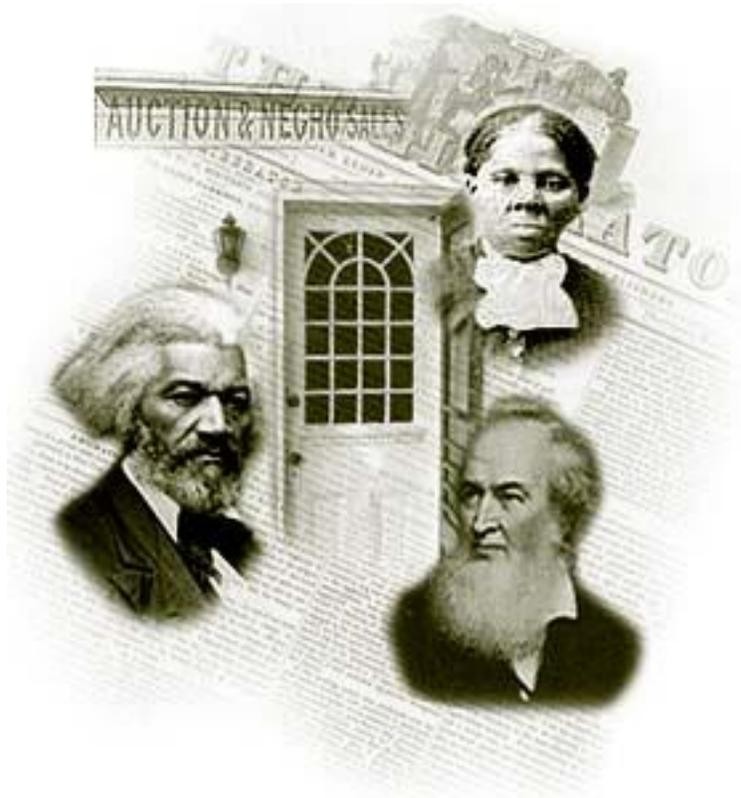


# Underground Railroad on The Niagara Frontier: Selected Sources in the Grosvenor Room



## Key

- \* = Oversized book
- Buffalo = Buffalo Collection
- Stacks = Closed Stacks, ask for retrieval
- GRO = Grosvenor Collection
- MEDIA = Media Room
- Non-Fiction = General Collection
- Ref. = Reference book, cannot be borrowed

Grosvenor Room  
Buffalo and Erie County Public Library  
1 Lafayette Square  
Buffalo, New York 14203-1887  
(716) 858-8900  
[www.buffalolib.org](http://www.buffalolib.org)  
Revised June 2020

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## Introduction

Although there is not a book-length history of abolitionism or the Underground Railroad in the Buffalo area, there are other resources that cover this subject, including journal and newspaper articles. There are also books about Underground Railroad history in other parts of New York State and Ontario, Canada that include brief passages about the Underground Railroad in Western New York.

Most of the following resources are in the Grosvenor Room and cannot be borrowed. Other books on the Underground Railroad may be available in the non-fiction collection at the Central Library and other BECPL branches.

## Books

GRO E444 .L832 2001

Loguen, Jermain Wesley

**A Stop on the Underground Railroad: Rev. J.W. Loguen and Syracuse**

Syracuse, NY: Hofmann Press, [2001]

Buffalo E445 .J6 H4 1990

Heintzman, Nelson Terry

**"Not a Scintilla of Abolition in Buffalo:" The Rise of a Liberty Man as Revealed in the Journals of George Washington Jonson**

Thesis (M.S.)--State University of New York at Buffalo, 1990

GRO E445 .N9 C34 2003

Calarco, Tom

**The Underground Railroad Conductor**

Schenectady, NY: Travels Thru History, 2003

Non-Fiction E450 .F66 2015

Foner, Eric

**Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of The Underground Railroad**

New York : W.W. Norton & Company, [2015]

## Books

Buffalo E450 .K57 1997

Klees, Emerson.

