



# Conductors on the Underground Railroad

## Harriet Tubman & Thomas Garrett

Harriet Tubman was born into slavery in March, 1820. She freed herself in 1849 when she fled from her slave state of Maryland to the free state of Pennsylvania.

Harriet would return to Maryland many times over the next decade, to rescue both family and non-family members from the bondages of slavery. Harriet had a great ally and friend in Thomas Garrett. Garrett was a Quaker, an abolitionist and successful business man, who, ignoring the risk to his own wellbeing, used his home and personal wealth to support the slaves' escape.

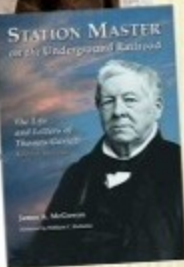
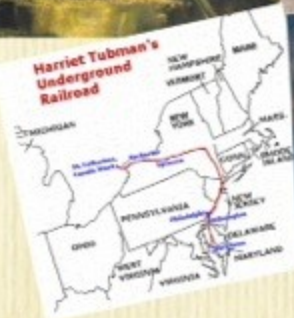
Harriet earned the nickname "Moses" after the prophet Moses in the Bible who had led his people out of slavery. Once she was free she knew she had to help others. She said "I was free and they (the slaves back home) should be free.... I would make a home for them in the North, and the Lord helping me, I would bring them all there." She was proud that in all her journeys on the "Railroad" she "...never lost a single passenger".

Garrett lived in Wilmington, Delaware which was the last stop on the "Railroad" before reaching the free state of Pennsylvania. His station on the Underground Railroad was the most efficiently run and the most hazardous due to its proximity to Pennsylvania. But, no runaway slave was ever turned away. Garrett gave the runaways new shoes and clothing. He also paid for forged passes for the slaves to protect them, should a slave catcher try to stop them.

Garrett himself has been credited with saving 2700-3000 slaves! He was also singularly responsible for helping Harriet rescue her parents from the slave system. Referring to Garrett Tubman once said: "Quakers are almost as good as colored. They call themselves friends and you can trust them every time."

In April 1870, the Blacks in Wilmington, Delaware celebrated the passing of the 15th Amendment to the Constitution which declared that the right to vote could not be denied to anyone because of race, color or previous condition of slavery. Jubilant Blacks pulled an open carriage carrying Thomas Garrett through the streets of Wilmington. On the side of this carriage was engraved "Our Moses".

Tubman and Garrett lived Race Amity. Garrett often signed his letters with: "Your friend and the friend of humanity, without regard to religion, country or color." And Tubman said: "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember you have within you the strength, the patience and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."



# FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR ALL!

Two men from different continents, of different skin color and backgrounds were joined in a spiritual quest as they raised their voices protesting both social injustice in their own countries as well as social injustice everywhere.

## DANIEL O'CONNEL

1775-1847



O'Connell, Irish politician, known as The Liberator, was a revered leader in the Catholic Emancipation from the Church of England. He was well known across Ireland, England and the United States as the staunchest abolitionist of that time. He was considered radical even by many other abolitionists and was very outspoken in his opposition and rhetoric. In an 1829 anti-slavery meeting in London, he declared "of all men living, an American citizen who is the owner of slaves is despicable." O'Connell, so strong in his conviction, would actually return any donation he received for the cause of Irish Emancipation, from an Irish man living in the United States. If he discovered that the money came from a slave owner.

His reputation as a great orator was unmatched. O'Connell was a large man, over six feet four, with a booming eloquent voice. His voice was called "musical". Douglass, himself a great orator, after hearing O'Connell speak, wrote that he was overwhelmed by him and had never heard any equal. "...It seems to me that the voice of O'Connell is enough to calm the most violent passion, ...There is a sweet persuasiveness in it, beyond any voice I ever heard. His power over an audience is perfect."

"The principle of my political life ... is that all amelioration and improvements in political institutions can be obtained by persevering in a perfectly peaceable and legal course, and cannot be obtained by forcible means, or if they could be got by forcible means, such means create more evils than they cure, and leave the country worse than they found it."

