

## Escape of William and Ellen Craft

### Northeast

In December 1848, William and Ellen Craft waited at the Macon, Georgia (**GA**) train station to board a Savannah-bound train. Enslaved, unable to read, and owned by different slaveholders, the Crafts were ready for a daring escape to the North.

Ellen was so light skinned that she was able to pose as a frail slaveowner. She carried her arm in a sling, covered her face, hid her eyes behind dark green glasses, and wore a top hat to confirm her assumed identity as a male. William played the role of the obedient enslaved servant traveling with the sickly slaveowner to Philadelphia in search of medical treatment.

The Crafts traveled by train to Savannah, Georgia (**GA**), where they stopped overnight, then took a steamboat and another train to Baltimore, Maryland (**MD**). The Crafts were almost caught by railroad agents, but on the train to Baltimore there was also a free African American passenger that helped them.

Sensing that William might be an enslaved African seeking his freedom, the freeman suggested that William contact a certain Quaker when he arrived in Philadelphia, and with that suggestion the guiding hand of the Underground Railroad touched the Crafts.

Arriving at the Philadelphia (**PA**) train station, Ellen clasped William's arm and said, "Thank God we are safe." The two exhausted enslaved Africans seeking their freedom found the Philadelphia Quaker who fed, housed, comforted, and kept them safe until it was time to conduct them to Boston, Massachusetts, (**MA**) where the Crafts ended their 1,000 mile flight to freedom.

## **Lewis Hayden**

### **Massachusetts (MA)**

Lewis Hayden escaped slavery with wife Harriet and son Joseph in 1844. Running from Kentucky (KY) with stops in Michigan (MI) and New York (NY), the Haydens settled in Boston, a city in Massachusetts (MA) in 1849.

The Haydens soon became active members of Boston's African American community. The Haydens owned a second hand clothing store and also became involved in the growing abolitionist movement. Their home became a safe haven for many enslaved Africans seeking their freedom.

Lewis Hayden never hesitated to help other enslaved Africans find freedom. Hayden helped the first enslaved African seeking his freedom in Boston that was arrested under the Fugitive Slave Act to become free.

## **Anthony Burns**

### **Washington D.C.**

In 1854 Anthony Burns, a twenty-year old enslaved African seeking his freedom, hid himself on a boat bound from Virginia (VA) to the north.

Burns reached Boston Massachusetts (MA) and found a job in a clothing store. Burn's freedom was short-lived, as he was arrested by a federal marshal. Reverend Leonard A. Grimes convinced Burns to fight for freedom.

Antislavery supporters attacked the courthouse in an attempt to rescue Burns; one policeman was killed, but they were not able to free Burns. Rev. Grimes and his church raised \$1,200 toward purchasing freedom for Burns. However, they were unable to buy his freedom.

Burns was denied bail, a jury trial, and the right to testify and was returned to his master in Virginia (VA). Held in a Richmond slave jail for five months, Reverend Grimes was finally successful in purchasing Burns' freedom.

Burns returned to the North and in 1860 he settled in St. Catherine's, in Ontario, Canada.

## **Margaret Ward**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (PA)

Originally enslaved in Maryland (MD), Margaret Ward worked very hard in the fields every day. While she worked, she had to leave her little baby, Samuel under the sage bush. One day Samuel almost died. Margaret saved him and decided to escape to protect Samuel from any more harm. At night, Margaret picked up Samuel and ran to the woods, following the North Star. Soon she saw that an old dog was following her- a dog named Watch that she had been very kind to. Watch protected Margaret until she reached the home of some Quakers, who then sent her to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (PA).

## **William Jordan**

North Carolina (NC)

William Jordan was an enslaved African owned by the governor of North Carolina (NC). To serve the governor, he had to be separated from his wife and could only visit her once or twice a year. His wife was owned by another slaveowner and lived on a plantation that was 200 miles away. The governor told William that he could not visit his wife, and that is why William Jordan decided to run away. He left home on Christmas Day and wandered the forests of North Carolina for 10 months, living in a cave for 3 months, and faced dangers including bears, wildcats, and rattlesnakes.

He finally made his way to Wilmington, North Carolina (NC) and then on to Philadelphia (PA). William Jordan made his escape alone and his wife was left behind.

## **Robert Smalls**

### **South Carolina (SC)**

Robert Smalls was born into slavery in Beaufort, South Carolina (SC) in 1839.

He was trained as a ship pilot, and in May 1862 he and twelve other enslaved Africans decided to escape from slavery.

With his wife and three children, Smalls stole the Confederate ship called the *Planter*. Smalls took control of the ship himself and sailed it North to Union forces. Because of this daring escape, Smalls, his family, and those onboard won their freedom.

Soon after this, President Abraham Lincoln named Smalls a pilot in the Union Navy. In 1863, Smalls earned the rank of Captain and commanded the *Planter* that now sailed under the Union flag.

Following the Civil War, Smalls returned to South Carolina and went into politics. He was elected to the United States House of Representatives.

## **Clarissa Davis**

### **Massachusetts (MA)**

In May 1854, Clarissa Davis ran away from Portsmouth, Virginia (VA). She was about 22 years old. As soon as she ran away from her owner, slave catchers were searching for her. She had to hide for 75 days in the town.

One day a friend told her about a ship going to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (PA). During a rain storm at night, Clarissa ran through the town in secret and made it to the ship dressed as a man. One of the sailors helped her hide in a box on the ship.

Once she reached Philadelphia, Clarissa changed her name to Mary Armstead. Three months later she moved and was living in Massachusetts (MA).