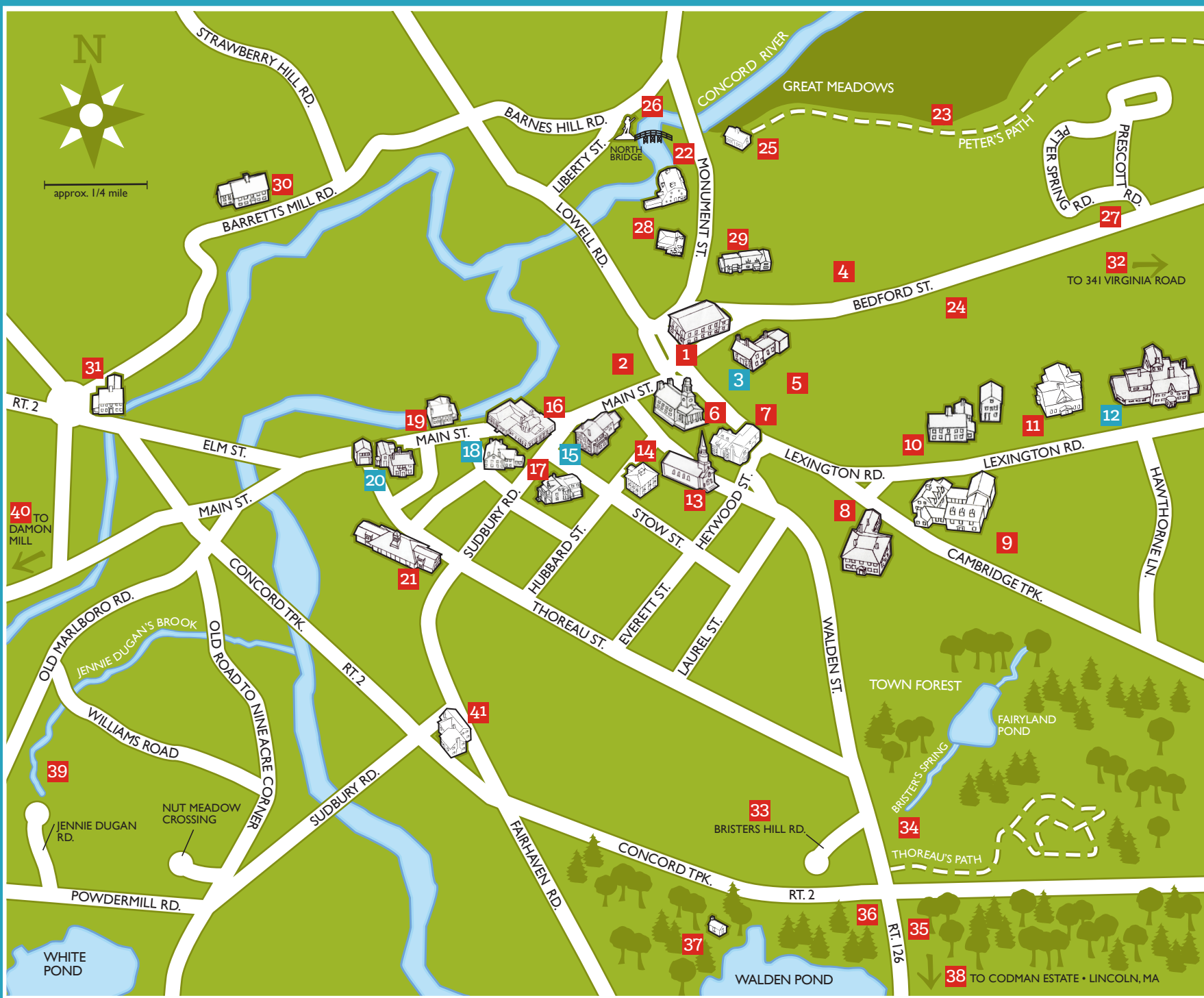


CONCORD VILLAGE

INCORPORATED 1635



UNDERGROUND RAILROAD STOPS

No 1 TOWN CENTER

- 1 Concord Town House - 22 Monument Square (1851)**
Concord Town records documented slavery as early as 1725. For many years in the 1850s and 1860s, Robbins House (#24) resident, John Garrison (owner of #29) was the building Superintendent.
- 2 Old Jail Site - Monument Square**
In 1846, Henry David Thoreau (1817-1861) spent a night in jail for his refusal to pay his poll tax as a protest against the war with Mexico and the spread of slavery. This event inspired his 1849 essay now known as *Civil Disobedience*.
- 3 Mary Rice House - 44 Bedford St. (ca. 1840)**
Mary Rice (1790 - c.1866) assisted in the escape of fugitive slaves. She helped replace John Jack's gravestone and regularly put flowers beside it. In 1864, she gathered signatures of 195 school children on a petition to President Lincoln, asking him to "free slave children." Copies of this petition and Lincoln's response now hang in Concord's three public elementary schools.
- 4 Sleepy Hollow Cemetery - Court Lane & Bedford St. (1823 and later)**
Peter Hutchinson (c.1799-1882) and his family were the last residents of color to live in The Robbins House (see #25). He and other family members were buried at Town expense; a gravestone was placed on Hutchinson's unmarked family plot in 2013. The grave of Thomas Dugan's daughter Elsea Dugan (#39) does have a stone, which reads, simply, "Faithful."
- 5 John Jack's Grave - Hill Burying Ground, Monument Square (1635)**
Born in Africa, John Jack (c.1706-1771) was enslaved in Concord well into middle age. After his owner Benjamin Barron died in 1754, Jack worked various jobs to earn the money to purchase his freedom and then to acquire 8 acres of land in the Great Field and Great Meadow - the first formerly enslaved man to become a landowner in Concord. Jack also joined the Concord church. At his death Jack bequeathed his property to Violet Barnes, with whom he had been enslaved; it's not clear whether she was allowed to keep it. Daniel Bliss, Esq., a Loyalist lawyer, composed an epitaph for John Jack that implicitly castigated the hypocrisy of Patriots in demanding liberty for themselves while holding slaves. When Daniel Bliss fled for British lines, the court approved a claim of £3.18.06 on Bliss's estate to Violet.
