



The Connecticut Freedom Trail

documents and 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.

Application for Listing the Connecticut Freedom Trail

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.

1. How the site represents one of more of the eligible categories: Amistad; Civil Rights; Concepts of Freedom; Underground Railroad;
2. If the site is the location of a "First," or how it provided opportunities for others that followed;
3. How the site is centered around Connecticut African-American history/events; and
4. If sufficient time has passed to be able to evaluate the site within the context of history (ideally at least 50 years, but there may be some sites of importance that are less than 50 years old).

Contact information of the individual or organization presenting application (please note this entity will be considered the Site Ambassador if listed):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Site Information:

Type of site (check at least one):

- Amistad
- Civil Rights
- Concepts of Freedom
- Underground Railroad

Name of site (if applicable):

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Longitude and Latitude of building or site to be included on the Connecticut Freedom Trail for future GPS mapping: _____

Property Owner:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

General information:

Present use of property: _____

Age of property: _____

Open to Public: __Yes __No

Visible from the Public Road: __Yes __No

Historic Designations:

Is the project site recognized for its architectural/cultural/historical significance by any of the following designation programs? (Check all that apply.) Visit connctris.ct.gov to determine if the property has a designation.

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

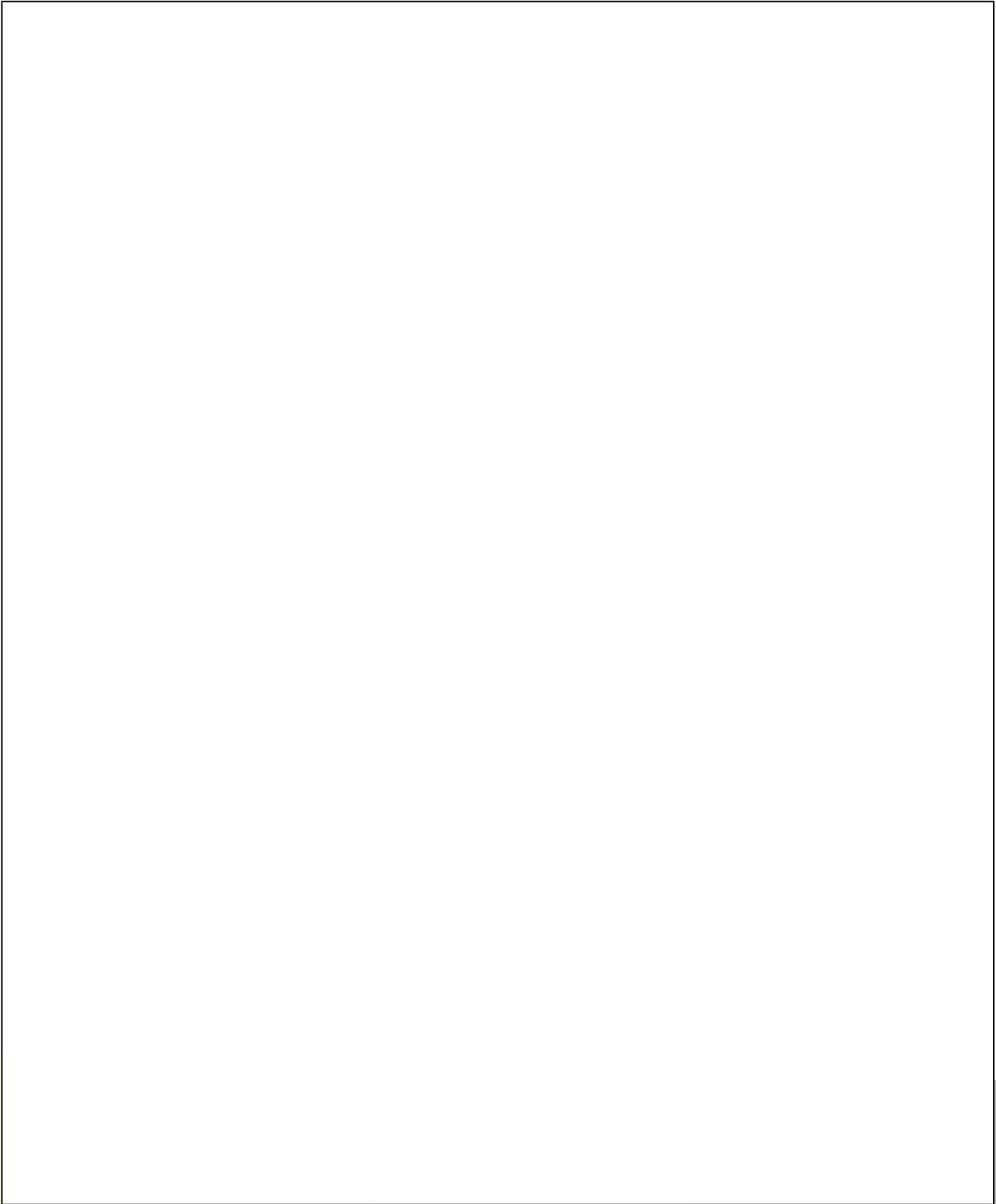
Is there any additional historic information that the Committee should be aware of that is not covered under “Historic Designations”? If so, please enter it in the box below.