**Underground Railroad Tales: With Routes Through the Finger Lakes Region**

Rochester, NY: Friends of the Finger Lakes Pub., ©1997

Buffalo E450 .M52

Merrill, Arch

**The Underground, Freedom's Road, and Other Upstate Tales**

[New York: American Book-Stratford Press, 1963]

Buffalo E450 .P5 1987

Phelan, Helene C.

**And Why Not Every Man? An Account of Slavery, the Underground Railroad, and the Road to Freedom in New York's Southern Tier**

Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1987

Buffalo E450 .P514 1999

Pettit, Eber M.

**Sketches in the History of the Underground Railroad, Comprising Many Thrilling Incidents of the Escape**

Westfield, NY: Chautauqua Region Press, ©1999

*A reprint of the original 1879 edition*

Buffalo E450 .P75 1991

Priebe, Paula J.

**The Underground Railroad in Western New York**

National Endowment for the Humanities study of evidence regarding the underground railroad in Erie County

Buffalo E450 .R4 1985

Kern, Walter, comp.

**Reclaiming Your Heritage: Getting to Western New York and Ontario**

[S.l.; s.n.], 1985

Non-Fiction E450 .T62 2007

Tobin, Jacqueline L.

**From Midnight to Dawn**

New York: Doubleday, ©2007

*See Chapter 7, "Niagara Region" (pp. 148-179)*

GRO F119 .H85, v.1, pp. 140-142

Horton, John Theodore

**History of Northwestern New York: Erie, Niagara, Wyoming, Genesee and Orleans Counties**

New York: Lewis Historical Pub. Co. [1947]

Buffalo F127 .N6 S52, pp. 227-271

Severance, Frank H., 1856-1931

**Old Trails on the Niagara Frontier**

Buffalo, NY: 1899

Online at <https://archive.org/details/oldtrailsniagara00severich>

Buffalo F127 .N6 W74, v.1, pp. 427-430

Wilner, Merton Merriman, 1867-

**Niagara Frontier: A Narrative and Documentary History**

Chicago, IL: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1931

Buffalo F129 .B8 B917, pp. 61-62

**Buffalo Past and Present**

Buffalo, NY: Reinecke & Zesch, 1912

## Books

Buffalo F129 .B8 F6, pp. 95-118

Fosdick, Myrtila

**When Buffalo Was Young**

Buffalo, NY: Otto Ulbrich Co., [1925]

Buffalo F129 .E12 G28, pp. 27-28

**Our Town**

[East Aurora, NY: The Garcians, 1967]

Buffalo \*F129 .F843 E24 1987, pp. 38, 66, 105-106, 212

Eberle, Scott G.

**Second Looks: A Pictorial History of Buffalo and Erie County**

Norfolk, VA: Donning Co., ©1987

Buffalo \*F130 .N3 P3

Powell, Elwin H.

**News from the Aceldama: Black and White Relations as Revealed by the Journal of George Washington Jonson (1832-68)**

[Buffalo, NY: s.n., 1976]

GRO F1035 .N3 P6 1993

Power, Michael

**Slavery and Freedom in Niagara**

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario: Niagara Historical Society, ©1993

GRO F1059 .N5 T46 1999

Thomas, Owen A. 1962-

**Niagara's Freedom Trail: A Guide to African-Canadian History on the Niagara Peninsula**

Thorold, Ontario: Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation, ©1999

## Newspaper Articles

The Local History File is a card index of newspaper and periodical articles about people, places, and things in the Buffalo area. Look under these subject headings:

- Abolition Party
- Abolitionists
- African-Americans
- Churches. Baptist. Michigan St.
- Clubs. Anti-Slavery Society
- Negroes
- Slavery
- Underground Railroad

## Journal & Magazine Articles

For more articles, see "Underground Railroad" in the **Local History File**.

