



ROKEBY MUSEUM, FERRISBURGH, VT

The Vermont African American Heritage Trail explores the lives and stories of African Americans in Vermont, and those dedicated to issues of freedom and equality. It takes you to historic and cultural sites where actions, events, and individuals significant to African American history and civil rights are remembered. These places feature exhibits, roadside markers, films, and tours that illuminate the lives of African Americans in the Green Mountain State and North Country of the neighboring Empire State of New York. You shall meet teachers, storytellers, activists, ministers, and legislators who contributed to the complicated mosaic of race relations to make Vermont a better home for all.

Lesson plans, supplemental materials, interactive activities, and geocache coordinates are available at [www.VtAfricanAmericanHeritage.net](http://www.VtAfricanAmericanHeritage.net) and [www.VermontVacation.com/AAHT](http://www.VermontVacation.com/AAHT).

The African American Heritage Trail is a continuous effort to recognize, document, and share the important Vermont sites touched by inspiring African Americans and those who fought for the abolishment of slavery and the establishment of civil rights. This collaborative project partnership was undertaken by ALANA Community Organization, Vermont State Historic Preservation Office, Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing, Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity, Vermont Attractions Association, Vermont Tourism Network, and all the cultural sites forming the trail.



For more information, visit:

[www.VermontVacation.com/AfricanAmericanHeritageTrail](http://www.VermontVacation.com/AfricanAmericanHeritageTrail)

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2021

Vermont  
**AFRICAN  
AMERICAN**  
Heritage Trail



**EXPLORE MUSEUMS, CULTURAL SITES, EXHIBITS, FILMS, AND TOURS THAT ILLUMINATE AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN VERMONT.**

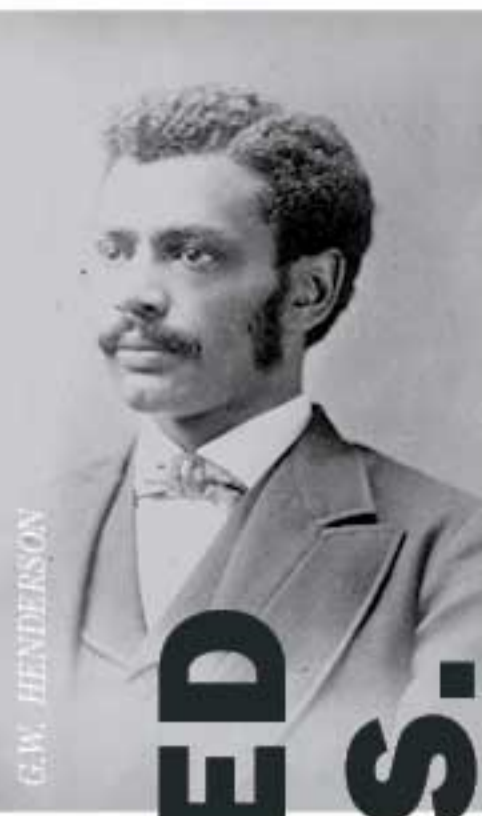
DAISY TURNER, c.1913 (AGE 30), COURTESY OF GRAFTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Lake Champlain  
Basin Program