- 6 First Parish Church - 20 Lexington Rd.**
A public building for religious worship and town meetings, the First Parish meetinghouse provided an occasional platform for antislavery speakers in the quarter-century before the Civil War, as did the Trinitarian Church nearby. Among the well-known formerly enslaved people who gave antislavery speeches here were Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) and Harriet Tubman (1820-1913). The Middlesex County Antislavery Society met from time to time at the church, which burned and was rebuilt in 1901.
- 7 Robertson James House - 70 Lexington Rd.**
Author Henry James' teenage brothers Garth Wilkinson (1845-1883) and Robertson James (1846-1910) were sent to Frank Sanborn's school (see #17), where they were influenced by Sanborn's ardent abolitionism. Two years later, Wilkinson served in the 54th regiment and Robertson enlisted in the 55th regiment - Massachusetts' two black Civil War regiments. After the war Robertson briefly owned and operated a southern cotton plantation worked by free black laborers, an arrangement which proved to be a financial failure. In the 1890s he purchased this building for a studio, and died here in 1910.

No 2 LEXINGTON ROAD

- 8 Emerson House - 28 Cambridge Turnpike**
Ralph Waldo Emerson was persuaded to speak out against slavery publicly by his wife Lydian, his Aunt Mary and his friend Mary Brooks. He supported the controversial abolitionist John Brown.
- 9 Concord Museum - 200 Lexington Rd.**
Through original artifacts associated with Thoreau, Emerson and antislavery activists, the museum galleries examine the concept of liberty and the ability of individuals to effect change.
- 10 Benjamin Barron House - 245/249 Lexington Rd.**
Here the enslaved man John Jack (c.1706-1771) purchased his freedom with money he earned as a shoemaker and laborer. His epitaph in the Hill Burying Ground is world famous (see #5).
- 11 Alcott "Orchard" House - 399 Lexington Rd.**
The Alcotts were dedicated antislavery activists. It's possible that they hid fugitive slaves at the Orchard house, where they lived from 1858-77. They held antislavery meetings here,

