



# UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREE PRESS®

Independent reporting on today's Underground Railroad community

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## His State and Hometown Remove Memorials to US Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney, Author of the Dred Scott Decision

It was Frederick, Maryland's Roger Taney as Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court who in 1857 wrote the court's opinion in Dred Scott vs. Sandford, the explosive decision that stripped blacks of citizenship, kept Scott and his family enslaved, and enraged the northern states. Regarded immediately and ever since as one of the most misguided decisions, if not the most so, that the Supreme Court ever issued, Dred Scott vs. Sandford was a direct cause of the Civil War, emancipation, and thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution.

Nevertheless, as with the many statues of Confederate generals which went up across the South after the Civil War, Roger Taney was memorialized perhaps more than any other Chief Justice, despite the Dred Scott decision. In 1872, the Maryland Gen-

eral Assembly, the state's legislature, installed a statue of Taney on the grounds of the State House. In 1932, Frederick County, Maryland, where Taney was born and practiced law, installed a bust of Taney on the lawn of the County Courthouse. In the 1970s, when the courthouse became the city hall of Frederick, the county seat, the bust remained.

The two monuments stood until last year when the State and the City of Frederick—like Baltimore, New Orleans, Charlottesville, Virginia, and many other locales—came to the realization that a gradually enlightened nation had moved beyond wink and nod to the legacy of slavery.

For several years, the Frederick City Council had struck an edgy compromise between history and grievances

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### IN THIS ISSUE



He had successfully defended freedom seekers, but then ruined his reputation in a single act.

1



The international Underground Railroad community's top honors will be awarded again in September. Tell us who should win.

1



Who was United States President Elias Boudinot and why was he an early emancipation leader?

1



Romantic getaways at Underground Railroad sites? Try these B&Bs.

2



How many active Underground Railroad organizations are there? See our Lynx website page for over 160.

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#### Free Press Prize Nominations Now Open

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#### Curious About Something You Would Like Researched?

Submit a question to be included in the annual *Free Press* survey coming up next month.

## The First Non-enslaver US President (Not Who You Might Think)

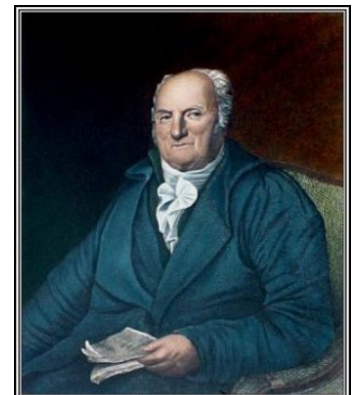
Rather famously, John Adams, George Washington's successor as president, made it a point that, unlike Washington, he, Adams, was never an enslaver. In fact, from Adams until Lincoln 60 years later, the only other president who was not an enslaver was John Quincy Adams. Even two presidents who came after Lincoln and emancipation—Andrew Johnson and Ulysses Grant—had been slave owners.

But John Adams was not the first president who was never an enslaver. That distinction goes to Elias Boudinot IV, the second presi-

dent of the original United States government under the Articles of Confederation, the nation's first governing charter.

Boudinot was a New Jersey delegate to the first government, the United States in Congress Assembled, when in 1782 the body elected him as the second President of the United States for a one-year term. The unexplained failure of United States history textbooks to adequately describe the original government, its presidents, and its critical role in establishing nationhood has left most Americans unin-

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## More Underground Railroad B&B Inns

In our January, 2017, issue, we ran an article on [bedandbreakfast.com](http://bedandbreakfast.com)'s list of 26 bed and breakfast inns that claim Underground Railroad history. Now the website offers nine more. Its new listings have been edited here for length.

### **1830 Hallauer House B&B Oberlin, Ohio**

Hallauer House was built by Nathan Smith in 1830 but it was not until later when Samuel Wightman and family lived in the house during the Civil War that it was believed to have been used as an instrumental stop on the Underground Railroad. There is much evidence that points to how the Wightman family once aided slaves as they traveled on the Underground Railroad from Wellington through Oberlin and north to Lake Erie. A dry cistern with an adjacent thick-walled secret room and a concealed opening offered shelter. Just above the hidden room, a small rectangular opening concealed by a wooden plug that offered the family access to communicate and provide food to those hidden below.

