

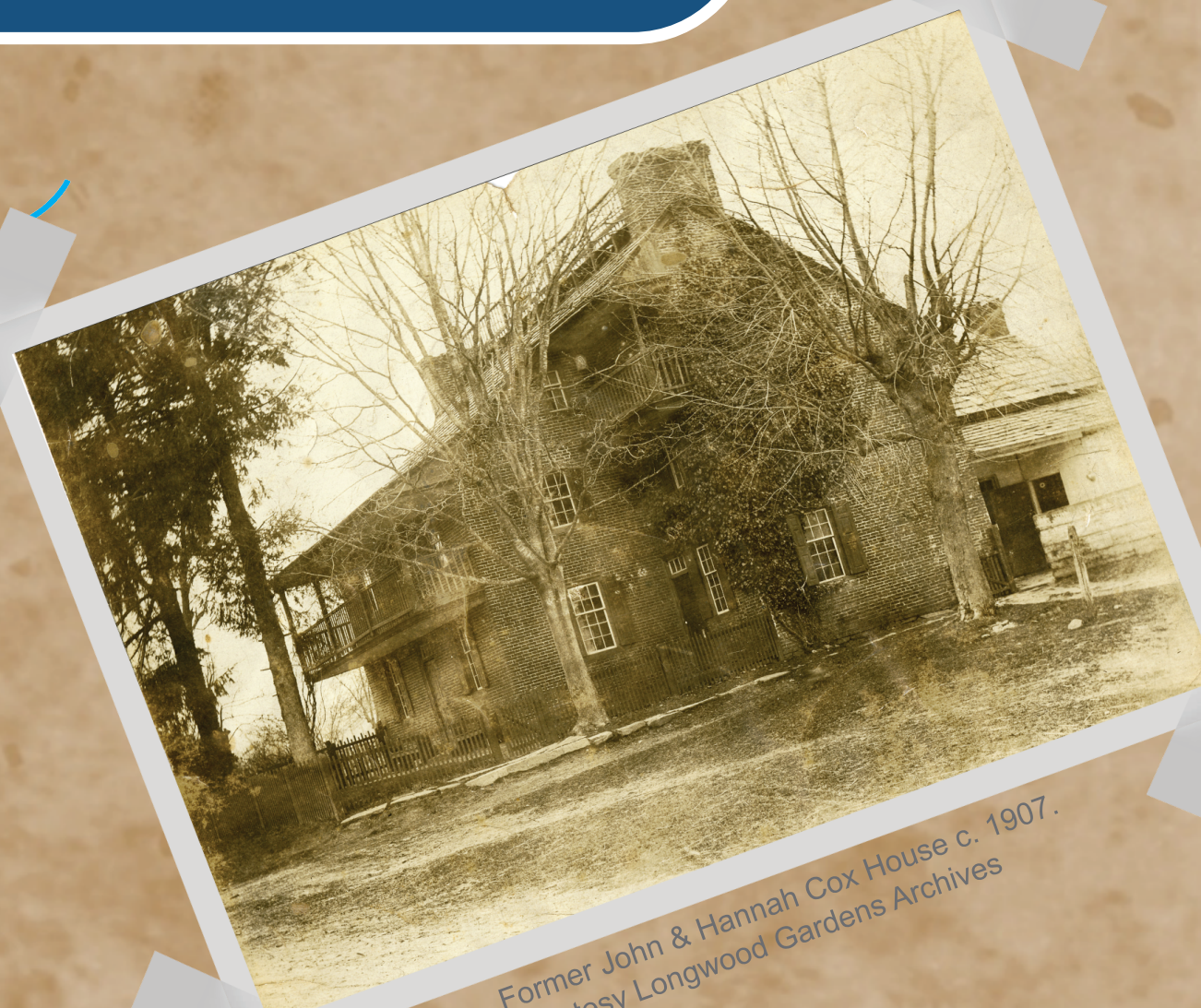
# HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BYWAY

## CENTREVILLE & THE CAMBRIDGE 28

On October 24th, 1857, a remarkable group of 28 people fled enslavement near Cambridge, Maryland and headed for Delaware, following advice from Harriet Tubman who had been making the same trip since 1849. The armed group of 13 men, 5 women and 10 children included several families. Their perilous journey, complicated by three days of heavy rain, puny rations and illness, was made worse by a betrayer who alerted their enslavers.



"Twenty-eight Fugitives Escaping from the Eastern Shore of Maryland," William Still, The Underground Railroad, 1872:102



Former John & Hannah Cox House c. 1907. Courtesy Longwood Gardens Archives

With their pursuers close on their trail, the group made it to the Camden "station" of Tubman's friends, William and Nathaniel Brinkley, who were already aware of the dire situation. Running his horses to exhaustion, William Brinkley drove the full wagon to the outskirts of Wilmington where he awaited help from Black agents and "stationmaster," Thomas Garrett. The group was divided for safety and James Jackson guided his 17 charges around Wilmington to Centreville, intending to deliver them to Longwood Progressive Meeting where Quaker operatives John and Hannah Cox would take over.

As the group passed the Todd Hotel on Kennett Turnpike late on October 31st, they were accosted by several Irishmen. Fearing that the men were kidnappers, the freedom seekers fought back. There were injuries on both sides and one Irishman was wounded by a bullet. The terrified freedom seekers fled to Longwood and later reunited with the rest of their party in Philadelphia at the Anti-Slavery office, where clerk William Still recorded their story. Every one of "The Cambridge 28" arrived safely in Canada. This period has been referred to as the "stampede of slaves" since so many people were claiming their freedom on the now fully mature "Underground Railroad."



Widening of Kennett Pike, 1917. Todd Hotel is on the far right. Courtesy Hagley Museum and Library

### SOME NOTABLE SITES TO VISIT ALONG THE BYWAY

- 1 **Wilmington Friends Meeting and Cemetery** - Built in 1815, this was the meeting house of many prominent Quaker abolitionists, including Thomas and Rachel Garrett. Thomas was known as the Stationmaster of the Underground Railroad in Delaware.
- 2 **Tubman-Garrett Riverfront Park** - See the sculpture that commemorates the work of Thomas Garrett and Harriet Tubman near the location where she crossed the Christina River into Wilmington on the way to Garrett's business in Quaker Hill. The scenic Christina Riverwalk includes Underground Railroad interpretive panels.
- 3 **The Dover Green** - The 1847 trial of Underground Railroad Conductor, Samuel D. Burris, is interpreted at the Old State House. Interpreters from First State Heritage Park lead walking tours around The Green on African American history.
- 4 **Camden Friends Meeting** - Built in 1804, this meeting house was an important hub of southern Delaware abolitionist activity. Historical markers commemorate the Underground Railroad work of John Hunn, who attended Meeting here.

**The Freedom Seekers:**  
 Aaron Cornish, Daphne Cornish and Solomon, George Anthony, Joseph, Edward James, Perry Lake and Baby Cornish; Kit Anthony, Leah Anthony and Adam, Mary and Murray Anthony; Joseph Hill, Alice Hill and Henry Hill; Sarah Jane Hill; Marshall Dutton; George Light; Susan Viney, Joseph Viney and Lloyd, Frank, Alberta, Henry, Joe, Tom and JW Viney



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:  
[deldot.gov/programs/byways](http://deldot.gov/programs/byways)

References: Kate Clifford Larson, Bound for the Promised Land, Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero (2004); James Mc Gowen, Stationmaster on the Underground Railroad, Life and Letters of Thomas Garrett (2005); J.C. Smedley, History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania (1883; reprinted 2005); William Still, The Underground Railroad (1872).