No 3 ANTISLAVERY NEIGHBORHOOD

- 13 Trinitarian Congregational Church - 54 Walden St.**
Organized in 1825-26, this congregation took an early lead in antislavery activism. In 1836 the congregation voted to deny admission to slaveholders. Minister John Wilder (1796-1844) hosted antislavery speakers in his pulpit, and his wife, Mary Wilder (1802-1893), was the first president of the Concord Female Antislavery Society in 1837. A successor in the pulpit, the Rev. Daniel Foster took a prominent part in opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law and later moved to Kansas to join John Brown's fight for a free state.
- 14 Brooks House - 45 Hubbard St. (ca. 1740)**
Mary Merrick Brooks (1801-1868), granddaughter and daughter of merchants who had once bought and sold enslaved people, was one of Concord's leading white abolitionists. She carried antislavery petitions from door to door for neighbors to sign. She organized "ladies' fairs" to raise money for the antislavery cause and contributed her signature "Brooks cake" to such events.
- 15 Francis and Ann Bigelow House - 19 Sudbury Rd. (ca. 1840-50)**
Shadrach Minkins (1814-1875), enslaved in Norfolk, Virginia, stowed away on a northern-bound vessel and made his way to freedom in Boston in May 1850. Nine months later he was seized by bounty hunters, the first refugee from the South to be arrested in Boston under the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law. A crowd organized by the Boston Vigilance Committee rescued Minkins from custody at the court house and put him on an escape route that involved a brief stop in the middle of the night at the home of blacksmith Francis Bigelow (1809-1873) and his wife Ann (1813-1898). From Concord, Minkins traveled by train to Canada, where he became a restaurant owner and barber. According to Ann Bigelow, at the height of the abolitionist movement, "one fugitive slave passed through Concord each week."
- 16 Concord Free Public Library - 129 Main St.**
Repository of the original documents telling of Concord's antislavery efforts and earliest African and American residents. Original site of Mary Merrick Brooks House (see #14).

hosted a huge reception for John Brown and the "regular antislavery set", and gave two of John Brown's daughters a home after he was hanged for his raid on Harper's Ferry. Anna and Louisa Alcott (1832-1888) staged plays to raise money for the Concord Antislavery Society.

12 Wayside - 455 Lexington Rd. (ca. 1714)
Home to Samuel Whitney (1734-1808), muster master of the Concord Minutemen in 1775, and his enslaved man Casey (c.1732-1822). In the woods to the left of the Wayside, a plaque states, "In 1775, Casey was Samuel Whitney's enslaved person. When the Revolutionary War came, he ran away to war, fighting for the colonies, and returned to Concord a free man." When the Alcotts lived here from 1845-48, according to the plaque, "The Wayside sheltered two self-emancipated slaves during the winter of 1846-47 as they fled north to freedom in Canada. A young Louisa May Alcott learned first hand lessons about slavery here that would influence her life and writing."

- 17 Franklin Sanborn House & Schoolroom - 49 Sudbury Rd. (1850)**
Franklin Sanborn (1831-1917) was one of the "Secret Six" who raised funds for John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. Sanborn ran a small private school, and after Brown was hanged for the Harper's Ferry raid, two of Brown's daughters came to Concord and attended Sanborn's school. Federal marshals tried unsuccessfully to arrest Sanborn for aiding Brown.
- 18 Col. William Whiting House - 169 Main St. (ca. 1800-10)**
Col. Whiting (1813-1873) was vice president of the state Antislavery Society, and sheltered runaway enslaved people. Abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison (who published the antislavery newspaper *The Liberator*), Wendell Phillips and John Brown were all guests in this house.
- 19 Samuel Hoar House - 158 Main St. (ca. 1810/1819)**
One of Concord's leading politicians, the lawyer Samuel Hoar (1778-1856) served one term in Congress as a Whig (1835-37) and helped to found the Free Soil Party to oppose the expansion of slavery into the western territories. In 1844 Hoar was dispatched by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to protest the arrest of African American sailors from the Bay State when the ships on which they served docked in the port of Charleston. An angry mob prevented Hoar from carrying out his mission. The incident strengthened support for the antislavery cause in Concord.
- 20 Thoreau-Alcott House - 255 Main St. (ca. 1820)**
The entire Thoreau family was instrumental in the antislavery movement. They moved here in August 1850, and Henry David Thoreau wrote in his Journal on 10/1/1851 about lodging self-emancipated slave Henry Williams and putting him on a train to Canada. The Alcott family moved here in 1877.
- 21 Concord Depot - 90 Thoreau St.**
The Fitchburg Railroad opened its route through Concord in 1844, with connections north to Vermont and Canada. The original railroad depot, close to the town center, facilitated the efforts of Concord residents to aid the escape of fugitive slaves to freedom on the "Underground Railroad."