### **1852 Hall Place Bed & Breakfast Glasgow, Kentucky**

Innkeeper Karin Baldwin-Carroll is related to Judge Christopher Tompkins, the original owner of Hall Place. Judge Tompkins was a teacher of Abraham Lincoln and an active Underground Railroad supporter. A now-closed cave located under Hall Place was linked to an entire network of other caves which were used for safe travel for slaves escaping to freedom. Access to the caves through this B&B and a number of other nearby homes gave the area surrounding Glasgow, Kentucky the nickname "Cave City." As additional proof that Judge Tompkins was a supporter of freeing the slaves, he provided lifetime care for each of his former slaves in his will.

### **Ashley Manor on Cape Cod Barnstable, Massachusetts**

Built in 1699, this historic inn has a secret passage behind a bookcase that connects the upstairs and downstairs. The passage was originally thought to provide a hiding place for loyalists during the Revolutionary War and later to provide a temporary hideout for slaves traveling the Underground Railroad. Allegedly, slaves climbed down a ladder, still found behind the bookcase of the King George Suite, into the basement. From the base-

ment, they were able to flee into the woods toward freedom in Canada.

### **The Fairfield Inn Fairfield, Pennsylvania**

Opening its doors in 1757, the Fairfield Inn is one of the oldest, continuously operated inns in the United States. The inn was used as a battlefield hospital in the Civil War and also as a safe station along the Underground Railroad. Runaway slaves were taken to the third floor and, after crawling through a small trap door, the door was boarded back up with wainscoting. The runaway slaves hid inside the wall of the inn until the coast was clear and someone would lead them out. While staying at the inn, guests can visit an Underground Railroad exhibit on the third floor where a window has been cut into the wall so viewers can see the area where the escaping slaves hid. Throughout its 261 years of history, the Fairfield Inn has also hosted many famous Americans including Patrick Henry, General Robert E. Lee, and Ike and Mamie Eisenhower. The inn offers a free history tour daily to its guests and other visitors.

### **The Great Valley House of Valley Forge Malvern, Pennsylvania**

Today's owner and innkeeper Pattye Benson avidly shares many interesting stories of hidden rooms at this historic 1690 inn where she has lived for decades. A tunnel from the main house, originally built to store food and vegetables, was later prepared as an escape route in the event of a British attack during the Revolutionary War. In the 1850s the tunnel was used to house runaway slaves moving north along the Underground Railroad. Two green doors remain as important tributes to this escape route. The stories of the Underground Railroad at Great Valley House are just a few of the many of this inn rich in American history.

### **Munro House B&B and Spa Jonesville, Michigan**

After purchasing Munro House, George Clinton Munro constructed a Greek revival addition to the home in 1840. The addition contained a secret room that became an instrumental station on the Underground Railroad for over 15 years. More than 400 runaways are thought to have been hidden at Munro House on their way to a free life in Canada. The Munro family lived in the house until

1945, which was converted into a B&B in 1985. A secret passage conceals a pair of second floor rooms large enough for a dozen adults. Today, the bed and breakfast inn celebrates its unique past by providing Underground Railroad tours to school groups, families and others by appointment.

### **Six Acres Bed and Breakfast Cincinnati, Ohio**

This home was built in the 1850s by Zebulon Strong, a noted abolitionist and participant in the Underground Railroad, and is close to Cincinnati's National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Documents in the Ohio Historical Library say Strong had a "false bottom" in his farming wagon where he would pick up his "passengers" along Mill Creek, which runs alongside the property. He hid the runaways in the bottom of his wagon and covered them with crops to be hidden from view. He would then take them to his home for a safe respite before moving them further up Hamilton Pike to the next safehouse along the route to Canada.

### **Whispering Pines Bed and Breakfast Nebraska City, Nebraska**

A short stroll from the 1878 Victorian home Whispering Pines is the Mayhew Cabin (also known as John Brown's Cave), one of the oldest buildings in Nebraska and currently Nebraska's only recognized National Park Service Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site. In 1855, Allen B. Mayhew, with the aid of his father-in-law, Abraham Kagi, built the cabin of cottonwood logs. The Mayhew Cabin became a stop on the Underground Railroad in the late 1850s, used by freedom seekers escaping to Canada.

### **Williams House B&B Amelia Island, Florida**

Built in 1856, this mansion contains a mysterious trapdoor in the dining room closet, offering access to a secret room where slaves could hide. When Union troops occupied Fernandina, Florida, they used Williams House as their headquarters and its large hearthstone as an infirmary. Upon his return to the island, Marcus A. Williams released his slaves prior to the war and became active in the Underground Railroad by offering safety to freedom seekers in a secret space in the dining room.

