



AN INVENTORY OF KANSAS UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SITES, FACILITIES, AND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

Criteria of the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program aided the preparation of this inventory. Continuing research is producing new material for interpretation.

The Underground Railroad still has something to teach: that every individual, no matter how humble, can make a difference in the world, and that the importance of one's life lies...in doing the right thing, even in silence or secrecy, and without reward.

Fergus M. Bordewich, author of Bound for Canaan: The Underground Railroad and the War for the Soul of America

Into the North

Table listing sites by county: Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jefferson, Jackson, Leavenworth, Nemaha, Riley, and Wyandotte. Sites include various homes, churches, and businesses.

The Free State Battleground

Table listing sites by county: Douglas, Wabaunsee, Miami, and Osage. Sites include museums, churches, and residences.

The Southern Gate

Table listing sites by county: Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, and Linn. Sites include cabins, churches, and houses.

Key to listings

- D Source: Documentary
T Source: Oral tradition
M Education/Museum
R Research facility
\* Registered by the Network to Freedom Program

Shawnee, C3

Table listing sites in Shawnee County, including houses and public buildings like Constitution Hall.

Franklin, B4

Table listing sites in Franklin County, including the Martin Carson House and Old Depot Museum.

Wabaunsee, D3

Table listing sites in Wabaunsee County, including churches and museums.

Miami County, A4

Table listing sites in Miami County, including the Adair Cabin and John Brown Museum.

Osage County, C3

Table listing sites in Osage County, including the Harvey town site.

The Southern Gate

Table listing sites by county: Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, and Linn. Sites include cabins, churches, and houses.

Additional information may be available locally.

Continuing study might result in revisions and new listings.

“THERE IS NO MONUMENT UNDER HEAVEN ON WHICH I WOULD RATHER HAVE MY NAME INSCRIBED THAN ON THIS GOODLY STATE OF KANSAS.”

Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), American Congregationalist clergyman. A brother of Uncle Tom's Cabin author Harriet Beecher Stowe. He raised funds for the defense of Kansas; the rifles purchased were called "Beecher's Bibles."

The National Underground Railroad Network To Freedom Program

The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998 directed the National Park Service to establish the Network to Freedom program, linking Underground Railroad sites, programs, and research facilities in communities across the country.

"Wherever slavery existed, there were efforts to escape, at first to maroon communities in rugged terrain away from settled areas, and later across state and international borders. While most began and completed their journeys unassisted, each subsequent decade in which slavery was legal in the United States saw an increase in active efforts to assist escape...Freedom seekers went in many directions to Canada, Mexico, Indian Territory, the West, Caribbean islands and Europe. Freedom seekers (usually called fugitives before the Civil War)...used wagons, horses, stagecoaches, and other means of the day. When these were unavailable, people traveled on foot."

The Underground Railroad always began with the decision of enslaved African Americans to seek freedom. It began with the decision of Austin Steward to leave slavery in Bath, New York. It began when Jane Johnson took her sons and left her master forever, and it began with anonymous journeys northward to freedom, of which many were aided by Kansas Free State settlers.



Registered in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program, National Park Service:

- Clinton Lake Museum
Constitution Hall-Topeka
Douglas County UGRR
Henry & Ann Harvey House
John Doy House Ruins
Quindaro Ruins
Wabaunsee Cemetery
Watkins Museum
William Mitchell House

The Clinton Lake Museum in Clinton, Kansas, is a facility listed by the Network to Freedom Program



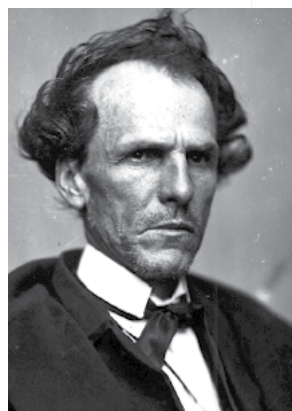
The Friends of the Network to Freedom Association is the premier national not-for-profit organization for education, preservation, and interpretation of the historic Underground Railroad.

For membership and conference information, contact The Underground Railroad Research Institute at Georgetown College: www.ugri.org

INTO THE NORTH

William Connelly, historian and a long-time executive director of the Kansas State Historical Society, researched the Lane Trail in the early 20th century. His map charts the trail north of the Kansas River, through Nebraska, and into Iowa. Connelly titles his map:

"The Lane Trail through Kansas and Nebraska, Used as the Underground Railroad, Showing Also the Indian and Trader trails Used by the Pioneers as Public Highways." The "Indian and Trader trails" continued south of the Kansas River. Those escaping slavery used these routes to reach the Lane Trail.



