McLean County Museum of History
Underground Railroad Collection

Processed by
JoAnna Mink
Summer 2020

Collection Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOLUME OF COLLECTION:</th>
<th>1 box</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COLLECTION DATES:</td>
<td>1858 to 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESTRICTIONS:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:</td>
<td>Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER FINDING AIDS:</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOCATION:</td>
<td>Archives</td>
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<td>NOTES:</td>
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Brief History

The terms Underground Railroad, or Underground Railway, designated organized efforts to assist enslaved persons on their way through the free North and into Canada, in the 1840s and 1850s.

Scope

The Underground Railroad Collection consists of newspaper clippings, articles, papers presented at academic conferences, and excerpts from monographs pertaining to the Underground Railroad in McLean County, as well as about the fugitive slave John Anderson.
Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Newspaper Clippings
(from Pantagraph unless noted)
1.1 “Anti-Slavery lecture,” August 17, 1858.
1.2 “Kidnapper in Town,” March 24, 1862.
1.4 “John McCoiim, Last Survivor of Underground Railway, Dies,” May 9, 1913.
1.5 “Escaping Negroes Hidden in Cave Near Lexington by Abolitionists,” March 23, 1929.
1.6 “Old Cellar Hid Slaves,” February 21, 1948.
1.8 “Railroad moved people north to freedom” (“Back Then” column), July 2, 2000.
1.9 “Historian bringing Underground Railroad to Pontiac,” November 29, 1000. (Note: Underground Railroad quilts have been thoroughly debunked—this article is an example of the mythmaking and well-intentioned false history on this movement.)
1.10 “Colony played anti-slavery role,” February 24, 2002.

Folder 2: Articles and Excerpts from Publications
2.3 The Underground Railroad in Illinois special issue, Historic Illinois, vol 22, April 2000.

Folder 3: John Anderson, Fugitive Slave

**Folder 4: Miscellaneous**

4.1 “A Little McLean County History, by Albert Robinson Greene—a Native Son,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, vol 8, October 1915, pp. 459-65. Includes description, when 6 years old, of being awakened by slave hunters looking for two runaway slaves. Greene soon understands that his parents were a stop on the underground railroad.


4.3 Typed notes, author and date unknown, 1 p. about underground railway in McLean County.

4.4 Photograph of a “token,” from a postcard.

4.5 Photocopies of Jack Muirhead’s notes, mostly relating to Mahan and Lexington, 9 pp.

4.6 “The Anti-Slavery Movement,” section in *The History of Livingston County* (1878; rpt. 1982). Reference to a “colored barber from Bloomington.”


4.8 Email, Brent Wielt, Macon County Conservation District, July 31, 2009, to Museum Library, referencing letter from Waynesville, IL (Logan County).

4.9 List of MCMH Library Holdings on Underground Railroad.

See also:

“The Underground Railroad in McLean County” by Alice Schlenker, typed manuscript, 7pp, in BNBHP, Box 2, Folder 3, item 1.

“Old Colony House at Delavan Part of ‘Underground Railway,’” newspaper clipping from unknown source, BNBHP, Box 2, Folder 3, item 4.