**Champlain Valley  
National Heritage Partnership**





G.W. HENDERSON

# AFRICAN AMERICANS HELPED TO ESTABLISH COMMUNITIES.

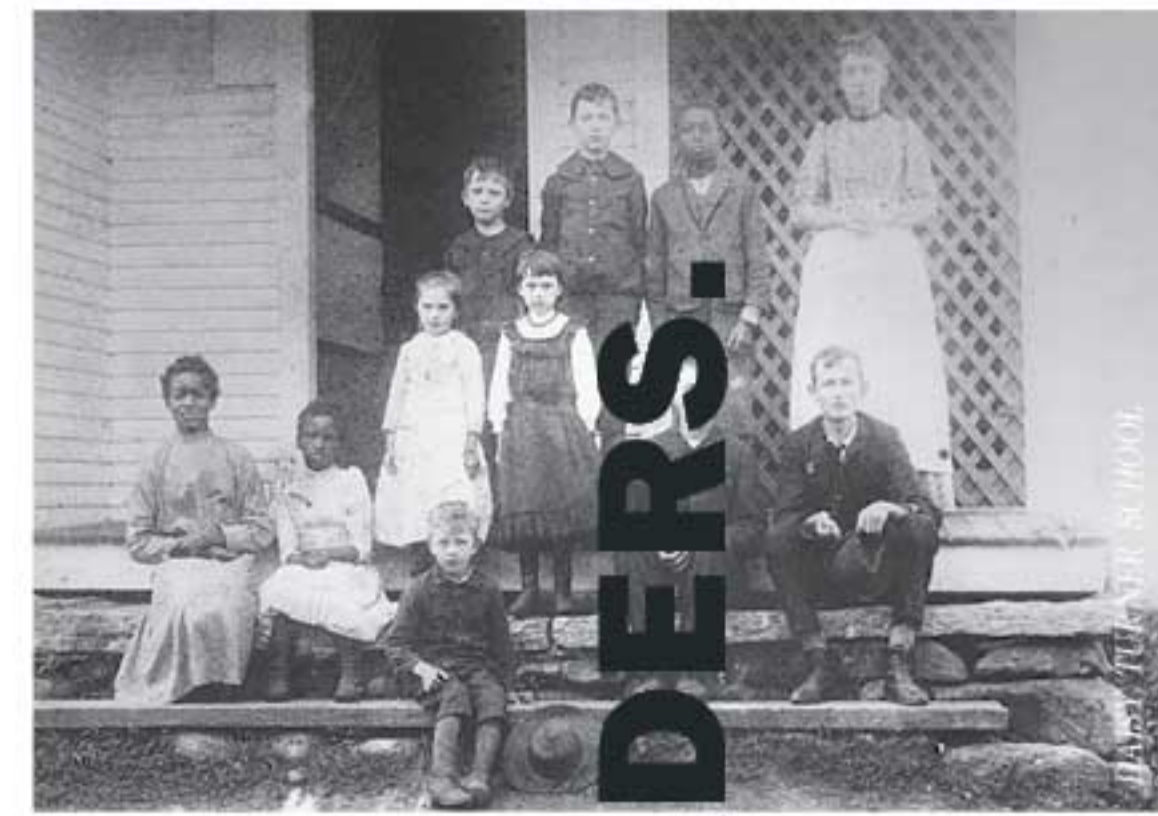


BIRCHDALE CAMP

# THEY FOUGHT TO SUPPORT THE UNION IN THE CIVIL WAR.



MARTIN HENRY FREEMAN



TURNER SCHOOL

# THEY STUDIED IN VERMONT SCHOOLS AND BECAME LEADERS.



FREDERICK DOUGLASS

African American history has been a part of Vermont's story since before the founding of the Green Mountain State. Blacks were among the earliest settlers, tilling the land, building homes, and establishing communities. An estimated 25 to 50 Black persons resided within the rolling hills of what would become Vermont when the 1777 Constitution presented one of the earliest abolition clauses banning adult slavery. In 1791, when the 14th state was admitted to the Union, the federal census recorded that Vermont was home to 270 Blacks. Black Vermonters would account for slightly more than 0.5 percent of the overall population until 1860. Although significant challenges existed related to slavery and race relations, Vermont offered opportunities for Black people not readily found everywhere.

African Americans fought for national freedom in the Revolutionary War, defended the Union in the Civil War, and since have proudly served Vermont and our nation in all military conflicts. Vermont's African Americans were among the first to earn advanced and honorary degrees, publish histories and antislavery memoirs, preach to white parishes, and serve as religious and educational leaders. Complex experiences suffered by African Americans cultivated generations of Vermont-born abolitionists and statesmen who reached the national stage to fight for emancipation, desegregation, and civil rights. These struggles and successes are part of Vermont's African American heritage, which continues into the 21st century.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home, exhibits a 1903 Pullman car. These cars were serviced by Black porters who, in 1925, formed the first all-Black union in the U.S.
- Solomon Northup's book, *Twelve Years a Slave*, was adapted into a movie 160 years after it was first published in 1853, receiving an Academy Award for Best Picture.
- Birchdale Camp is the last standing structure at Journey's End, the Turner Family Homestead. It reflects architecture of the Virginia Piedmont, where Alec Turner was enslaved. The camp was restored in 2019.
- The Clemmons Family Farm is among the 0.4 percent of farms in the U.S. owned by African Americans.
- A portrait of Alexander Twilight, the first African American lawmaker in the U.S., will be displayed in the Vermont State House by 2022.



### 1 JOURNEY'S END

Immerse yourself in the remarkable story of formerly enslaved Alec Turner, and the family's powerful connection to the land in the hill farming community with visits to the Turner Hill Interpretive Center, Grafton History Museum, and Birchdale Camp at Journey's End.

31 TOWNSHEND ROAD,  
GRAFTON, VT 05146



### 2 OLD CONSTITUTION HOUSE VERMONT STATE HISTORIC SITE

On July 8, 1777, the Constitution of the "Free and Independent State of Vermont" was adopted here. This was the first constitution in America to prohibit slavery, promising freedom for men over 21 years of age and women older than 18.