In this January 1858 letter, Samuel F. Tappan tells General Higginson:

"I am bappy to inform you that a certain Rail Road has been and is in full blast. Several persons have taken full advantage of it to visit their friends. Only one or two accidents have happened. Our funds in these hard times have nearly run out, and we need some help, for the present is attended with considerable expense. If you know of any one desirous of helping the cause, just mention our case to him, and ask him to communicate with Walter Oakley at Topeka, James Blood and myself at Lawrence, or Sam C. Smith at Quindaro...Yours in haste, Samuel F. Tappan"

James Lane, in 1855 elected president of the Topeka Constitutional Convention, organized efforts for those escaping slavery over the Lane Trail, earlier blazed by John Brown.

THE FREE STATE BATTLEGROUND

Writing in 1870, Charles Leonhardt told of this 1860 journey:

"We crossed the old Santa Fe road several miles east of 110 Mile Creek...made Dragoon Creek Station on time. The depot-master here, friend Henry Harvey had spent a lifetime in the anti-slavery struggle.

The next day we started for Auburn Station, Dr. Sabin...kept the Depot there. At his cabin on a branch of the Wakarusa, we found a colored passenger (with) his free papers...but his last owner had a chattel mortgage given to the grantor, which remained unpaid...[We] also had the manservant Joe and woman cook Nancy who were claimed as chattels by a Major at Ft. Leavenworth. With these two slaves had also come an almost white girl...Kate, who had been sold at a most fabulous price.

...Before leaving Auburn Station it became necessary to lay in sufficient stores to last up to stations in Nemaha county..."

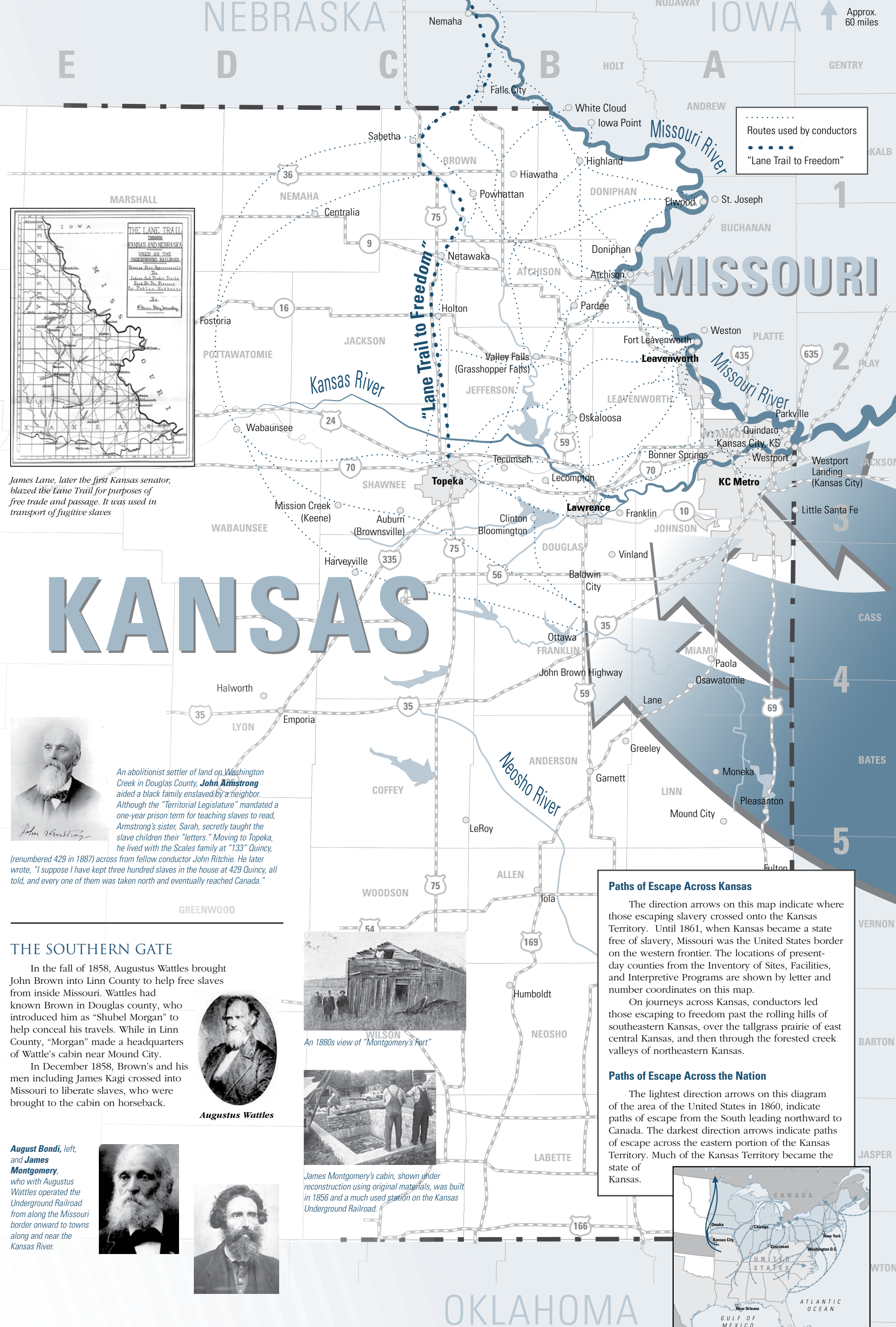
In the winter of 1857, "An underground railroad route was established through the settlement. The attic of the William Mitchell House, east of Wabaunsee, served as a hiding place for slaves. Mitchell took the slaves to Joshua Smith, who escorted them north to the state line. Enoch Platt was active in this movement." Enoch's father, Jirard Platt, was one of the most active conductors in the state of Illinois.



