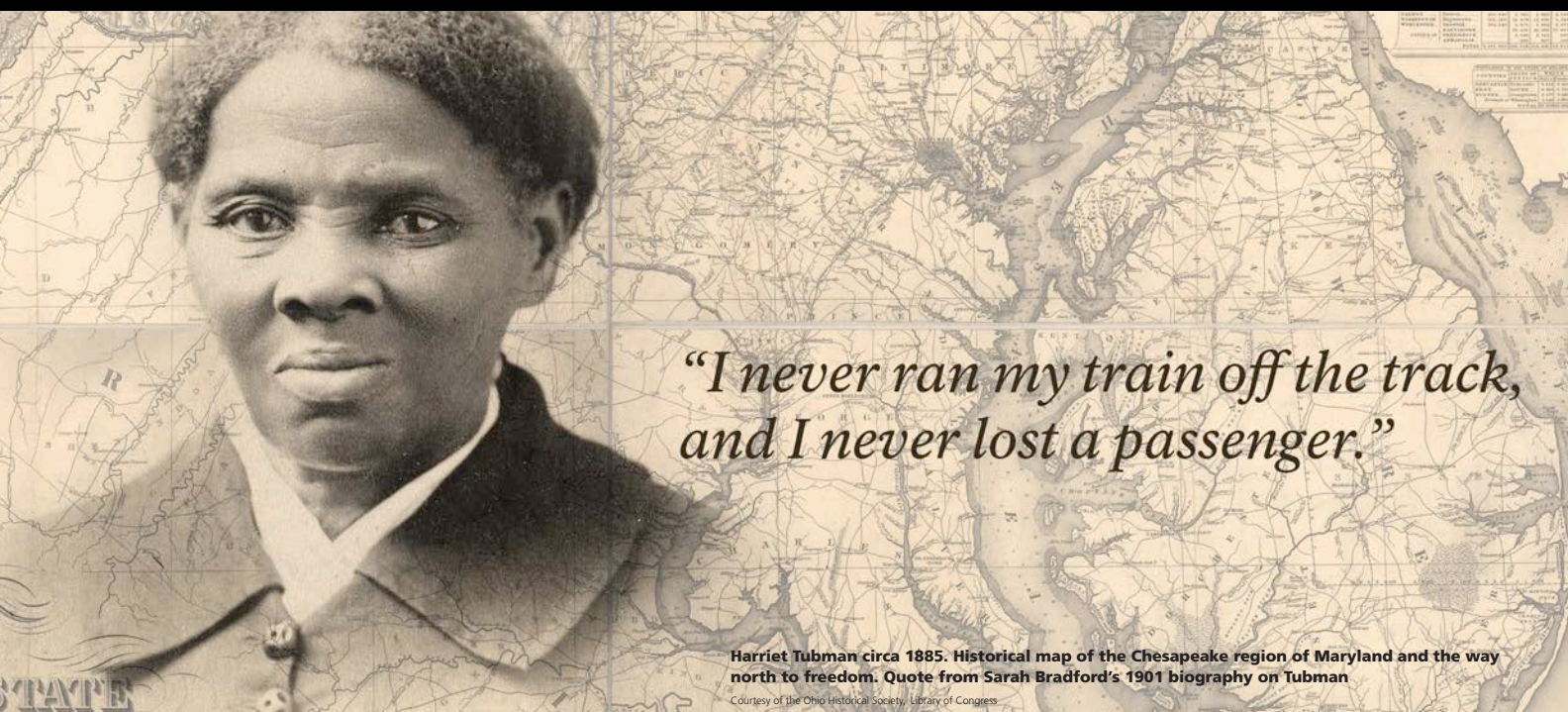


Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



National Monument
Maryland



*“I never ran my train off the track,
and I never lost a passenger.”*

Harriet Tubman circa 1885. Historical map of the Chesapeake region of Maryland and the way north to freedom. Quote from Sarah Bradford's 1901 biography on Tubman
Courtesy of the Ohio Historical Society, Library of Congress

A Different Kind of 19th-century Battlefield

Popularized with a name that reflected the technological marvel of its day, the Underground Railroad was a resistance movement and secret network that helped enslaved people emancipate themselves to lives of freedom. While people held in bondage sought freedom and self-determination through escape and flight from the earliest days of the nation, this activity intensified in the years prior to the Civil War.

