Tue, Jan 10, 2023

STATION MASTER ON THE
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Life and Letters of
THOMAS GARRETT

BY

James A. McGowan

Justice been administered
back to New Hampshire.
Anti-Slavery man. He
slavery, but does not wish to
entirely to the States. He
imits, it will soon die out of
d in the Presidential Chair,
wish I could bring myself to
abolition of slavery in any
on.

the present difficulties in
edom, and slavery may be
e. But should Buchanan be
and overbearing than ever;
use the North to retaliate.
yield. In case of Civil War;
e care of her own slaves, and
e within the next four years,

ent to me was appreciated, I
value in dollars. It was a
he slaves was appreciated by
assure you that I have been
e of humanity by that Spirit
willing to live up to the light

e escaping from the prison-
passed on two who had spent
y live to four-score years) in
ce. My list now counts 2011
st on their Northern journey.
se poor creatures, expressing
have passed a pretty active
of age, and do not recall to
h has given me so much real
enefit the colored race, bond
uch time in establishing and
the colored children were not
en—we have now two large
the Society of Friends, both
hools for colored children, all
town contains about 20,000
*

abolitionists, says: "In 1857 Wil-
ted by Negroes, with considerable

Please remember me affectionately to all members of your
Society, & send me a line when time and inclination permit, and I
shall feel obliged.

Thy Friend,
Thomas Garrett.

* * *

Letter No. 4. Haverford College Library Quaker Collection.

COMMENT

In the first part of this letter Garrett tells of an incident between
him and Harriet Tubman in which he jokingly tells Harriet he has
no money for her, and relates her response. He elaborates further
on this story in Letter No. 5 and tells the same story to Sarah
Elizabeth Bradford in Miscellaneous Letter No. 10. The reader might
want to compare this story with one told by Tilden in his "Memorial
Address" (p. 11). Tilden's story is very similar, except that the
woman in his story is Sojourner Truth, a black woman and ex-slave
who became famous for crusading against slavery. There is no other
record that Thomas Garrett ever met Sojourner Truth. It is possible,
therefore, that Tilden confused the two women.

Wilmington, 10-24-56

My dear friend, E. Wigham,

Thy esteemed favor of 9th Month 11th was handed to me by J.M.
McKim on the 18th of this month, also five pounds designated for
that noble woman, Harriet Tubman, forwarded by thee. As I had
not heard (from) her for several weeks past, I left a letter at the
Anti-Slavery office with Wm. Still, informing her of the handsome
donation I had just received for her. On sixth day (Friday) last, less
than a week after I received thy letter and money, Harriet came into
my office and addressed me thus—"Mr. Garrett I am here again,
out of money, and with no shoes to my feet, and God has sent me to
you for what I need"—I said—Harriet, art thou sure thou art not
deceived? I cannot find money enough to supply all God's poor. I
had five here last week and had to pay 8 dollars to clothe and for-
ward them. She said, "Well, you have got enough for me to pay for
a pair of shoes, and to pay for my own and a friend's passage to

assistance from Quaker Thomas Garrett, who purchased the land site and
hired the building contractor."¹¹ Quarles does not list the source of this
information.

130 Station Master on The Underground Railroad

Philadelphia." Then she said, "I must have 20 dollars more to enable me to go down to Maryland for a woman and three children." She said she had paid her last copper that morning to a coloured man that had brought her, and a delicate female—a house servant—some 30 odd miles in his carriage. I then told her that the Good Spirit had put it into the heart of a kind friend in England to send, especially for her, five pounds, so that she would have enough for all her present wants without calling on her Philadelphia friends for aid. She said, "I thank you very much. I was sure I could get money from you, but I did not expect so much."—The history of this trip was remarkable, and manifested great shrewdness. This girl was a slave in Baltimore, and was engaged to be married to a slave 8 years since. For some reason his master determined to sell him to go South. A friend very kindly informed him of (this) fact. He went to see the object of his affections, bid her farewell, and left. He arrived safe in the interior of New York, and after being absent more than 7 years, furnished Harriet with some money, and she went to Baltimore in pursuit. After considerable search she found the woman and brought her away. She had gone to Philadelphia with the captain of a steamboat, trading through the Delaware, and Cheapeak canal, and had taken the precaution to get from him a certificate of her being a resident of Philadelphia, and free. She knew she could not bring a strange woman from Baltimore to Philadelphia, either by railroad or steamboat, without giving bonds in 500 dollars, and therefore took passage for herself and companion to (Seaford), on the eastern shore of Maryland, in the steamboat, and showing the Captain her passport from Philadelphia to Baltimore, and he, knowing the captain of the boat that took her to Baltimore, was on to give her a certificate, also.