- Daniel O'Connell, The Nation newspaper, 1843

"Instead of the bright, blue sky of America, I am covered with the soft, grey fog of the Emerald Isle. I breathe, and lo! the chattel becomes a man."

- Frederick Douglass, letter to William Lloyd Garrison, 1845

## FREDERICK DOUGLASS

1818-1895



Douglass first learned of O'Connell when he heard his master curse the name of the Irishman. He later wrote "my master hated him so I knew I would love him." As a slave doing his master's bidding, Douglass had a chance encounter with some Irish sailors (his first connection to Ireland). They encouraged him to run for freedom, and Douglass, in 1838, did indeed escape slavery in Maryland by running North.

In 1845, as Ireland was plunging into the despair of the Great Famine, Douglass arrived for a four month speaking tour at the invitation of the Quaker Community there and was hosted by members of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society. Douglass had recently published his autobiography, "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave". An Irish edition of his book was about to be published and his anti-slavery lectures across Ireland were meant to raise funds for the abolitionist movement in the United States.

Douglass was greeted by enthusiastic crowds in Dublin, Belfast and Cork and in Ireland he formed many friendships. The most significant of which was his relationship/ friendship with Daniel O'Connell, which came about when in Sept, 1845, at a rally in Dublin, the two great men and orators shared a stage for the first and only time. At the time of their meeting O'Connell was seventy and Douglass twenty-eight. The two men retained a mutual respect and admiration for each other until O'Connell's death less than two years later. And for the rest of his life, Douglass acknowledged O'Connell's influence on his philosophy and world view.

It was from O'Connell that Douglass learned that it wasn't enough to work only for the emancipation of the American slave. He became a "world citizen" and would spend the rest of his life working for social justice anywhere injustice was found. So upon arriving back in America he immediately went to New York to offer his services to the Suffragist Movement - he had come to embrace the concept of universal suffrage so eloquently expressed and practiced by his new friend, O'Connell.



Courtesy: Wayland Historical Society

## Captain Wade's Change of Heart

Thomas Francis Wade (1820-1885) of Wayland served in the Civil War in the US Navy. Wade, at meetings in Wayland, was an outspoken critic of abolition and served as a loyal officer for the Union. At the end of the war, his feelings towards slavery were quite changed.

*'Come here, my good fellow! I've been fighting alongside of people of your color, and glad enough I was to have 'em by my side. Come and sit by me.'*

The following story was recorded by Wayland abolitionist and author, Lydia Maria Child:



"Capt. Wade of the U.S. Navy, who bought a house for his wife in this town, has been a bitter pro-slavery man, violent and vulgar in his talk against abolitionists and 'niggers.' Two years ago, he was for having us mobbed because we advocated emancipating and arming the slaves...."

"He has been serving in the vicinity of N. Orleans, and has come home on a furlough, an outspoken abolitionist. He not only says it in private, but has delivered three lectures in town, in which he has publicly announced the total change in his sentiments since he has had 'an opportunity to know something on the subject.'"

Lydia Maria Child letters:  
April 22, 1864



Courtesy: Library of Congress

Captain Wade's story teaches us that when we are able to give ourselves "... an opportunity to know something on the subject..." our hearts and minds can change, can be opened, such that the artificial barriers between people of different races, creeds or cultures come tumbling down.

This is yet another example of "Race Amity" at work.



Courtesy of the Council on Library and Archives



# Partners in Social Justice for All

## Mary McLeod Bethune & Eleanor Roosevelt

*Mary McLeod Bethune and Eleanor Roosevelt were two of the most powerful women in the 20th century. Bethune was in the forefront as a civil rights leader, an educator and a member of FDR's "Black Cabinet". She and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt shared mutual goals that led, not only to a unique relationship between women of markedly different backgrounds, but to a partnership as advocates for social change in our country.*

*Mary McLeod Bethune (1875 - 1955) was an American educator and civil rights leader best known for starting a school for African-American students in Daytona Beach, Florida, that eventually became Bethune-Cookman University and for being an advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Born in South Carolina to parents who had been slaves and having to work in fields at age five, she took an early interest in her own education. With the help of benefactors, Bethune attended college and started a school for African-American girls in Daytona Beach.*

