

Notes from the recollections of Thomas L Gray who was very instrumental in the Underground Railroad in Ohio. The excerpt is undated but presumed to be from the period leading up to and including the U.S. Civil War

Special thanks to Chris Wimsatt and to Deanda Johnson, Midwest Regional Manager of the National Parks Service's Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

Isaac and Anderson were the property of Mary Ann McDonald, of Virginia, and they were closely pursued from the start to the end of their journey; but by good engineering they escaped. They came to my house early in the night, and I inquired of them how it was and they told me they were closely followed and that they would like to move on as soon as they could. I saw at a glance there was no time to lose; so I started immediately, for I would rather be in the advance than in the rear. My destination was Cyrus Mariah's, a distance of fourteen miles. All of us were walking, for we preferred to walk when closely pursued, as we could step aside if necessary, and let the pursuers pass. When we were one and a half miles from Deavertown, we passed a house where a German, Frederick Woolpert, lived. It was not very dark, and he saw me pass with the men, but we pursued our journey unmolested, arriving at Mariah's about two o'clock in the morning. I rested myself, procured a bite to eat, and started back. When about three miles on the road home I met two men, and I knew they were the slave-hunters. I spoke to them and passed on. The tracks of those colored men could plainly be seen in the dust, for they were barefooted. I felt easy for their safety, for I knew the man in whose care I had left them.