No 4 MONUMENT STREET, GREAT MEADOWS & BEYOND

22 Old Manse - 269 Monument St. (1770)
The Rev. William Emerson (1743-1776), minister of the Concord church from 1766 to 1776 and grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson, built this house in 1770. Four people were enslaved here during the 1770s: Cate, Phyllis and her daughter Phyllis, and Frank. In 1842 the Manse was rented by newlyweds Nathaniel and Sophia Hawthorne, who arrived to find a surprising wedding gift: a vegetable garden had been planted for them by John Garrison, a free man of color, working with Henry David Thoreau. This one-time setting for slave-holders became a site of abolitionism when John Brown spoke in the parlor in April 1857. Frank Sanborn, one of the “Secret Six” supporting Brown’s fight against slavery, lived here in 1863.

23 The Robbins Farm - (c. 1790s)
Caesar Robbins was a Revolutionary War soldier who had been enslaved from birth in nearby Chelmsford and Acton. After his service, he lived in a house on an acre or two of land at the edge of the Great Field, made available by the wealthy Humphrey Barrett. Several decades later, in 1823-24, two of Robbins’s children – son Peter and daughter Susan Robbins Garrison – moved into a new house on the site with their families. Peter and his wife Fatima Oliver lived in the west half; Susan and husband Jack Garrison raised several children in the east. After seven years of marriage, Peter left the house to live nearby with Almira Oliver, a relative of his wife, and there they had thirteen children. The Garrisons moved out of the house in 1837 (See #29).

Garrisons – Caesar Robbins’s daughter Susan Garrison was an original member of the Concord Female Antislavery Society, founded in 1837; her husband Jack, once enslaved in New Jersey, took up a new life as a free man in Concord by 1810.

No 5 WALDEN WOODS

33 Brister’s Hill Road- Named after Brister Freeman
34 Brister and Fenda Freeman House Site - Brister Freeman (1744-1822), who had been given as a wedding gift to Dr. John Cuming (#31), purchased the “old field” in Walden woods in 1792 with another African American Revolutionary War soldier and set up a two-family household. Brister’s wife Fenda Freeman (1751-1811) told fortunes; they had three children. Brister worked as a day laborer and endured frequent harassment from residents and local officials. Impressed by what Brister was able to accomplish in such a hostile environment, H.D. Thoreau compares him in Walden to Scipio Africanus, the great Roman general.

35 Cato and Phyllis Ingraham House Site - When local squire Duncan Ingraham (1726-1811) moved to Medford in 1795, his previously enslaved man Cato (1751-1805) asked if he could marry Phyllis (1768- 1805), the Old Manse servant, and bring her along. Duncan replied that Cato could marry but only if he stayed behind in Concord, severed his ties with his master, and sought no further financial assistance from him. Cato chose Phyllis over a secure financial future, and Duncan provided him with a small house and permission to live in it on his acre of sandy land in Walden Woods. Cato and his family took in boarders to help with expenses, but Cato and the rest of his family died of diseases associated with malnutrition.

36 Zilpah (or Zilpha) White House Site - Formerly an enslaved woman, Zilpah White (c.1738-1822) lived in a one-room house on the common land that bordered Walden Street. She

made a living spinning flax into linen fibers. In *Walden*, Thoreau notes that, like other formerly enslaved persons, she too was harassed. He describes her living conditions as “somewhat inhumane.” And yet her ability to provide for herself at a time when few if any other Concord women lived alone was impressive.

Hutchinsons – In 1852, Peter Hutchinson, a free man of color, acquired the Robbins Farm, which he occupied with his wife, children, and grandson. During his time in The Robbins House, the lane to the farm became known as Peter’s Path and the woods nearby as Peter Hutchinson’s Woods. A spring at the edge of the farm was known as Peter’s Spring.

