



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.



The Connecticut Freedom Trail Nomination Instructions

The Connecticut Freedom Trail application form is available in Microsoft Word format or PDF. Please type application using either format, print it and MAIL one ORIGINAL COPY plus all required attachments to the Connecticut Freedom Trial Selection Committee (address below).

Please be sure to review the Methods of Listing Properties on the Connecticut Freedom Trail prior to completing and submitting the Application (available [HERE](#).) If you need additional information or have questions, contact:

Connecticut Freedom Trial Selection Committee
c/o Todd Levine
Connecticut Freedom Trail Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Economic & Community Development
1 Constitution Plaza, 2nd floor
Hartford, CT 06103

E-mail: todd.levine@ct.gov
Fax: 860-256-2763
Phone: 860-256-2759

The following is a list of CRITERIA that the Selection Committee has developed. Keep these points in mind as you answer the questions in the application.



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

1. Related to the Amistad incident, the abolitionist movement and/or the Underground Railroad.
2. Documented to have contributed to the struggle for freedom.
3. First, if opened doors for others.
4. Connecticut based
5. At least fifty years old.

One Sentence Summary: _Request to add Riverside Cemetery to the Freedom Trail

Site Information: Burial location of "The Man Fortune"

Name of site (if applicable): _Riverside Cemetery

Address: _496 Riverside St

City: ___Waterbury_____ State: _CT__ Zip: _06708_

Property owner:

Name: _Riverside Cemetery_____

Address: _496 Riverside St_____

City: ___Waterbury_____ State: __CT__ Zip: _06708_

Phone: _203-808-2774_____

E-Mail: _riversidecemeteryct@gmail.com_____

General information:

Present use of property: _Cemetery_____

Age of property: __170 years old_____

Open to Public: **Yes** Visible from the Public Road: **Yes**



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

THE MAN FORTUNE (c. 1740 - 1798)

Fortune, his wife Dinah and their 3 children were slaves of Preserved Porter, a Connecticut bone doctor. In 1798, Fortune slipped on the west bank of the Great Brook, broke his neck and drowned. At the time, dissecting cadavers was illegal; but not applying to slaves, Dr. Porter cut him into pieces at the riverbank. At his office, he boiled the bones so that all flesh fell off, etched labels into them and used them as a medical training tool. Dr. Porter died 6 years later, listing the bones as worth \$15.

Prior to his death, Dr. Porter used the bones to teach anatomy to his son; who used them to teach anatomy to his grandson; who used them to teach his daughter... 135 years of generational doctors and wealth. In 1933, his name long forgotten, the family donated the bones to the Mattatuck Museum where they were displayed next to slave tools as "Larry the Slave"; a popular exhibit shown on their postcard; not taken down until 1970 when the Museum realized this was demeaning. They stored them in the basement.

In 1999, made aware of these bones in the basement, the NAACP and museum staff enlisted anthropologists and archeologists to examine them, ultimately determining this was Fortune. Based on bone density, he was a strong man who lived and worked with a broken back, hand and died of a broken neck.

On Sept. 13th, 2013, after being a slave, medical specimen, museum exhibit and archeological artifact spanning 275 years, Fortune was finally freed... laid to rest next to White society of his time... something that wouldn't have been allowed when he died.

There is still a display for Fortune at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, CT. You can find more information as well at <http://www.fortunestory.org/> which is a site managed by the Mattatuck Museum.

Body snatching, grave robbing and the dissection of bodies without consent was a common practice of the late 18th and early 19th century by medical institutions. Bodies were needed for research to progress medicine, therefore these now illegal practices were common around the world. These practices most commonly affected the poor and people of color. Fortune's story represents one of many stories aligning to this practice in Connecticut.



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

TIMOTHY PORTER (Jan. 30, 1792 – Aug. 28-1864)

The first owner of the house was Timothy Porter, who operated a business manufacturing bricks in Waterbury during the 1830s and 1840s. Every building constructed of brick during this time period was said to have used Porter's bricks. (*Anderson, Vol III, 679-682*)

Porter's brick business started in 1829, after he purchased swamp land lying along Carrington Brook, which runs through Bouley Manor to Hamilton Park (much of it is now underground). The swamp land included a large bed of clay, which Porter used to make his bricks. The clay supply ran out in 1849 or 1850.