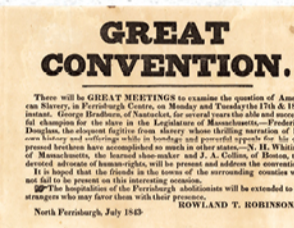
16 NORTH MAIN STREET,  
WINDSOR, VT 05089



### 3 RIVER STREET CEMETERY & MARSH-BILLINGS-ROCKEFELLER NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

River Street Cemetery contains the graves of eight African American veterans of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment who fought during the Civil War. The national park offers ranger- and self-guided tours of Woodstock's Civil War and abolitionist history.

54 ELM STREET,  
WOODSTOCK, VT 05091



### 4 SENATOR JUSTIN S. MORRILL STATE HISTORIC SITE

Justin Morrill sponsored the Land-Grant College Acts, which granted public lands to universities. In 1890, the second Morrill Act forbade racial discrimination in admissions policies for colleges receiving these federal funds.

214 JUSTIN MORRILL HIGHWAY,  
STRAFFORD, VT 05072



### 5 ORLEANS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY/OLD STONE HOUSE MUSEUM

The Old Stone House Museum interprets the visionary leadership of Alexander Twilight, an African American educator, preacher, and Vermont's first Black legislator.

109 OLD STONE HOUSE ROAD,  
ORLEANS, VT 05860



### 6 WINOOSKI UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The UMC was the home church for many Buffalo Soldiers from 1909 to 1913. Soldiers who retired in the area helped rebuild the church after a fire. Their descendants continue worshipping at UMC.

24 W. ALLEN STREET,  
WINOOSKI, VT 05404



### 7 CLEMMONS FAMILY FARM

The 148-acre Clemmons Family Farm is one of the largest African American farms in Vermont. The farm is a heritage and multicultural center that blends agriculture with African American and African diaspora arts, culture events, and storytelling.

2213-2158 GREENBUSH ROAD,  
CHARLOTTE, VT 05445



### 8 ROKEBY MUSEUM

The exhibit "Free & Safe: The Underground Railroad in Vermont" chronicles the stories of Simon and Jesse, two fugitives from slavery who found shelter in the 1830s at Rokeby. The story introduces the abolitionist Robinson family and explores the turbulent decades leading up to the Civil War.

4334 U.S. ROUTE 7,  
FERRISBURGH, VT 05456



## NORTH COUNTRY OF NEW YORK

### 1 NORTH COUNTRY UNDERGROUND RAILROAD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION/NORTH STAR UNDERGROUND RAILROAD MUSEUM

The Museum reveals the hidden history of the Champlain Line of the Underground Railroad. Stories include the fugitive slaves, Chinese Underground Railroad, and immigrants today who no longer feel safe.

1131 MACE CHASM ROAD,  
AUSABLE CHASM, NY



### 2 THE OLD FORT HOUSE MUSEUM

Exhibit celebrates the life and experiences of Solomon Northup, a free black man who was sold into slavery in 1840. Examine the original copy of Solomon's book, *Twelve Years a Slave*.

29 BROADWAY,  
FORT EDWARD, NY

### 3 JOHN BROWN FARM NY STATE HISTORIC SITE

Home and grave site of abolitionist John Brown, who led the raid at Harpers Ferry in 1859 to incite the slave liberation movement. His trial escalated tensions that led to the South's secession in 1860-1861.

2 JOHN BROWN ROAD,  
LAKE PLACID, NY

### 9 VERMONT FOLK LIFE CENTER

The folklife archive houses the Turner Family Collection detailing the life of Daisy Turner, the daughter of formerly enslaved parents who settled in Grafton in 1873. Daisy's captivating account covers slavery, plantation life, escape, the Civil War, battling racism, and creating a family center in Vermont.

88 MAIN STREET,  
MIDDLEBURY, VT 05753

### 10 MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE AND THE TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

Middlebury College was the first institution to grant an honorary degree and a Bachelor of Arts to men of African descent, and the first to graduate a Black man (1856) and a Black woman (1899). The town was the site of the founding of the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society and the first stop of the 100 Conventions Project in 1843.

14 OLD CHAPEL ROAD,  
MIDDLEBURY, VT 05753

### 11 BRANDON MUSEUM AT THE STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS BIRTHPLACE

Stephen A. Douglas, candidate for president versus Abraham Lincoln in 1860, was born here in 1813, raised amid the town's early activities in the antislavery movement.

4 GROVE STREET (VERMONT RTE. 7),  
BRANDON, VT 05733

### 12 RUTLAND SCULPTURE TRAIL

This downtown trail showcases works of marble carved by regional artists, including sculptures and reliefs honoring African Americans who were among the first to fight in the Civil War, as well as Martin Henry Freeman, America's first Black college president.