Please describe the site and how it represents one or more of the categories for inclusion. Include any relevant sources and documentation in the bibliography. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Signature of Applicant: _____

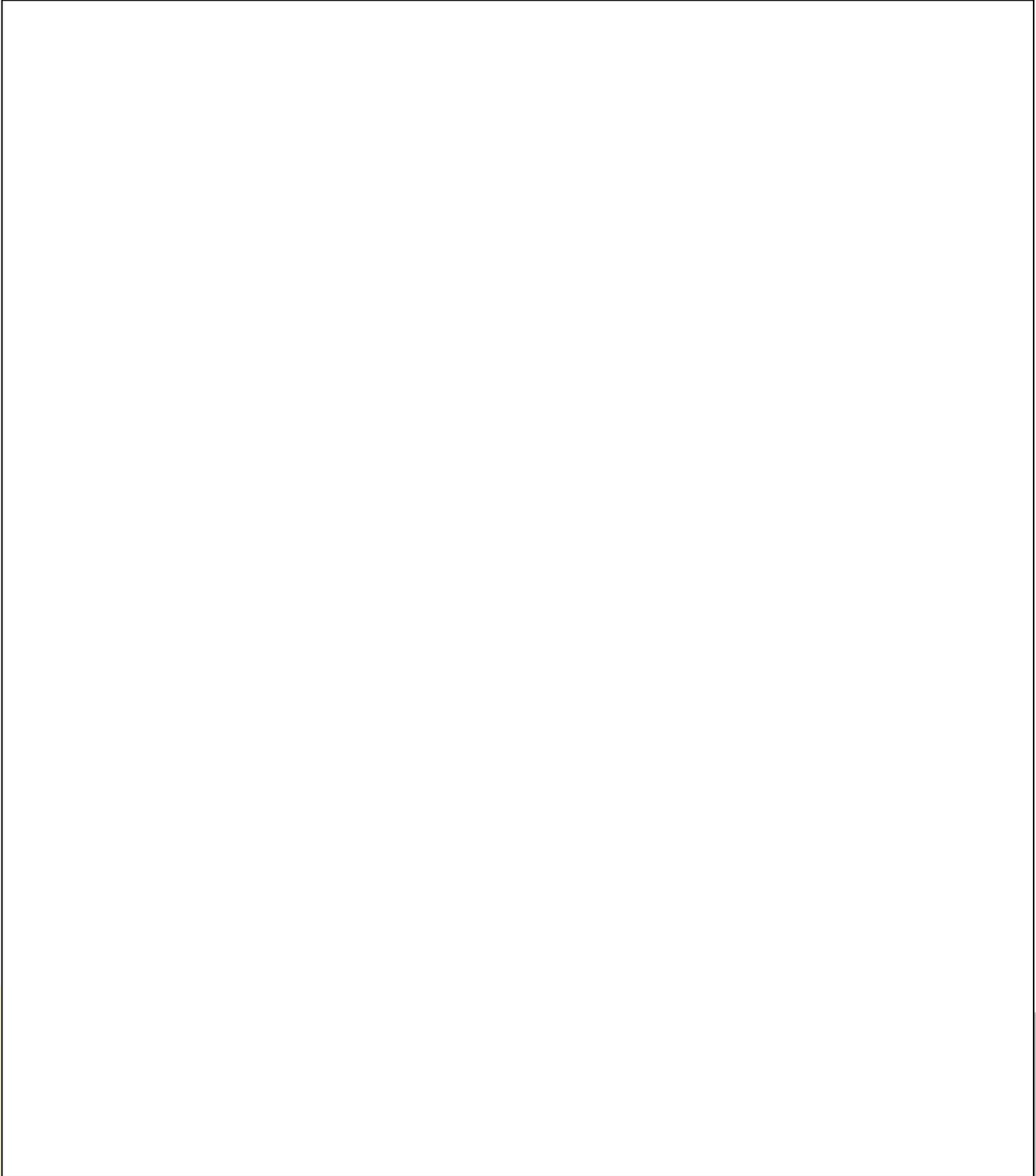
Date of Submission: _____

Bibliography and/or Other Reference Information:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to enter their bibliography and other reference information. The box occupies most of the page's vertical space below the header.

Photographs:

Color photographs and a site map are a requirement and should be included below. 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 of the main structures, pertinent interior views, and any other views or details that are important to explaining the nature of the nomination.



LUCY AND LOIS TRITTON

Request to allow Freedom Trail Marker on the New Haven Green Honoring the Last Slaves Sold on New Haven's Historic Green

BY JILL MARIE SNYDER

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St. Luke's Episcopal Church was founded in 1844 as New Haven's first African American Episcopal congregation. In a 1990s project to document the church's history, the name *Lucy Tritton* was discovered on a list of St. Luke's founding members.¹

In the early 2000s, with the introduction of online genealogy tools and Internet access to online archives, several published interviews of Lucy's daughter Lois were discovered. In the later years of Lois's life, Lois became widely known as the last living enslaved person to be auctioned on the New Haven Green.

Below is an abbreviated list of articles, most retrieved from Newspapers.com:

- ✓ The Sun (New York, New York (April 1, 1988)
- ✓ The Boston Daily Globe (May 18, 1891)
- ✓ The New Haven Courier (Vol. LXII)
- ✓ The Indianapolis Journal, June 20, 1894
- ✓ The Carroll Herald, Carroll City, Iowa, June 20, 1894
- ✓ Clinton Daily Item, Worcester, Mass, July 23, 1894
- ❖ Newark [Ohio] Daily Advocate, August 13, 1894 (*Posted by a family member on Ancestry.com (public member trees/Public member photos & documents.)*)

Lucy's Story: From Ghana to St. Thomas

As told by Lois, Lucy and Lucy's parents were stolen from Africa in the mid-1700s. They were brought to the Caribbean island of St Thomas. This suggests they may have originated from modern-day Ghana.

Ghana—St. Thomas, Virgin Islands Connection

In 1671, the Danish government established a slave fort, today known as *Osu Castle*, under the auspices of King Christian V of Denmark-Norway. The fort held captured Africans before sending them across the Atlantic and selling them into slavery.

St. Thomas served as Denmark's Caribbean *slave depot* from which thousands of African men, women, and children were sold to middlemen throughout the Americas.²

As told to Lois, Lucy and Lucy's father were sold to an Englishman they called 'General' Tritton. He took Lucy and her father to London. We do not know the fate of Lucy's mother.

Except for a vague mention by Lois of her father fighting in the Revolutionary War, we have no additional information about his life.

Nova Scotia, Canada

After living in London for an unknown period, the Tritton family moved to Nova Scotia, taking Lucy with them. The family also had a second home in New Haven and attended Trinity Church when in town.