In 1830, Porter built a house for himself and his family out of bricks he made from the local clay; that is the house still standing today on East Main Street across from Hamilton Park. The house was later enlarged with additions on the back.

Timothy Porter was an abolitionist. In 1840, he joined the newly-formed Liberty Party, which was founded to help end slavery. Porter was said to have a "strong sense of justice," "warm sympathy for the oppressed," and "independence of mind and action." (*Anderson, Vol III, 679-682*)

Porter was a vocal opponent of slavery at a time when, even in the north, openly fighting to end slavery could lead to being ostracized by people in power, to being seen as a public disgrace.

Porter was not concerned about impressing local officials or fitting in with polite society. He believed in the cause of abolishing slavery. For many years, Porter led the local branch of the Liberty Party, which had only a dozen members.

Porter often hosted anti-slavery lecturers at his home as they traveled the lecture circuit through Connecticut. According to Anderson's history of Waterbury, the house also "served on occasion as a station for the underground railroad."

Refugees fleeing from slavery traveled along the underground railroad until they reached Canada. There were several routes through Connecticut, and no guarantee of safety. Refugees often traveled at night with the assistance of "conductors," resting during the day in barns, basements, and other hiding places owned by "station masters."



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

JOHN MILES STOCKING (March 15, 1811 - 1873)

Stocking raised his children on anti-slavery literature. Uncle Tom's Cabin was read aloud to the whole family every week while it was being published as a serial in 1851 and 1852. His son William would later write that John Stocking was "one of a small group of earnest anti-slavery workers" in Waterbury.

The family attended anti-slavery sermons preached by traveling lecturers and at churches in other towns. Stocking's son William later wrote that abolitionists such as John M. Stocking "considered the whole slavery system an iniquity and the fugitive slave law especially as wrong in principle and harsh and cruel in its execution. If a man... knew of a fugitive concealed or running away he did not consider it his duty to inform the United States marshal of that fact, but would rather aid the runaway." (*Stocking, p. 8-9*)

The Stocking family took pride in knowing that every male relative of military age, including John Stocking's nephews, served in the Union army during the Civil War—one of Stocking's sons, Gilbert Miles Stocking, died from disease during his service.

John Stocking assisted several fugitive slaves on their way to freedom in Canada, using his barn as a station on the Underground Railroad. The location of the barn is uncertain. Until 1853, Stocking lived on South Main Street, approximately where I-84 is today. Stocking built a new home for himself and his wife on State Street in 1853. The barn may have been on South Main Street, further from the center of town and further from notice than State Street.



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

PVT. GILBERT MILES STOCKING - CO. B 20th CONN. VOLUNTEERS

Gilbert Miles Stocking was the son of Deacon John Stocking, an ardent abolitionist who raised his family on anti-slavery literature. The deacon would read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" aloud to the children every week while it was published as a serial. The family attended anti-slavery lectures by traveling speakers.

Deacon Stocking assisted several fugitive slaves on their way to freedom in Canada, using his barn as a station on the Underground Railroad. The Stocking family took pride in knowing that every male of military age served in the Union army.

Gilbert graduated from Yale in 1861, taught school for a few years and then enlisted in the Army in 1863. The Civil War, to be clear, was fought by the South to preserve slavery and by the North to preserve the Union. Pvt. Stocking it appears volunteered because he believed all people should be free and no person should be owned as property.

Gilbert went West with the Twentieth Connecticut Volunteers, and his regiment for some weeks guarded the Louisville and Nashville railroad. In May 1864, the 20th Connecticut was attached to the Army of the Cumberland and took part in Gen. Sherman's march to Atlanta.