In 1868 J.S. Keyes and his wife Martha bought the house and farm. In the winter of 1870-71 the house was moved **24** to **324 Bedford Street**, where it became a home for Irish immigrants Bartholomew and Margaret Barry. As of 2011 **25** **The Robbins House** stands across from the Old North Bridge at 320 Monument Street and is one of the only known historic sites commemorating the legacy of a previously enslaved Revolutionary War veteran. It now serves as a site for the interpretation of Concord’s African American history

26 North Bridge - Revolutionary War soldier Caesar Robbins likely served here on April 19, 1775.

27 Peter’s Spring Road & Path - Named after Peter Hutchinson

28 Addison G. Fay House - 93 Monument St.
The house of former Universalist minister Addison Fay (1818-1873) during the height of the antislavery movement. His biographer called him “an antislavery man from the start, when to be an antislavery man was unpopular.”

made a living spinning flax into linen fibers. In *Walden*, Thoreau notes that, like other formerly enslaved persons, she too was harassed. He describes her living conditions as “somewhat inhumane.” And yet her ability to provide for herself at a time when few if any other Concord women lived alone was impressive.

37 Thoreau’s Cabin at Walden Pond - (1845) In August 1846, Thoreau hosted the Concord Female Antislavery Society and guests at his Walden Woods cabin to celebrate the 2nd anniversary of West Indian Emancipation. Among the speakers was Lewis Hayden, a self-emancipated slave from Kentucky, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, who gave his first public speech on antislavery.

38 Codman Estate - 34 Codman Rd., Lincoln (1708)
This was the Concord farm with the largest number of enslaved “servants for life” before 1754, when town lines were redrawn locating the farm in Lincoln. In 1708 Charles Chambers left Charlestown and brought his six enslaved servants to Concord. His grandson Chambers Russell succeeded him as owner of the large estate in 1749, to which he brought still more enslaved servants acquired through marriage. Just after the Revolutionary War started, the British sympathizing Russells fled their farm and then the country, abandoning their enslaved servants who found homes and freedom squatting along the roadside in Walden Woods. In 1790, John Codman, whose grandfather was orphaned and a ward of Charles Chambers, inherited the Chambers-Russell estate, which has since been known as the Codman estate.

29 Garrison House - 78 Monument St. (ca. 1850s)
In 1835 a derelict windmill stood at the top of this hill. The Garrison family moved into the mill about 1837, and later built the present cottage.

30 Barrett House - 448 Barrett’s Mill Rd.
Slave-holding was concentrated among the rich, and Col. James Barrett (1710-1779), the commander of Patriot forces at the North Bridge on April 19, 1775, belonged in this elite class. He owned a young man named Philip, born c.1761, who after his master’s death enlisted in the Continental Army and was stationed at West Point in 1781.

31 John Cuming House - 998 Elm St. (ca. 1750)
John Cuming (1728-88) was a country doctor, Lt. Col. in the French and Indian War, and presided over 70 town meetings before and during the Revolution. He could not have done this without help to run his farm, which he found in his enslaved men Jem and Brister (Brister proclaimed his freedom after serving in the Revolutionary War alongside John Cuming (see #34).

32 Thoreau Birth House - 341 Virginia Rd.
Peter Hutchinson spent his final years as a boarder in the house where Henry David Thoreau was born. This dwelling, when owned by Captain Jonas Minot, was the first known residence of Jack Garrison, who married Susan Robbins in 1812, after his arrival in Concord as a fugitive slave sometime before 1810. Peter, Jack and Susan were all African American residents of the Robbins House, (#25)

No 6 WEST CONCORD

39 Jennie Dugan’s Brook - Thomas Dugan (1747-1827) was a self-emancipated slave from Virginia, arriving in Concord around 1787. He and his first wife Catherine had five children. When Catherine died, Thomas married Jennie Parker (1770-1855+) of Acton, and after whom Jennie Dugan’s Brook was named. Thomas and Jennie had three children. Elisha Dugan lost his father’s land and subsequently lived in the woods. He was memorialized by Thoreau in his poem *The Old Marlborough Road*. After he died, Thomas Dugan was remembered for introducing the rye cradle to Concord and teaching local farmers to graft apple trees. George, their youngest son, enlisted in the MA 54th regiment of the Civil War at the age of 44 in 1863; he never returned.

40 Damon Mill - 1700 Main St.
One of the earliest textile mills in Massachusetts, founded in 1808, this enterprise produced cotton cloth from raw materials grown on plantations in South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. Acquired by Calvin C. Damon in 1835, the mill became known for the popular lightweight flannel fabric it made from cotton and wool. In 1855 it consumed some 40,000 pounds of cotton from Southern plantations.

41 Peter Hutchinson House - 12 Fairhaven Rd. (c.1847)
Peter Hutchinson, the last African American resident of The Robbins House, built this house on part of the former Hubbardville farm of the Potter family. Soon afterward he also built a barn from pieces of an old barn that had stood on Main Street at Concord center.