¹ Snyder, Jill, *St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 1844-1994: He Makes His Marvelous Works to Be Remembered*, unpublished manuscript, 1996, pg. iv

² Hall, *Slave Society in the Danish West Indies* pp. 1-5

In 1790, 'General' Tritton died, revealing that he was not a general, but a merchant ship captain. He drowned at sea when his ship sank during an Atlantic storm. (See Exhibit 1)

Because the Tritton family was living in New Haven at the time, Captain Tritton's estate was settled there. One of the highest valued possessions listed in his estate inventory was 'Negro girl Lucy.' She was assigned a value of 27 dollars.³ (See Exhibit 2)

Lois's Story

Lucy's daughter Lois was born in Nova Scotia in 1799. In 1806, Lois's baptism was recorded in the Cornwallis, Nova Scotia Township Book. She wasn't entered into the record as Lucy's daughter. She was entered as "the enslaved 'mulatto' child of Mrs. Tritton."⁴

The Loan

At some point after Captain Tritton's death, Mrs. Tritton needed money, leading to a series of financial and legal transactions. The original records of these transactions are in the *New Haven Museum*. Transcriptions are included in the appendix.

- On July 31, 1820, Mrs. Tritton borrowed money from a man named John Jacocks, using Lucy and Lois as collateral.
- It was noted in a book titled, *Slave in Canada*, that Lois was taken from Nova Scotia to Connecticut "to be sold in 1824."⁵
- In 1825, when Mrs. Tritton hadn't repaid the loan, Jacocks sold the loan to a man named Anthony Sanford. Sanford sued Mrs. Tritton for \$405.32. However, Mrs. Tritton couldn't be found and likely had never returned to Connecticut.

A statement given by Anthony Sanford, dated New Haven, March 8, 1825, provides details.

I do this day with this Execution made diligent search and inquiry for the within named Debtor, but could not find her within my precincts, she having no place of residence therein, nor has she [been] within my precincts at any time since I received this execution to my knowledge. I therefore by direction of the creditors attorney on this day of 8th day of March 1825 levied this execution on two Female Colored Slaves named Lucy and Lois, they being the property of the debtor within named city, and the same day, I gave Public Notice by a written advertisement under my hands, fastened to the Public sign Post at Public Vendue, at the end of twenty days therefrom being the 28th day of March. At said Public Sign Post in the City of New Haven. I caused a drum to be beat to give notice of the sale at said place, exposed said slaves for sale...at an outcry the aforesaid slaves [were sold] for the sum of Tenders each to Anthony Sanford, him being the highest bidder.

Attending Elisha Munson, Constable

A court officer recorded that Anthony P. Sanford purchased Lucy and Lois for \$10 each. The sheriff also recorded, "Manumission (not signed) of the two slaves by A. P. Sanford, May 3rd, 1825."

We can assume that Sanford actually paid the overdue amount that Mrs. Tritton owed. However, the auction on the Green was carried out despite a 1774 Connecticut law outlawing the importation of slaves into the

³ Ancestry.com. *Connecticut, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1609-1999* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015. Original Source: *Probate Files Collection, Early to 1880*; Author: *Connecticut State Library (Hartford, Connecticut)*; Probate Place: *New Hartford, Connecticut*.

⁴ *Whitfield*, pg. 187

⁵ *Whitfield*, pg. 115

state. In addition, the ***Connecticut Gradual Abolition Act of 1784***,⁶ set forth female slaves would become free on attaining the age of 21. Lois was born in 1799, thus, Lois should have been freed under both laws.⁷

The Deception

It appears that Lucy was likely freed after the auction. Older enslaved women were often freed because they could no longer fulfill the heavy workload expected of female slaves. Furthermore, slave owners didn't want the responsibility to care for an aging slave.

Lois, however, in her many interviews never mentioned being freed at the time of the auction. In her most extensive interview, she states that she was *owned* by Mr. Sanford and had to work extra hours for several years to earn \$600 to buy her freedom.⁸

The New Haven Museum has Lucy and Lois's *Freedom Certificates*. They appear to be in pristine condition. Furthermore, Lois never mentions that she or her mother received freedom certificates in any of her newspaper interviews. Thus, it appears the certificates in the museum were part of creating for the public the appearance that Lois was a free woman to comply with Connecticut laws.

Putting all the documentary evidence and Lois's recollections together, one can conclude that Mr. Sanford paid off Mrs. Tritton's loan, and, unknowingly, Lois worked for many years to repay Mr. Sanford. It is little known that it was a known common practice for slaveholders to 'free' enslaved people to comply with state abolition laws only to then designate the formerly enslaved as *indentured*, forcing them, in effect, to work to purchase their freedom. (Historian Kris Manjapra delves into this topic in his book, *Black Ghost of Empire: The Long Death of Slavery and the Failure of Emancipation*. (Scribner, New York,) 2022).