When the boat arrived at Seaford, she boldly went to the Hotel and called for supper and lodging. Next morning, when they were about to leave, a dealer in such stock attempted to arrest them, but on showing the captain's certificate, the landlord interfered, the woman went to the railroad and paid their passage to Camden, some 50 miles below here, and then came up in private conveyance.

I asked her is she was not frightened (when) arrested. "Not a bit," she said. She knew she would get off safe. And now I hope by this time she has taken the girl to her long lost lover. But the strangest thing about this woman is, she does not know, or appears not to know, that she has done anything worth notice! May her Guardian continue to preserve her many perilous adventures.

The piece cut out of the Trenton New Jersey *Gazette*, giving a history of the slave heroine who returned to a slave state and rescued 7 of her children and grandchildren is not the person I have given you a history of. I happened to be in Philadelphia when that woman was there with her children. She was also a noble woman.

I must have 20 dollars more to end for a woman and three children." copper that morning to a coloured delicate female—a house servant—ge. I then told her that the Good of a kind friend in England to send, that she would have enough for all on her Philadelphia friends for aid. ch. I was sure I could get money so much."—The history of this trip great shrewdness. This girl was a ged to be married to a slave 8 years determined to sell him to go South. n of (this) fact. He went to see the arewell, and left. He arrived safe in ter being absent more than 7 years, ney, and she went to Baltimore in she found the woman and brought elphia with the captain of a steam- are, and Cheapeak canal, and had a him a certificate of her being a e. She knew she could not bring a Philadelphia, either by railroad or in 500 dollars, and therefore took a to (Seaford), on the eastern shore and showing the Captain her pass- ore, and he, knowing the captain ore, was on to give her a certificate, ord, she boldly went to the Hotel g. Next morning, when they were lock attempted to arrest them, but eate, the landlord interfered, the aid their passage to Camden, some ne up in private conveyance. ned (when) arrested. "Not a bit," off safe. And now I hope by this long lost lover. But the strangest oes not know, or appears not to worth notice! May her Guardian ilous adventures. a New Jersey *Gazette*, giving a his- ned to a slave state and rescued 7 s not the person I have given you a iladelphia when that woman was also a noble woman.

Harriet's health (has) much improved since I last saw her. She now looks as though she might be able to perform good service in the cause for years to come.

Our whole country is agitated at present about Politics, whether Buchanan or Fremont will be elected President. No one can certainly tell, but I think most likely Buchanan will be. But no matter which is elected, the slavery agitation must continue till slavery is abolished. The South is becoming bold and insolent towards the North, and towards the advocates of freedom. If the North once becomes fairly aroused, they have the power to dictate terms. But I fear that slavery may not be abolished here without Civil War. Slaves still continue to follow the North Star when favorable opportunity offers. My list now numbers 2028. Nothing gives us more pleasure than to have an opportunity to assist them on their way.

I hope your Anti-Slavery efforts will be continued, as I can assure you that the slaveholders and their apologists on this side of the water are anxiously watching what is going on with you. I am no politician, and therefore need not say any more on that subject, as you can learn from the papers all that is going on here. You will no doubt conclude that there never was a more contemptible or unjust government on earth than ours at the present time, not only in respect to Kansas and Nebraska, but also to Central America. Walker,* in his maruading expeditions, is discouraged by the man called Frank Pierce and all his understrappers, more especially, Southerners. If a rupture take place between the North and the South, then, and not until then, will the South discover their weakness, for the majority of the whites at the South are poor, and do not hold slaves, and in reality are opposed to slavery, but dare not express their honest convictions on the subject, for the penalty would surely be expulsion from their houses, or imprisonment, till they would agree to Southern views respecting slavery. There is now no freedom of speech or of the press in any southern state, except little Delaware, and here only in Wilmington. There is about as much anti-slavery feeling here as in Boston, and quite as freely expressed. I can have published in one paper at least anything I wish on the subject of slavery, as I always put my name to what I write.

When time and opportunity offers, a line from thee or any other of our anti-slavery friends in Europe will be gladly received by your friend, and the friend of Humanity, without regard to religion, country, or colour.

Thomas Garrett

* * *

* William Walker (1824-1860) was an American military adventurer in Nicaragua.