GRO \*F118 .W46a, v.16, no.1, pp. 20-23  
*Western New York Genealogical Society Journal*, June 1989  
 Francis, Mary Morrison  
 "Underground Railroad in Erie County"

Buffalo F127.N6 N58, v.1 No.3, pp. 69-71  
*Niagara Frontier*, Autumn 1954  
 Graf, Hildegard  
 "The Underground Railroad in Erie County"

GRO F128.9 .N4 A36, v.25 no.1, pp.7-32  
*Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*, Jan 2001  
 Sernett, Milton C.  
 "On Freedom's Trail: Researching the Underground Railroad in New York State"

GRO F128.9 .N4 A36, v. 36, no.1  
*Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*, Jan 2012  
 Cynthia M. Van Ness  
 "Still They Come: Some Eyewitness Accounts of the Underground Railroad in Buffalo."

Buffalo \*F129 .B8 B926, v.29 no.4, pp. 44-45  
*Buffalo Spree*, Winter 1995  
 Fox, Austin  
 "The Train into Canada"

Buffalo \*F129 .B8 B926, v.35 no.1, pp. 76-81  
*Buffalo Spree*, Jan/Feb. 2001  
 Pelton, Ted  
 "Searching for the Underground Railroad"

## Databases

<http://dbaz.buffalolib.org>

Database	Description	Access
<a href="#">Slavery in America and the World: History, Culture &amp; Law</a>	The Slavery in America Collection of HeinOnline, brings together all the known legal materials on slavery in the United States and the English-speaking world, including hundreds of pamphlets and books written about slavery from the collection of the B&ECPL.	For use at any B&ECPL library branch.

## Slavery Collection in the Rare Book Room

There are over 600 items in the Slavery Collection in the Rare Book Room, dating from 1651 to 1945. It is strong in the areas of the abolition of the slave trade in Great Britain; slavery in Jamaica and the West Indies; the American Colonization Society; the Christian Church; debates on slavery; anti-slavery societies; slave narratives; almanacs; speeches. A few titles are available as reprints and may be borrowed. A few items relate to Western New York.

Items in the collection can be identified by searching the Catalog at [www.buffalolib.org](http://www.buffalolib.org). Search for the phrase "RBR Slavery." You should see items listed with call numbers that begin with RBR SLAVERY. To request to view specific items from the Slavery Collection by appointment, call 716-858-8900.

The [HeinOnline Legal Database](#) also provides online access to this collection through the BECPL databases. Please note that this is only available at BECPL branches (no at home access).

## Vertical File

The Grosvenor Room collects articles, pamphlets, and clippings about local Underground Railroad history. Ask for these vertical files:

- Michigan Street Baptist Church
- Underground Railroad

## Videos

BECPL Digital Collections include these WIVB news reports in the Rich Newberg Reports Collection. Watch the following online:

### **The Road to Freedom : Preserving Black History In Western New York**

<http://digital.buffalolib.org/document/1839>

Highlights Buffalo's unique role in the abolitionist movement. Uses reenactments, old photographs and drawings, and interviews with historians and preservationists such as Dr. Monroe Fordham, Jesse Nash, Jr., George Arthur, Rev. William Henderson, and Kevin Cottrell, to tell the story of Buffalo's critical role as the last stop on the Underground Railroad. Discusses significant sites in Buffalo to be preserved, such as the Michigan Street Baptist Church and the Nash house.

### **Beyond the Road to Freedom : New Lessons as Freedom's Message is Brought to Life**

<http://digital.buffalolib.org/document/1813>

Western New York is a leader in presenting re-enactments at authentic sites dating back to the days of abolitionism. Learn why these Underground Railroad sites are now gaining national attention. See how efforts have begun to document and preserve these treasures for future generations.

Untouched original hiding places for escaping slaves are revealed. You will understand why the civil rights movement had its earliest origins in the Buffalo/Niagara region. See how the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo offered both hope and despair for an aspiring African American community in the country's eighth largest city at the time.