After the auction, while bound by Mr. Sanford, Lois also worked part-time with her mother Lucy as a laundress, a common occupation for African American women. It was a specialized trade requiring knowledge of how to launder different fabrics such as silk, linen, cotton and wool. The work generated income but required handling caustic chemicals and toting heavy buckets of water..

Laundresses were often paid monthly. For reference, in the 1860s, Army laundresses could earn up to \$40 per month. If Lois earned approximately one-quarter of that or \$10 per month, she could have accumulated \$600 within five years.⁹

Lucy died September 17, 1762.¹⁰ No burial site has been found. Although no specific record points to this possibility, the remains of indigent people, including people of color, were often used for medical research in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Legacy Continues

In 1880, Lois was recorded in a genealogical site as being married to Asa Jeffrey, however, his 1885 death was recorded in Wisconsin. Lois had a son, Henry Tritton, who was a barber. Through him, based on public information in *Ancestry.com*, it appears that Lucy and Lois have living descendants.¹¹

⁶[Acts and laws of the State of Connecticut in America \(1784\) · Western CT State University Archives' Digital Collections](#) An Act Concerning Indian, Molatto (*sic*) and Negro Servants and Slaves" (pgs. 233-235). accessed 8/13/2025

⁸ [Ancestry.com/public](#) scanned documents and photos to view a copy this document

⁹ [Ancestry. Com](#), last accessed 8/1/2025

⁹ [The Army Laundress \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#) accessed 10/20/2025

¹⁰ [Ancestry.com](#), Births, Deaths, and Marriages accessed 10/20/2025

¹¹ [Ancestry.com](#), accessed multiple times in 2024 and 2025.

APPENDIX

Exhibit 1

Richard Tritton Death Notice: August 20, 1790

Source: Hale Collection of Cemetery Inscriptions and Newspaper Notices, 1629 to 1934.

Accessed from Ancestry.com 10/16/2025

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TOWN</u>	<u>S. L. N. 138</u>	<u>DIED</u>	<u>AGE</u>
Latimer, ----(Mrs.) Helpen, James P.	<u>JUNE 25, 1790</u> New London New London	Wife of Capt. Peter Late of Newport		46
Huntington, Jabez	<u>JULY 2, 1790</u> Port au Prince	Of New London	June 10	
Rockwell, ----Son Daniels, Grace	<u>JULY 9, 1790</u> Middletown New London	Son of Joshua Wife Of Jasper		4 73
Gray, Lydia	<u>JULY 16, 1790</u> Windham	Wife of late Samuel		66
Palmer, ----Son Waldron, Jonathan	<u>JULY 23, 1790</u> Wethersfield Stonington	Son of Isaac	July 13	9
Williams, Weeks	<u>JULY 30, 1790</u> East Haddam		July 22	101
Wheeler, William Cleveland, Sarah (Widow) Silliman, Gold S.	<u>AUGUST 6, 1790</u> New London New London Fairfield	Widow	July 21	77 49 59
Cheney, ----(Mr.) Minor, John Van Verts, Nathan	<u>AUGUST 13, 1790</u> East Haven New London Albany		Aug. 3	124
Tritton, Richard	<u>AUGUST 20, 1790</u> New Haven	Native of Halifax	July 10	40
No Deaths Recorded	<u>AUGUST 27, 1790</u>			
Larrabee, Timothy Sr.	<u>SEPTEMBER 3, 1790</u> Windham		Aug. 24	22
Griffing, John Major Ledyard, Ann	<u>SEPTEMBER 10, 1790</u> Lyme Groton	Wife of Col. Wm.	Sept. 2	54 46



Exhibit 2

Excerpt from the estate of Richard Tritton showing Lucy valued at 27 dollars.

Source: Ancestry.com, Connecticut Wills and Probate Records.

Accessed various times in 2024 and 2025.

