



~ ROANOKE RIVER UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TRAIL ~

Notable Freedom-Seekers and Freedom-Fighters In Antebellum Northeastern North Carolina

BERTIE COUNTY

Baysmore, Joseph (1823-?) Born a slave in Bertie County, he was moved to Halifax in 1846; became Minister of the first Colored Baptist Church in Weldon, NC from 1865-1879. Wrote his memoir: *A Historical Sketch of the First Colored Baptist Church Weldon, N. C., With the Life and Labor of Elder Joseph Baysmore, with Four Collected Sermons.*

Crafts, Hannah (Hannah Bond) (Born c.1830-?) African American Author. As a young woman, she wrote *The Bondwoman's Narrative*, an autobiographical "novel" (written c. 1850's, published 2002 by Henry Louis Gates, Jr). Also known as Hannah Bond, she was a slave of John Wheeler's family in Bertie and what is now Hertford County, NC. About 1857 she escaped, married, settled in New Jersey and became a teacher. **Historic Marker: A-18, Murfreesboro (This is John Wheeler's marker; the associated NC marker essay online notes Hannah Craft's book).**

CAMDEN COUNTY

Grandy, Moses (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 and published the story, *Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy; Late a Slave in the United States of America* in 1843. **Historic Marker: A-12, South Mills (This is the Dismal Swamp Canal marker; the essay online details the building of the canal.)**

CHOWAN COUNTY

Jacobs, Harriet (1813-1897) Anti-slavery activist and abolitionist African American author. Lived in hiding in an Edenton attic for 6 years before escaping to freedom via the maritime UGRR. Wrote *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Written by Herself (published 1861 under pseudonym Linda Brent). **Historic Marker: A-72, Edenton**

Jacobs, John (1815-1873) Harriet's brother. John Jacobs escaped slavery to the north in 1838, during the Sawyer family trip to New York City. In Rochester, New York, he worked in the Anti-Slavery Office and Reading Room and lectured widely throughout New York and Massachusetts.

Parker, Allen (c.1838-?) Wrote "Recollections of Slavery Times," an important but little known slave narrative. Parker tells about his years as a slave in the coastal region of North Carolina to his flight to a Union gunboat in 1862.

CURRITUCK COUNTY

Ferrebee, London (b. 1849 –c. 1883) Born into slavery on Roanoke Island in Currituck County, he also lived in Elizabeth City and New Bern. As a young man, ran away seeking protection from the Northern army. He worked for a judge and later aspired to political office but was thwarted. In 1877 he was licensed as a minister, joined the African Methodist Episcopal Church and served in several churches, including one in Raleigh. Wrote "A Brief History of the Slave Life of Rev. L. R. Ferebee, and the Battles of Life, and Four Years of His Ministerial Life."

DARE COUNTY

Etheridge, Richard (1842-1900) First black keeper of Pea Island Lightsaving Station and former Buffalo Soldier. In Manteo, I have seen two sites that recognize his contributions: a memorial statue of him in a traffic circle, and an interpretive display at his gravesite near the Aquarium. **Historic Marker: B-66, Pea Island.**

HALIFAX COUNTY

Moore, Bartholomew F. (1801-1878, Caucasian) A UNC graduate and NC Attorney General, in 1834 Moore argued for the defendant in the case of State vs. Will that established a slave's rights to protection from unlawful violence by an overseer. Moore opposed secession and refused to practice in Confederate courts. **Historic Marker: E-104, Enfield.**

Turner, Benjamin S. (1825-1894) Born into slavery in Weldon, NC, his parents were both slaves. He was taken to Alabama when he was just 5 years old, and was not emancipated until 1865. He later became a US Congressman representing Alabama from 1871-73. **Historic Marker: E-105, Weldon.**

HERTFORD & NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES

Boone, Lemuel (1827-1878) A free black born in Northampton County, he worked as a brick mason and teacher before the Civil War. Moved to Hertford County and organized the first black Baptist association in NC during the Reconstruction era. One of the original trustees of Shaw University. **Historic Marker: A-81, Winton.**

Copeland, Dorothy (1804-1881, Caucasian) Quaker; wife of Henry. Lived in Rich Square, NC and active in the UGRR. Her gravestone reportedly reads "She hath done all she could." **Historic Marker: E-76, Woodland (This marker is for the Rich Square Monthly Meeting; Copelands are not mentioned by name.)**

Copeland, Henry (1801-1875, Caucasian) Quaker; husband of Dorothy; their home in Rich Square, NC (no longer standing) was reported to have secret hideaways for UGRR. His gravestone reads: "The path of the Just is the shining Light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." **Historic Marker: E-76, Woodland (This marker is for the Rich Square Monthly Meeting.)**

Horton, George Moses (1798-1884) Poet – "The Black Bard." Born into slavery in Northampton County; then was moved to Chatham County. The first black poet published in the United States, his poetry explored Faith and Love, and protested Slavery. In 1829, published The Hope of Liberty. **Historic Marker: H-108, Pittsboro**

PERQUIMANS & PASQUOTANK COUNTIES

Woolman, John (1720-1772, Caucasian) NJ Quaker who traveled to Perquimans and Pasquotank preaching and published numerous essays against slavery. "I believed slave-keeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian religion." - Woolman's Journal, p. 15. **(See also Historic Markers: A-79, Town of Hertford – "Quaker Activity" and A-82, Winfall – "Old Neck Friends Meeting.")**

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Drew, Rebecca Hathaway (1825-1901) Affectionately known as "Ma Becky", Rebecca Hathaway Drew spent the first forty years of her life enslaved on plantations belonging to the Josiah Collins family near Edenton. By 1845, Rebecca and most of her family were living at Somerset Place, on the shores of Lake Phelps in Washington County. She was one of nineteen slaves documented to have run away from Somerset during its 80 years of operation. Rebecca's story is particularly harrowing and tragic - she was punished in stocks on a cold winter night and as a result lost both her feet. She lived to see freedom at the end of the Civil War. **Historic Marker: B-57, Creswell (Marker is for Somerset Place.)**

Piety (Patsey Young) (born c. late 1700s, d. 1800s) 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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