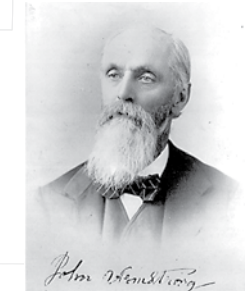
William Mitchell, left, and a painting of his house near Wabunsee

Julia Lovejoy, Kansas settler and a correspondent with several newspapers in New England:

"Last week a party of fugitives had fled from the land of bondage and stripes and reached Lawrence... They have lately found that the underground railroad reaches—; we must not tell how far, nor where the depots are located, for paid spies are on hand watching all our movements."



James Lane, later the first Kansas senator, blazed the Lane Trail for purposes of free trade and passage. It was used in transport of fugitive slaves



An abolitionist settler of land on Washington Creek in Douglas County, John Armstrong aided a black family enslaved by a neighbor. Although the "Territorial Legislature" mandated a one-year prison term for teaching slaves to read, Armstrong's sister, Sarah, secretly taught the slave children their "letters."

(renumbered 429 in 1887) across from fellow conductor John Ritchie. He later wrote, "I suppose I have kept three hundred slaves in the house at 429 Quincy, all told, and every one of them was taken north and eventually reached Canada."

THE SOUTHERN GATE

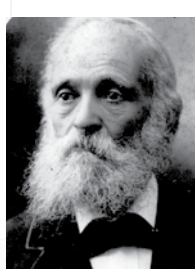
In the fall of 1858, Augustus Wattles brought John Brown into Linn County to help free slaves from inside Missouri. Wattles had known Brown in Douglas county, who introduced him as "Shubel Morgan" to help conceal his travels. While in Linn County, "Morgan" made a headquarters of Wattle's cabin near Mound City.

In December 1858, Brown's and his men including James Kagi crossed into Missouri to liberate slaves, who were brought to the cabin on horseback.



Augustus Wattles

August Bondi, left, and James Montgomery, who with Augustus Wattles operated the Underground Railroad from along the Missouri border onward to towns along and near the Kansas River.



An 1880s view of "Montgomery's Fort"



James Montgomery's cabin, shown under reconstruction using original materials, was built in 1856 and a much used station on the Kansas Underground Railroad.

Paths of Escape Across Kansas

The direction arrows on this map indicate where those escaping slavery crossed onto the Kansas Territory. Until 1861, when Kansas became a state free of slavery, Missouri was the United States border on the western frontier.

On journeys across Kansas, conductors led those escaping to freedom past the rolling hills of southeastern Kansas, over the tallgrass prairie of east central Kansas, and then through the forested creek valleys of northeastern Kansas.

Paths of Escape Across the Nation

The lightest direction arrows on this diagram of the area of the United States in 1860, indicate paths of escape from the South leading northward to Canada. The darkest direction arrows indicate paths of escape across the eastern portion of the Kansas Territory. Much of the Kansas Territory became the state of Kansas.