WHAT WAS SLAVERY LIKE IN CONCORD?

In the quarter-century before the American Revolution, more than a dozen individuals in Concord at the top of the economic order owned “servants for life,” whose numbers fluctuated over the years. A census of the town taken in 1764 listed 27 “negroes,” some of whom lived in the section later set off to Carlisle. That figure corresponds with estimates from tax and assessment lists of 25-26 “servants for life,” as they were called by officials of the province. Most of these men and women labored as household servants or did chores on the small farms of the town; their work made essential contributions to the households of the ministers, merchants, doctors, lawyers, public officials, and gentleman farmers commanding their service. Unlike coerced laborers on Southern plantations, Concord’s enslaved inhabitants did not produce staple crops for export markets.

In 1790, at the start of the new nation under the Constitution, the non-white population of Concord was 29 on the first federal census. Ten years later African Americans numbered 38 out of 1,679 inhabitants or 2.3% of the whole – the peak figure during the antebellum period. As late as 1850, with anti-slavery activism at a height, 33 free people of color were inhabitants. Though only 1.5% of the town, local blacks had a larger presence in Concord than in the state overall. They had held their own as free citizens of the Commonwealth.

~ Professor Robert Gross
Author of “The Minutemen and their World,” *Draper Professor Emeritus of Early American History, University of Connecticut*

WHY DID MEN OF COLOR ~ ENSLAVED OR FREE ~ FIGHT IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION?

There is some evidence to indicate that enslaved men hoped to gain their freedom by serving in the Revolutionary War. Although the records are not always clear, some enslaved men were able to parlay terms of military service in exchange for their freedom from slavery. Other enslaved men took matters into their own hands and ran away from their owners to serve in the Continental Army in 1775.

Soldiers of color returning to Massachusetts at the close of the Revolutionary War in 1783 were thrust into a nebulous position within the state’s social hierarchy. Although legally no longer slaves (due to the 1783 Quock Walker court case and the MA Declaration of Rights), people of color often found themselves with little or nothing to use in support of their livelihoods. Many drew on their military experiences to establish new networks and communities.

~John Hannigan,
Ph.D. candidate in History, Brandeis University & Minute Man National Park 2014 Scholar in the Park researching Patriots of Color
Please contact the Concord Chamber of Commerce for tours; we thank them for supporting our mission.
Research and substantiation is ongoing.
The compilers of this map welcome your comments & corrections.
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VISION

To inspire conversation, expand understanding and contribute to a better society

GOALS

- Unearth and share the stories of Concord’s earliest African Americans (particularly the African residents of the 19th century Robbins House)
- Create educational resources based upon the experience of Concord’s early African Americans and antislavery activists
- Promote dialogue about social justice

- This is being accomplished through:**
- maps and tours of the early African and antislavery sites
 - the establishment of The Robbins House and creation of interpretive exhibits (see #25)
 - framed copies of an 1864 petition to the President from Concord school children to free slave children together with Lincoln’s response, which hang in Concord’s three public elementary schools (see #3)
 - commemorating early African and African American forgotten home sites with stone benches (see #34)
 - providing engraved headstones for the unmarked graves of African Americans (see #4)
 - educational events to promote and inform audiences about this aspect of Concord’s history
 - working closely with many entities in town, including schools, museums, town agencies and community organizations

We thank and recommend the following Authors and their books:

- Lois Brown, Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins:** *Black Daughter of the Revolution*, University of North Carolina Press, 2008
Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World*, Hill and Wang, 1976; 25th Anniversary Edition 2001
Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009
Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and “Race” in New England, 1780-1860*, Cornell University Press, 2000
Sandra Petrulionis, *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau’s Concord*, Cornell University Press, 2006

Special Thank You to Leslie Wilson, Curator of Special Collections at the Concord Free Public Library & the Concord Community Preservation Committee

Donations are gratefully accepted to expand our work on the African American and Antislavery History of Concord, and preserve The Robbins House as an African American interpretive center.
Donations can be made online at: www.robbinshouse.org
Checks can be made out to The Robbins House and sent to: P.O. Box 506 Concord, MA 01742
Thank You!

The Robbins House is a Concord-based nonprofit organization focused on revealing the little known African American history of Concord and its regional and national importance.

www.robbinshouse.org