Websites	Notes
<a href="https://buffaloresearch.wordpress.com/blog/ugrr/">https://buffaloresearch.wordpress.com/blog/ugrr/</a> Van Ness, Cynthia <b>Buffalo Research – Underground Railroad</b>	Buffalo UGRR sites and good information o the research process of using authoritative sources, and being aware of myths and false claims.
<a href="http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/units/archives/exhibits/old/urr/">http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/units/archives/exhibits/old/urr/</a> Densmore, Christopher <b>Reform, Religion, and the Underground Railroad in Western New York</b>	Includes transcriptions of local newspaper articles about fugitive slave cases and anti-slavery activities
<a href="http://www.math.buffalo.edu/~sww/0history/hwny-ugrragents.html">http://www.math.buffalo.edu/~sww/0history/hwny-ugrragents.html</a> <b>Underground Railroad Agents in Western New York.</b> Compiled by Christopher Densmore, UB Archives	Names of persons who were said to be directly involved with the Underground Railroad.
<a href="http://www.visitbuffaloniagara.com/visitors/african/">http://www.visitbuffaloniagara.com/visitors/african/</a> Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau <b>African American Buffalo: A last stop before freedom</b>	The Underground Railroad in the context of the history of African Americans in Buffalo.
<a href="http://www.freedomtrail.ca/home.html">http://www.freedomtrail.ca/home.html</a> <b>The Underground Railroad: Finding Freedom in the Niagara Region</b>	Focuses on people and places in Ontario, Canada
<a href="http://www.buffaloah.com/h/af/index.html">http://www.buffaloah.com/h/af/index.html</a> <b>History of African-Americans in Buffalo, NY</b>	Images link to brief information on the Michigan Street Baptist church and further possible URR sites.

## Further resources at BECPL

Search the online catalog for materials owned by the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library: [www.buffalolib.org](http://www.buffalolib.org) --->**Catalog**. It includes the Grosvenor Room, all departments in the Central Library, and every town and branch library.

To find more Underground Railroad items at B&ECPL branches, including fiction, and new additions to the non-fiction collection, try these Subject searches:

ABOLITIONISTS NEW YORK STATE  
 ANTISLAVERY MOVEMENTS NEW YORK STATE  
 EMANCIPATION  
 FREE AFRICAN AMERICANS  
 FREEDMEN  
 SLAVERY NEW YORK STATE  
 SLAVERY ONTARIO  
 SLAVES EMANCIPATION NEW YORK  
 UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NEW YORK STATE

## Where Else Can I Research The UGRR in WNY?

### **Buffalo History Museum's Research Library**

1 Museum Court  
Buffalo, NY 14216-3199  
library@buffalohistory.org  
716.873.9644 x 306  
<https://buffalohistory.org/library-collections/>

See UGRR resources listed here: <https://www.worldcat.org/profiles/BECHS/lists/651523>

### **The William A. Miles Center for Afro-American History and Research**

Frank E. Merriweather Library  
1324 Jefferson Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14208  
(716) 883-4418  
<https://www.buffalolib.org/locations-and-hours>

The **Merriweather Library**, a branch of B&ECPL, houses the **Center for Afro-American History and Research** collection, the largest resource center in Western New York for African American history. This unique and outstanding collection was established in 1965 by now-retired B&ECPL Assistant Deputy Director William A. Miles. In 1975, the Afro-American Historical Association of the Niagara Frontier began to incorporate microfilms of primary source material on the history of African Americans in the Western New York area.

In addition to the numerous books, microfilms, and pictures, the collection has several specialized databases and has now acquired a new resource that makes Black Studies research more convenient and robust. The microfiche **Schomburg Clipping File** contains more than 9,000 records that preserve and document important accomplishments in the African American experience.

The Schomburg Clipping File mirrors the black experience, not only in North America, but worldwide. Essentially a periodical and newspaper clipping file, this unique collection also includes typescripts, broadsides, pamphlets, programs, book reviews, menus and various other short publications dealing with black history and culture. An important source for research into all aspects of black activities and accomplishments, the file brings together a huge diversity of material organized by subject and totaling almost a million pages not duplicated elsewhere.

The collection is international in scope including countries in Africa and others not normally associated with black culture such as Italy, Russia and Japan. Easy to use and suitable both for ready reference queries or in-depth research, the Schomburg Clipping File is a valuable and unusual research tool for the study of the African American experience.