Underground Railroad activity represents a different kind of 19th-century battlefield. Like a battlefield, the events that took place on this ground and the people who participated in them are long gone. Like a battlefield, the fight was for freedom and the risks were life and death. And, like the secret network that the national monument commemorates, the history here may not be immediately obvious.

You won't see Harriet Tubman represented here in structures and statues; rather, she is memorialized in the land, water, and sky of the Eastern Shore where she was born and where she returned again and again to free others. Tubman would easily recognize this place. The landscapes and waterways that she navigated and used for sanctuary on her Underground Railroad missions have changed little from her time.

The national monument boundary encompasses an approximately 25,000-acre mosaic of federal, state, and private lands in Dorchester County, Maryland. It includes large sections of land that are significant to Tubman's early years and evoke her life while enslaved and as a conductor on the Underground Railroad. The national monument includes the following areas. There are no national park facilities on these sites:

Stewart's Canal, dug by hand by free and enslaved people between 1810 and 1832 for commercial transportation. Tubman learned important outdoor skills working navigating the canal and when she worked in nearby timbering operations with her father, Ben Ross. Stewart's Canal is part of the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and, while part of the national monument, will continue to be owned, operated and managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Home site of Jacob Jackson, a free African American man who received a coded letter to help Tubman communicate secretly with her family. He was a conduit for a message to alert her three brothers, Henry, Benjamin, and Robert that she would soon come to guide their escape from slavery to the north. The Jacob Jackson Home Site was

donated to the National Park Service by the Conservation Fund for inclusion in the new national monument.

You can continue your exploration on the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway, an All-American Road, the highest level of designation for a scenic byway in the US. The byway is a 125-mile driving tour of more than two dozen historic sites and scenic vistas associated with Tubman that lie both within and outside of the national monument. www.harriettubmanbyway.org

“The difference between us is very marked. Most that I have done and suffered in the service of our cause has been in public, and I have received much encouragement at every step of the way. You, on the other hand, have labored in a private way.”

Frederick Douglass to Harriet Tubman, Rochester, August 29, 1868

RIGHT Drawing of Harriet Tubman in her Civil War uniform from Sarah Bradford's 1869 biography of Tubman. Tubman served and advised the Union during the Civil War. The Granger Collection, New York



BACKGROUND Tubman was a master at surreptitiously navigating the wetlands and landscapes of the area where she was born in Dorchester County, Maryland to guide others to freedom on the Underground Railroad.

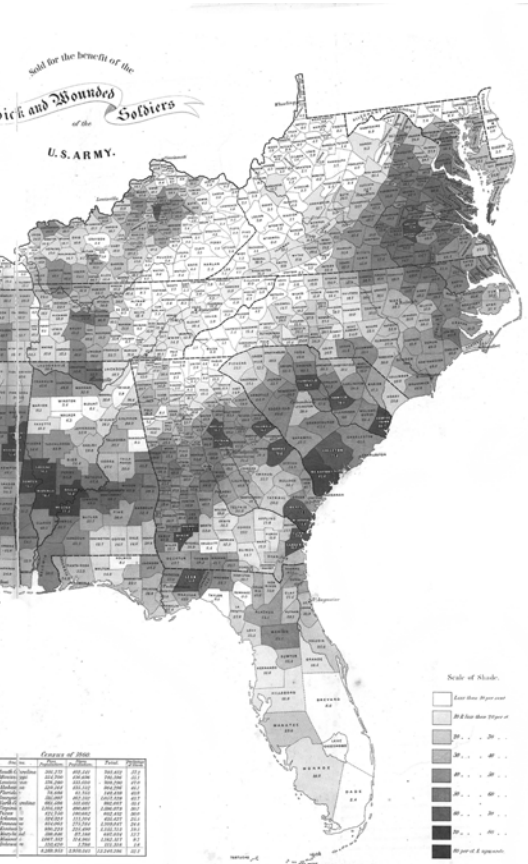
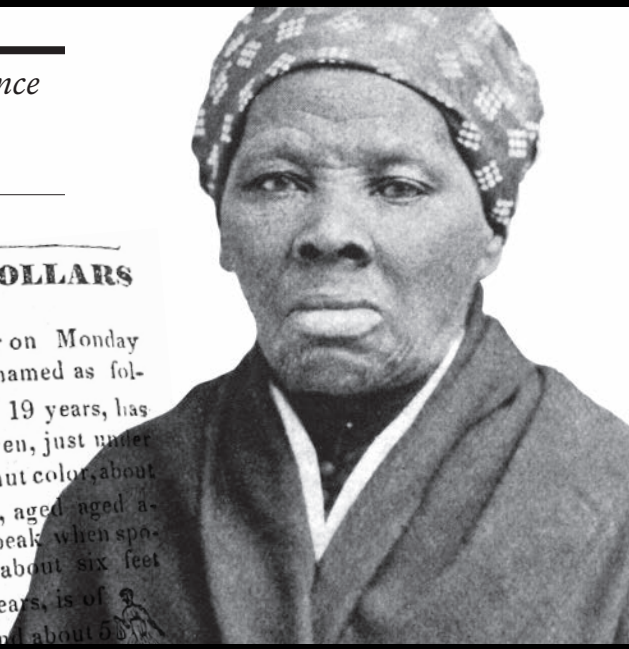
NPS illustration