Although Private Stocking was detailed as a clerk at Brigade headquarters, he claimed no exemption from service in the field, but with a zeal better suited to his patriotism than to his strength took his turn in the trenches and at picket duty, as well as his place in line at the battles near Marietta, Ga., and before Atlanta.

When Sherman prepared for his march to the sea, Pvt. Stocking was sent back to the hospital at Nashville, suffering severely from typhoid fever. He was transferred to Jefferson Barracks hospital, near St. Louis, where, after a lingering illness, he died, on Jan. 24, 1865.

Pvt. Gilbert Stocking was 26 years old.



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

Other Abolitionists resting at Riverside:

SAMUEL SOUTHMAYD DEFOREST (1811-1838)

A Waterbury-based branch of the American Anti-Slavery Society was organized in July 1836 with sixteen members, growing to 57 members in less than a year (*American*, p. 130). The chapter's secretary was Samuel S. DeForest, one of the founders of the Benedict & Burnham manufacturing company. Although active in Waterbury, DeForest lived in Watertown.

ELIZUR WARNER KEELER (1808-1879)

Elizur Keeler moved to Waterbury from New York in 1852 and became a deacon of the Second Congregational Church in 1855. Keeler was an abolitionist "in early manhood" (*Anderson, Vol. II, p. 254*).

SAMUEL WHEELER UPSON (1798-1890)

Wheeler Upson was the Waterbury agent for The Charter Oak newspaper during the mid-1840s. The newspaper was dedicated to the abolition of slavery. Upson was also a temperance man, abstaining from alcohol throughout his adult life; at the age of seventy, he boasted that "not a drop of [hard] cider had passed his lips for sixty years." (*Upson, p. 178*)



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state's African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

Additional relevant information:

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. **American Anti Slavery Society**, *Fourth Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society* New York: William S. Dorr, 1837.
2. **Anderson, Joseph**, *The Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut, From The Aboriginal Period To The Year Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-Five. Vol I, II & III.* Connecticut: The Price & Lee Company, 1896.
3. **Bronson, Henry**, *The History of Waterbury, Connecticut*, Connecticut: Bronson Brothers, 1858.
4. **FortuneStory.org**, *Fortune's Story*, Connecticut: Mattatuck Historical Society, 2004.
5. **Hamilton, Karin**, *Connecticut: After 215 years, member of St. John's Church to be buried*, New York: Episcopal News Service, 2013.
6. **Sappol, Michael**, *A Traffic Of Dead Bodies*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004.
7. **Stocking, William**, "The New England Churches and the Fugitive Slave Law" *Detroit Historical Monthly*, March 1923
8. **Upson Family Association of America**, *The Upson Family in America*, Connecticut: The Turtle, Morehouse and Taylor Company, 1940.

Photographs:

Color photographs (in the form of a CD) and map are a requirement. The photographs should include: a CONTEXT image (depicting the location of the site, such as, an aerial view, streetscape, neighborhood or city map); front, back, and side views, a ¾ view, pertinent interior views, and any other views or details that are important to explaining the nature of the nomination.



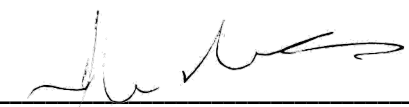
The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents the struggle toward freedom. This trail designates sites that celebrate the struggle for justice and equality that continues in the 21st century. Sites depict the efforts, in all their forms, of the state’s African American community and all the communities that championed the goals of universal freedom and human dignity.

Historic Designations:

Is the project site recognized for its architectural/cultural/historical significance by any of the following designation program? (Check all that apply.)

	Yes	No
National Historic Landmark	[]	[X]
National Register of Historic Places	[X]	[]
Individually listed	[X]	[]
Contributing to a District	[]	[]
District Name: _____		
State Register of Historic Places	[]	[X]
Individually listed	[]	[]
Contributing to a District	[]	[]
District Name: _____		
Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)		
Historic American Engineering Record (HAER)	[]	[X]
Other: (specify) _____	[]	[X]
	[]	[]

Signature of Applicant:  _____

Date of Submission: 8/2/2023