Small 1200 11 listed and better	Sarah Tratten	"	"	"
3/4 of Thread Stockings 1 P. W. Stock	Chet Micocke	"	"	6 6
2 Shirts, 4 Napkins, 6 Sheets	Hilla	"	"	1 14
3 Napkins, 2 Breakfast Cloths, 3 Shirts				
1 Pillow Case	Sarah Tratten	"	"	15
4 Breakfast Cloths, 4 Table Cloths				
6 Pillow Cases, 1 Trunk	Chet Micocke	"	"	2 5
Passes Voyage, Codogan on the Bowd	Shipman	"	"	4
Former Miss, Franklin on Etchings	Hilla	"	"	6
Negro Girl Lucy	Sarah Tratten	"	"	27
1 Silver Table Spoon, 1 Pewter Tureen	Hilla	"	"	13
2 New Slaps 1 Lampen & Looking Glass	Chet Micocke	"	"	7
2 Negro Beds & Bedding	Hilla	"	"	2
1 Land: Nick. Huger, New York Madie				
1 Cloth Horse	Hilla	"	"	5
4 Dishes, 6 Plates, 3 Butter Boats				
1 Wax Brush, 1 P. Dog Iron				
1 Quasins Rod & 2 Axes	Hilla	"	"	6

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Exhibit 3

City of New Haven Records archived in the New Haven Museum Afro-American Collection, 1688-1896: MSS 119

Loan agreement and Conditions

Know all men by these presents That I Sarah Tritton of the City and County of New Haven for the consideration of eighty dollars to me in hand paid at and before the unsealing and delivery of these presents the receipt whereof I hereby acknowledge and myself therewith fully satisfied, contention and paid: Have granted, bargained, and released and by these presents do fully, clearly, and also lately grant bargain sell and release unto John Nicoll of said New Haven, his executors and administrators [unintelligible] a certain Negro woman Lucy, being about forty years of age —Also a Negro girl Lois being about sixteen years of age.

To have and to hold said Lucy and Lois unto the said John Nicoll, his executors, administrators and assigns forever; — and I at the said Sarah Tritton for myself my heirs executors, administrators and assigns forever' and I the said Sarah Tritton forever; —and I the said Sarah Tritton for myself my heirs executors and administrators do so covenant and agree to and with the above named John Nicoll his executors, administrators and assigns to warrant and defend the sale of the above named Lucy and Lois against all persons whatsoever. In witness whereof I have here unto let my hand and seal this thirty first day of July 1820.

Signed sealed & delivered in presence of

Margaret Mills

Elisha Munson

Conditions

Whereas said Sarah Tritton has given said John Nicoll two promissory notes dated one June 14, 1819 and one other July 31, 1820 viz one note for the sum of thirty dollars and the other note or for fifty dollars payable on demand with interest. [illegible] if said Sarah Tritton shall well and truly pay said John Nicoll said notes awarding to these terms then this deed is to be void. *Sarah Tritton*

Whereas a judgement was obtained against Sarah Tritton in favor of John A. Jacocks on the 4th Friday of June 1820 at 4th March 1825 the County Court of execution was granted 4th March 1825. We therefore acknowledge the right(?) of Twenty dollars on said Execution by the hands of Elihu Munson Constable — New Haven 20th (?) of April 1825.

Added at the bottom in 1825

....I hereby release & quit claim unto Anthony Sanford all the rights titles and intentions, which I have or ought to have, in on to the Slaves Lucy & Lois mentioned in the foregoing written Instrument, signed & Sealed by Sarah Tritton, and dated the Thirty first day of July 1820 — and I also assign to him the said