*The school grew and merged with an institute for African-American boys and eventually became the Bethune-Cookman School. Its quality far surpassed the standards of education for African-American students. As president of the college, she was one of the few women in the world who served as such at that time.*

*Bethune was also active in women's clubs, and her leadership in them allowed her to become nationally prominent. She worked for the election of Roosevelt in 1932, sharing the concerns of black people with the Roosevelt administration while spreading Roosevelt's message to blacks, who had been traditionally Republican voters. In 1896, the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) was formed to promote the needs of black women. Bethune served as the Florida chapter president of the NACW from 1917-1925 and made it a mission to register as many black voters as possible, which prompted several visits from the Ku Klux Klan.*

*Never was the respect that Eleanor Roosevelt felt for Bethune more evident than when the First Lady demanded that the segregation rules at the Southern Conference on Human Welfare in 1938, being held in Birmingham, Alabama, be changed so she could sit next to Bethune. Roosevelt frequently referred to Bethune as "her closest friend in her age group." [19] Bethune, in her turn took it upon herself to disperse the message of the Democratic Party to black voters, and make the concerns of black people known to the Roosevelts at the same time.*

*She had unprecedented access to the White House through her relationship with the First Lady. She used it to form a coalition of leaders from black organizations called the Federal Council on Negro Affairs, but which came to be known as the Black Cabinet. [10] The role of the Black Cabinet was to serve as an advisory board to the Roosevelt administration on issues facing black people in America. It gathered talented blacks in positions within federal agencies, creating the first collective of black people enjoying higher positions in government than ever before.*

*It also served to show to voters that the Roosevelt administration cared about black concerns. The group gathered in Bethune's office or apartment and met informally, rarely keeping minutes. Although as advisers they had little role in creating public policy, they were a respected leadership among black voters and were able to influence political appointments and disbursement of funds to organizations that would benefit black people.*





# Two Prophets, One Soul

## Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. & Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel



*Two men from different geographies, color, creed and theological backgrounds were joined in a spiritual kinship as they came together to protest the pernicious racism that was poisoning America.*

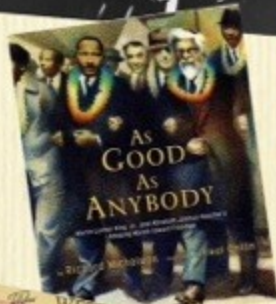
*The two men met in Chicago when they attended the 1963 Conference on Religion and Race where Dr. King was the keynote speaker.*

*MLK once described Heschel as "...one of the great men of our age, a truly great prophet. He has been with us in many struggles. I remember marching from Selma to Montgomery, how he stood at my side... I remember very well when we were in Chicago for the Conference on Religion and Race... to a great extent his speech inspired clergymen of all faiths to do something they had not done before." When Heschel spoke of that Selma march he once said: "When I was walking my feet were praying."*

*After the assassination of Martin Luther King, Heschel said of him: "Martin Luther King is a sign that God has not forsaken the United States of America. God has sent him to us... his mission is sacred. I call upon every Jew to hearken to his voice, to share his vision, to follow his way. The whole future of America will depend on the influence of Dr. King."*

*Dr. King and Rabbi Heschel charge us all to transcend the old history that separates us and to come together for the good of all. They remind us that although only some are guilty, all are responsible. Heschel and King taught us that the opposite of good is not evil but indifference and that silence in the presence of evil amounts to consent. Moral responsibility transcends class, creed and race.*

*Dr. King and Rabbi Heschel, with their words and the example of their lives, teach us all about the power of mutual respect, of close cross racial friendship and cooperation, of the power of RACE AMITY.*



### WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

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NO. 104782 PG. NO. 1048 BY NO. 11449-11517  
BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALA. 35808  
MY DEEP IDENTIFICATION WITH THE PEOPLE FOR WHOM I AM DESTINED AND  
MY FIRM LEADERSHIP BEING HELD BY ALL OF AMERICA  
ABRAHAM HESCHEL  
0211