636 MARBLE STREET,  
WEST RUTLAND, VT 05777

### 13 HILDENE, THE LINCOLN FAMILY HOME

This is the 1905 home of Robert Lincoln, the president of the Pullman Palace Car Company. The site's 1903 Pullman Car and "Many Voices" exhibit highlight the history of the company and the story of the Black Pullman Porters.

1005 HILDENE ROAD,  
MANCHESTER, VT 05254



FIND THESE ROADSIDE MARKERS AND MORE AT: [VERMONTVACATION.COM/AAHT](http://VERMONTVACATION.COM/AAHT)

### 1 THADDEUS STEVENS HISTORIC SITE MARKER

Vermont-born Thaddeus Stevens was a congressman from Pennsylvania and leader of the Republican Party. A fierce opponent of slavery and discrimination, he authored the 14th Amendment, inspired the 15th Amendment, and was architect of Southern Reconstruction.

### 2 ANDREW HARRIS HISTORIC SITE MARKER, UVM CAMPUS

Andrew Harris, University of Vermont Class of 1838, was one of the first Black college graduates in America and likely the first to commit himself to immediatist abolitionism. He was a featured speaker at the American Anti-Slavery Society Convention in New York City in 1839.

### 3 WILLIAM SLADE/GAG RULE HISTORIC SITE MARKER

In 1836, the Gag Rule was put in place by Southern legislators to prevent talks of slavery in Congress. Vermont Congressman William Slade assailed the proposed imposition of this rule and launched a filibuster that delayed passage of the bill.

### 4 CLARINA HOWARD NICHOLS HISTORIC SITE MARKER

Clarina Nichols advocated for women's rights and fostered abolitionist views in her native Vermont and Kansas. After the Civil War, she managed a home for orphan Black children in Washington, D.C.

### 5 JONATHAN PECKHAM MILLER HISTORIC SITE MARKER

Jonathan Peckham Miller was a champion of the abolitionist movement. Miller and his wife, Sarah Arms, supported the Underground Railroad financially and sheltered fugitive slaves in their Randolph home.

### 6 REV. LEMUEL HAYNES HISTORIC SITE MARKER, PLEASANT STREET CEMETERY

Lemuel Haynes was the first ordained African American minister in the U.S. An ardent antislavery supporter, he penned "Liberty Further Extended." In 1804, he received an honorary master's degree from Middlebury College, the first in the U.S. granted to an African American.

### 7 MARTIN HENRY FREEMAN HISTORIC SITE MARKER

Born in Rutland, Martin Freeman gained renown as the first African American to become a college president, working at Allegheny Institute. In Africa, he served as professor/president at Liberia College.

### 8 JEFFREY BRACE HISTORIC SITE MARKERS

Born in West Africa, Jeffrey Brace won his freedom fighting for the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. He settled in Poultney and then moved to Georgia, where he recorded his life story. It was one of the most important antislavery memoirs written in America.

### 9 REVEREND GEORGE S. BROWN HISTORIC SITE MARKER, UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Reverend Brown, the first Methodist African American preacher in Vermont, organized his white parish in 1856 to build their new church, boldly leading the community.

### 10 CENTENNIAL FIELD HISTORIC SITE MARKER

Established in 1906 as the home of the University of Vermont's athletics, Centennial Field included three ballparks that hosted exhibition games for the Negro League ball clubs.

### 11 EARLY BLACK SETTLERS HISTORIC SITE MARKER

In the 1790s, three Black settlers, expanding to six families, established an African American community in Hinesburg that thrived for seventy years. Lincoln Hill was home to soldiers of the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War.

### 12 GEORGE WASHINGTON HENDERSON HISTORIC SITE MARKER, BELVIDERE CEMETERY

George Washington Henderson studied at Barre Academy and was valedictorian for the University of Vermont Class of 1877. Late in life, he ministered in the South, and wrote statements to protest lynching.

### 13 SENATOR WILLIAM UPHAM HISTORIC SITE MARKER

William Upham, U.S. senator and abolitionist, resisted the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act. On the Senate floor, Upham stated "slavery is a crime against humanity, a sore evil in the body politic."

### 14 BUFFALO SOLDIERS AT FORT ETHAN ALLEN HISTORIC SITE MARKERS

The Buffalo Soldiers, Black army regiments formed after the Civil War, served a four-year tour of duty at Fort Ethan Allen beginning in 1909.

### 15 THE GREAT CONVENTION HISTORIC SITE MARKER

As part of the American Anti-Slavery Society's 100 Conventions Program, Frederick Douglass delivered a fiery abolitionist speech, his second in Vermont, in 1843.

### 16 COURT SQUARE HISTORIC SITE MARKER

At the first county courthouse, in 1804, the Vermont Supreme Court denounced a bill of sale as proof of ownership for an enslaved man, who was then granted freedom.