## Removed

by erecting a wayfinding sign next to its Taney bust, explaining the memorial in candid detail in the context of the Dred Scott decision. But by 2017 a growing unease tipped the scales in favor of no longer having city government offering official imprimatur of a proponent of slavery. Last March, the memorial came down and was moved to a nearby cemetery but, oddly, not the one where Taney is buried.

In August, two days after Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh had four Confederate statues on public land removed, the State of Maryland followed suit by removing its Taney statue and putting it into storage. Said Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, a moderate Republican, "We can't wipe out all of our history, nor should we try to, but when it reaches the point where some symbols become a focal point for racism and violence, then it's time to do something about it." Hogan said that it was the racist demonstration in Charlottesville that led him to order removal Taney of the statute.

Several years ago, the State erected a statue of Baltimore native Thurgood Marshall, the first African American Supreme Court justice, on the opposite side of the State House from the Taney statue. In the works are statues honoring abolitionists Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass to be placed in the State Maryland House.

### Underground Railroad Free Press® Independent Reporting on Today's Underground Railroad

Peter H. Michael, Publisher  
info@urfreepress.com  
301 | 874 | 0235

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## Boudinot

formed even of its existence. A nation is not a nation until it has a government and head of state, and that did not occur until November 4, 1781, the date prescribed in the Articles of Confederation for formation of the new government and therefor the nation. On that date, John Hanson of Maryland was elected the actual first president of the United States.

Hanson's immediate successor as president was New Jersey lawyer and early American philanthropist Elias Boudinot who had a long distinguished record before, during and after his presidency but is almost entirely forgotten today. Boudinot served as a New Jersey delegate to the Second Continental Congress and then to the first government throughout its seven-year existence. For a time before formation of the first government, he reported directly to George Washington as Commissary General of Prisoners of the Revolutionary Army, and later served as the Congress's *de facto* point man on foreign affairs. In the latter role, Boudinot was instrumental in controlling the receipt and disbursements of the nation's life-line foreign aid from the French, Dutch and Spanish, and gained credit for his careful handling of relations with Canada. His diplomatic and foreign affairs experience would prove an excellent fit during his presidency, as the Treaty of Paris was being concluded.

Elias Boudinot was forty-three when inaugurated as president. Upon his taking office, the nation transitioned from the fourth oldest president who would serve in either the first or second governments through 2018 to the fifth youngest.

Perhaps most to his credit was Boudinot's life-long philanthropic work promoting rights, education and place in society of African Americans and Native Americans. The exceptionally gifted Yale-educated Cherokee Chief Kilikeena Watie was so touched by Boudinot's tutoring and friendship that he adopted his name. His tombstone epitaph well sums the life of Elias Boudinot: "His life was an exhibition of fervent piety, of useful talent and of extensive benevolence."

Just as with his predecessor, Elias Boudinot provides another example of financial sacrifice for the nation to take on the intermittently paid job of an early president. The day after his inauguration in November 1782, Boudinot wrote in distress to his wife Hannah, "I informed you that I had this morning accepted the Chair of Congress. I think you had best

sell whatever you think we shall not stand in need of. You must get all the Cash you can; as that all will not be sufficient. Sell one or two Horses, the largest Colt & the little Mare, the Waggon, Plough, Harrow, Chair and supernumerary Hogs. As to the Family, I know not what to say about them."

During the summer of his presidential term, Boudinot had to deal with a serious mutiny of unpaid soldiers which required the rescue of the government by General Arthur St. Clair and the permanent vacating of Independence Hall for Princeton, then Annapolis, then New York where the capital remained until nearly the end of the John Adams administration. Elias Boudinot served in the United States House of Representatives during the first six years of its existence until his appointments by Presidents Washington, Adams and Jefferson as director of the United States Mint from 1795 to 1805. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Princeton University for forty-nine years. Late in life in 1816, Elias Boudinot founded and served as the first president of the American Bible Society until his death in 1821 at age eighty-one.

As with the Hanson-Washington contrast, most Americans today can easily identify John Adams, second president of the government under the Constitution, but surely few can now name Elias Boudinot as the second president of the original government and of the United States. Even his name's pronunciation is now clouded: President Boudinot's immigrant grandfather, Elias Boudinot II, used the French pronunciation, boo-din-OH. Some modern references have corrupted the name to boo-DIN-ot, but pronunciation websites use the original pronunciation as does the family.

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