

ROANOKE RIVER UGRR TRAIL

www.roanokeriverpartners.org/RRUGRRTrail

Embracing the rich Cultural Heritage

& abundant Natural Resources

of the Five-County Roanoke River Region in NE NC

Northampton~Halifax~Bertie~Martin~Washington



ROANOKE RIVER UGRR TRAIL VIEWMASTER GUIDES



WOMEN OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

- **Wanda Hunt McLean:** Modern-day UGRR Heroine to Northeast North Carolina. Wanda is a researcher from Elizabeth City, NC whose tireless efforts led to the Network to Freedom site designations of several NE NC sites and waterways, including the Roanoke River in 2008. Her great-grandmother, Mary Arnold Parks, was a former slave and her great-grandfather was the principal of the Fort Valley Industrial School. This was one of the schools supported by Julius Rosenwald, a philanthropist who partnered with Booker T. Washington to support the construction of over 5000 schools for African American children across the rural South.
- **Hannah Crafts (b. about 1830):** Author. Also known as Hannah Bond, she was enslaved in Bertie Co. and what is now Hertford County, NC. About 1857 she escaped, married, settled in New Jersey and became a teacher. As a young woman, she wrote *"The Bondwoman's Narrative,"* an autobiographical novel.
- **Harriet Jacobs (1813-1897):** Anti-slavery activist and Abolitionist Author. Lived in hiding in an attic for 6 years in Edenton, NC and eventually escaped to freedom via the maritime UGRR. Told her story in the book *"Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself."*
- **Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896):** Northern Abolitionist and prolific writer. She wrote anti-slavery novels during the Civil War, making public the atrocities of slavery. Best known for her book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but the book *Dred: Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp* is set in our NE NC region.
- **Harriet Tubman (1822-1913):** Nurse. Spy. Scout. Born Araminta Ross, she escaped slavery in Maryland, returning during the Civil War to lead hundreds of Maryland's enslaved to freedom. Became known as the "Moses of her people."
- **Piety or Patsey Young (b. early 1800's):** Locally Famous Freedom-Seeker. This courageous woman became famous as a "runaway slave" due to an advertisement posted for her after yet another escape. Piety and her child Eliza apparently lived in both Halifax and Washington Counties.

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**ROANOKE RIVER UGRR TRAIL
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- **George Washington Carver (c. 1860's-1943):** Agricultural Scientist and Inventor.
Born into slavery in Missouri a year before it was outlawed. Carver overcame great odds and became a Professor at the Tuskegee Institute and a world famous scientist. He developed hundreds of products using peanuts, sweet potatoes and soybeans. Soon after his death his childhood home would be named a national monument — the first of its kind to honor an African American.
- **Levi Coffin (1798-1877):** Quaker Abolitionist.
Born in Guilford County, he and his wife Catherine and cousin Vestal worked to free North Carolina's enslaved persons. He became known as the "President of the UGRR." He and his wife moved north in 1826 and continued their UGRR work in Indiana and Ohio.
- **Frederick Douglass (1818-1895):** Orator. Writer. Statesman. Abolitionist.
Born into slavery in Maryland, he rose to become one of the nation's foremost intellectuals and orators. Attained freedom and status, and devoted his life and talents to the abolition of slavery and the cause of universal suffrage. Wrote 3 autobiographies.
- **Moses Grandy (c. 1786-1843):** Waterman and Captain.
Born enslaved in Camden County, he was hired out to work on the canal boats and help build the Great Dismal Swamp Canal. *Twice saved for and purchased his own freedom and later that of his family. Wrote the story "Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy: Late a Slave in the United States of America."*
- **George Moses Horton (1798-1884):** Poet – "The Black Bard."
Born into slavery in Northampton County; then moved to Chatham County. The first black poet published in the United States, his poetry explored Faith, Love, and Slavery. He was one of the first men to publicly protest his slavery in poetry, in his work "*The Hope of Liberty.*"
- **Booker Taliaferro Washington (1856-1915):** Educator. Author. Orator. Presidential Advisor.
Born into slavery in SW Virginia, Booker eventually became the leading voice of the enslaved and their descendants. With philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, collaborated on a pilot program for Tuskegee architects to design model African-American schools in rural areas of the South. Wrote his autobiography "*Up from Slavery.*"

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BOOKS OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

- ***The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina*** (2001) – by David Cecelski
This book describes the world of enslaved and free black fishermen, pilots, rivermen, sailors, ferrymen and other laborers who escaped or helped thousands of other people to freedom via inland North Carolina waters before, during, and after the Civil War. Author is a native of the NC coast.
- ***The Bondwoman's Narrative*** (c.1850's, pub. 2002) – by Hannah Crafts
This book is thought to be the first and only "novel" written by an African American woman and fugitive from slavery. Autobiographical in nature, it is the story of a girl's adventures and obstacles after escaping from a North Carolina plantation, including posing as a young white man to reach freedom to the north. The book's discovery in a New Jersey attic and subsequent research and authentication is an interesting story in itself (see Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Gregg Hecimovich).
- ***The Hope of Liberty: Containing a Number of Poetical Pieces*** (1829) – by George Moses Horton
His first published collection of poetry, George became the first African American man to publish a book in the South. He hoped to buy his freedom with the proceeds from this book, but his attempts were denied. After 68 years of slavery, he found freedom for the last 17 years of his life.
- ***Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*** (1861) – by Harriet Jacobs
First published under the pseudonym Linda Brent, it was one of the first books to address the struggle for freedom by enslaved females, and their effort to protect their roles as women and mothers.
- ***Generations of Somerset Place: From Slavery to Freedom*** (2005) – by Dorothy Spruill Redford
As Somerset Place Site Director for 18 years, Redford was influential in transforming the interpretation of slavery at Somerset Place, creating a model of inclusive interpretation. She spent nearly ten years researching her connection to the enslaved population of Somerset Place, the third largest plantation in North Carolina, and home to more than 800 enslaved blacks and four generations of a planter family.
- ***Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*** (1856) – by Harriet Beecher Stowe
Far less influential than *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the novel *Dred* represents an extension of Stowe's abolitionist arguments. She indicts the entire system of Southern slave statutes and argues the laws enshrining slavery gave social sanction to their horrors. Stowe uses the swamp setting of the book symbolically, but the Great Dismal Swamp maroon colonies were indeed a place of refuge for fugitives from slavery.