"I never met with any person of any color who had more confidence in the voice of God, as spoken direct to her soul."

Abolitionist Thomas Garrett, describing Tubman

Newspaper advertisement seeking return of Tubman and her brothers on October 3, 1849. In it, Tubman is referred to by her childhood nickname, "Minty", short for her given name, Araminta Ross. Used by the courtesy of James & Susan Meredith and the Bucktown Village Foundation. The Granger Collection, New York.

THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.
RANAWAY from the subscriber on Monday the 17th ult., three negroes, named as follows: **HARRY**, aged about 19 years, has on one side of his neck a wen, just under the ear, he is of a dark chestnut color, about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high; **BEN**, aged about 25 years, is very quick to speak when spoken to, he is of a chestnut color, about six feet high; **MINTY**, aged about 27 years, is of a dark chestnut color, about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, and about 50 years of age.



On the Edge of Freedom

"When I found I had crossed that line [into freedom in Pennsylvania], I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven."

Harriet Tubman

From wretchedly humble beginnings, Harriet Tubman lived her principles and achieved fame in her lifetime. Her death on March 10, 1913 was reported in the New York Times, followed a year later by a grand commemoration of her life with Booker T. Washington delivering the keynote address. Tubman's story is a reminder that civil rights can be fragile, but a single person who takes personal action to fight for those rights can be an inspiration.

A decade and a half before slavery was abolished in the United States and a little more than 100 miles from the safety of Pennsylvania, Harriet Tubman operated on the edge of freedom. Born in Dorchester County, Maryland, in 1822, Tubman emancipated herself from slavery in 1849 at age 27. She earned the nickname "Moses" for risking her own life about 13 times to guide more than 70 people—many of them beloved family and friends she had left behind—from lives of slavery to new lives of freedom.



Tubman's deep Christian faith sustained her as she served as a nurse and a spy for the Union army. Her knowledge about tidal stream areas helped her to lead raids along the Combahee River in South Carolina, the first woman to lead an armed assault during the Civil War. Tubman eventually settled with her extended family in Auburn, New York, was active in the women's suffrage movement, practiced her faith, and founded a home for the elderly and disadvantaged.

QUOTE Harriet Tubman quoted in Bradford (1971), p. 19. UPPER LEFT Map showing the distribution of the enslaved population in 1860. Library of Congress. LEFT Tubman with family and friends at her New York residence around 1887. The Granger Collection, New York. ABOVE Tubman, circa 1912. Library of Congress.

Planning Your Visit

A New National Park

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument is a new national park area with limited services. There are no planned national park facilities within the monument. It is a park in progress and in the coming years, you will see services added to the park done in cooperation with Maryland's planned Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park.

For a Safe Visit

Be aware that land within the national monument is a mix of federal, state, and privately held land. Please respect private property. Mobile phone coverage can be unreliable in this area.

Getting to the Park

Directions to our partners at the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, about 12 miles south of Cambridge, Maryland: from US 50, turn south on Route 16. Follow Route 16 to Church Creek about 7 miles; turn south on Route 335 (Golden Hill Road); follow Route 335 about 4 miles; turn east on Key Wallace Drive. The visitor center is about 1 mile from the intersection on the right.

GPS: 2145 Key Wallace Drive, Cambridge, Maryland, 21613. Latitude/Longitude: 38° 26' 76.0 07'

More Information

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument
 National Park Service
 c/o Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge
 2145 Key Wallace Drive
 Cambridge, MD 21613
 (267) 838-2376
www.nps.gov/hatu
www.nps.gov/ugrr

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument is one of more than 400 units in the National Park System. The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

Learn more about parks and how the National Park Service strengthens American communities: www.nps.gov

