

# Delaware's Underground Railroad



The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway recounts what was perhaps the most dramatic protest action against slavery in United States history. A clandestine operation that began during the colonial period became part of organized abolitionist activity in the 19th century and reached its peak between 1830-1865 - with eastern passage going straight through Delaware, on the road toward freedom in Pennsylvania.

The sites listed below are all designated **National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom** sites. Visit [nps.gov/history/ugrr](https://nps.gov/history/ugrr) for more information on this National Park Service program.

**Tubman-Garrett Park** situated along Wilmington's Riverfront commemorates Harriet Tubman and Delaware Underground Railroad stationmaster, Thomas Garrett, whose home once stood nearby at 227 Shipley Street. The neighboring Market Street Bridge was a gateway into the city and an earlier bridge that once stood nearby was used by Harriet Tubman and freedom seekers to reach Underground Railroad operatives in Wilmington.

The story of the Underground Railroad in Delaware is part of the "Distinctively Delaware" permanent exhibit at the **Delaware History Museum** located at 505 N. Market Street. Next door, the **Old Courthouse** was the setting for speeches by abolitionists, and its basement cells were authorized to hold captured freedom seekers.

Just a short trip south of Wilmington in **Historic New Castle** you can learn "Emeline's Story" at the **New Castle Court House Museum**. The story recounts the perils of the freedom-seeking Hakins family as well as the trials of Delaware abolitionists Thomas Garrett and John Hunn.

Visit the circa 1772 **Corbit-Sharp House** in the small town of Odessa, Delaware. At this National Historic Landmark, you

will hear about a first-hand account of an encounter with an escaping slave. Part of the **Historic Houses of Odessa** the area includes exhibits as well as school and family programs.

Dover, Delaware includes two stops on the Underground Railroad – the **Old State House Museum** and the **John Dickinson Plantation**. The State House tells the story of Samuel Burris, a conductor captured and convicted of enticing enslaved woman to escape. At the plantation you will learn of the slavery that impacted more than 60 men, women and children during John Dickinson's time of ownership.

## We Also Recommend

- Center for African American Heritage at the Delaware History Museum
- August Quarterly Festival

Learn more at:

 [visitWilmingtonDE.com](https://www.visitwilmingtonde.com)