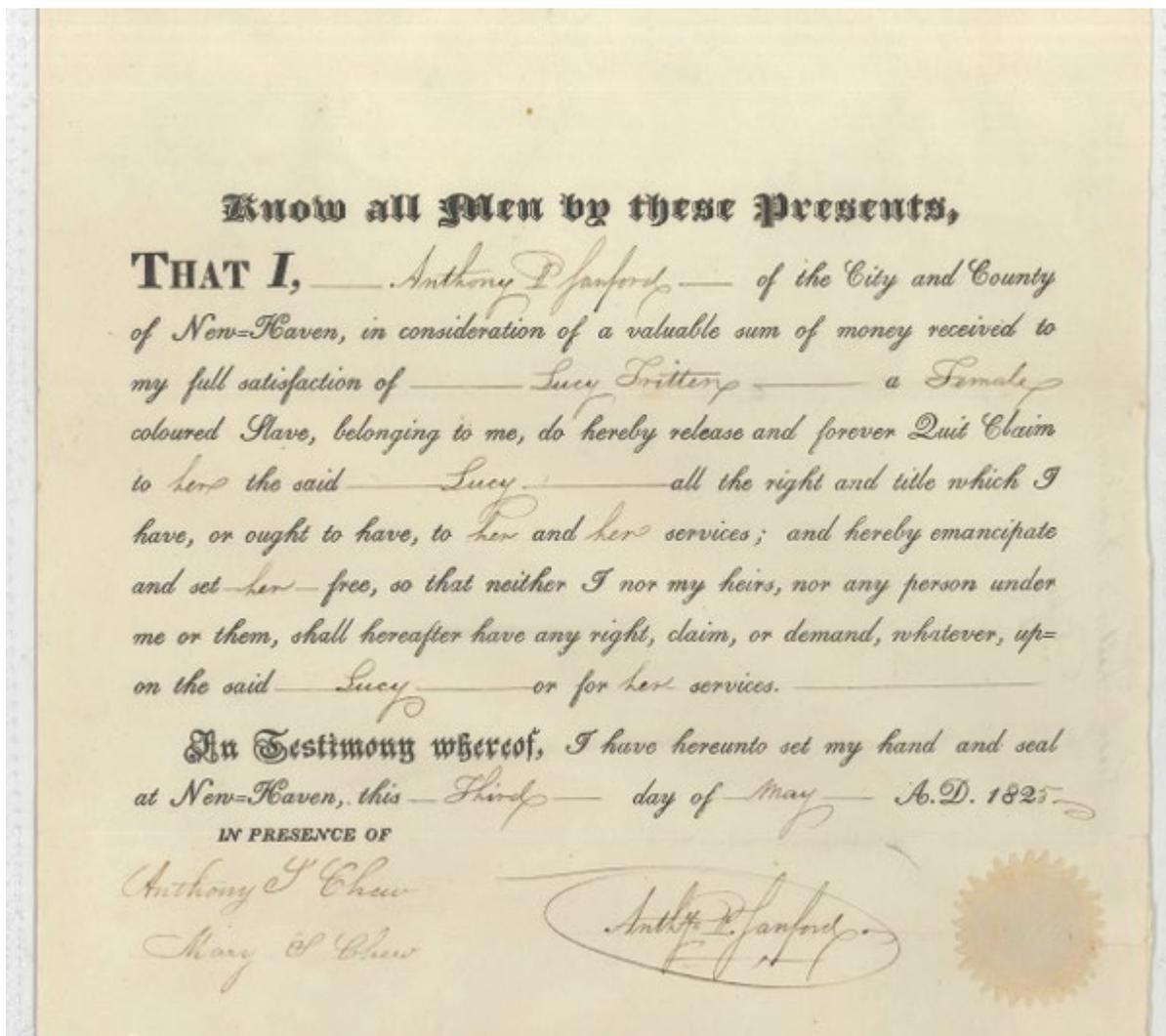
Sanford the Note for Thirty dollars, therein mentioned to collect the same for his own use and at his own work and expense, the Note for fifty dollars being cancelled *J. Nicoll*

Received New Haven March 28th 1825 of Anthony P Sanford twenty Dollars in full for two slaves sold at the sheriff(?) booth(?) on an execution in favour of John H. Jacocks against Sarah Tritton the said Slaves Lucy & Lois being the Property of said Sarah. Signed by me Elisha Munson Constable

Exhibit 4

Lucy Tritton Freedom Certificate, dated May 3, 1825

Source: New Haven Museum Library. Scanned and e-mailed by New Haven Museum Librarian, 8/29/2025



*Source: New Haven Museum Library. Scanned and e-mailed by New Haven Museum Librarian, 8/29/2025

Exhibit 5

Lois Tritton Freedom Certificate, dated May 3, 1825

Source: New Haven Museum Library. Scanned and e-mailed by New Haven Museum Librarian, 8/29/2025

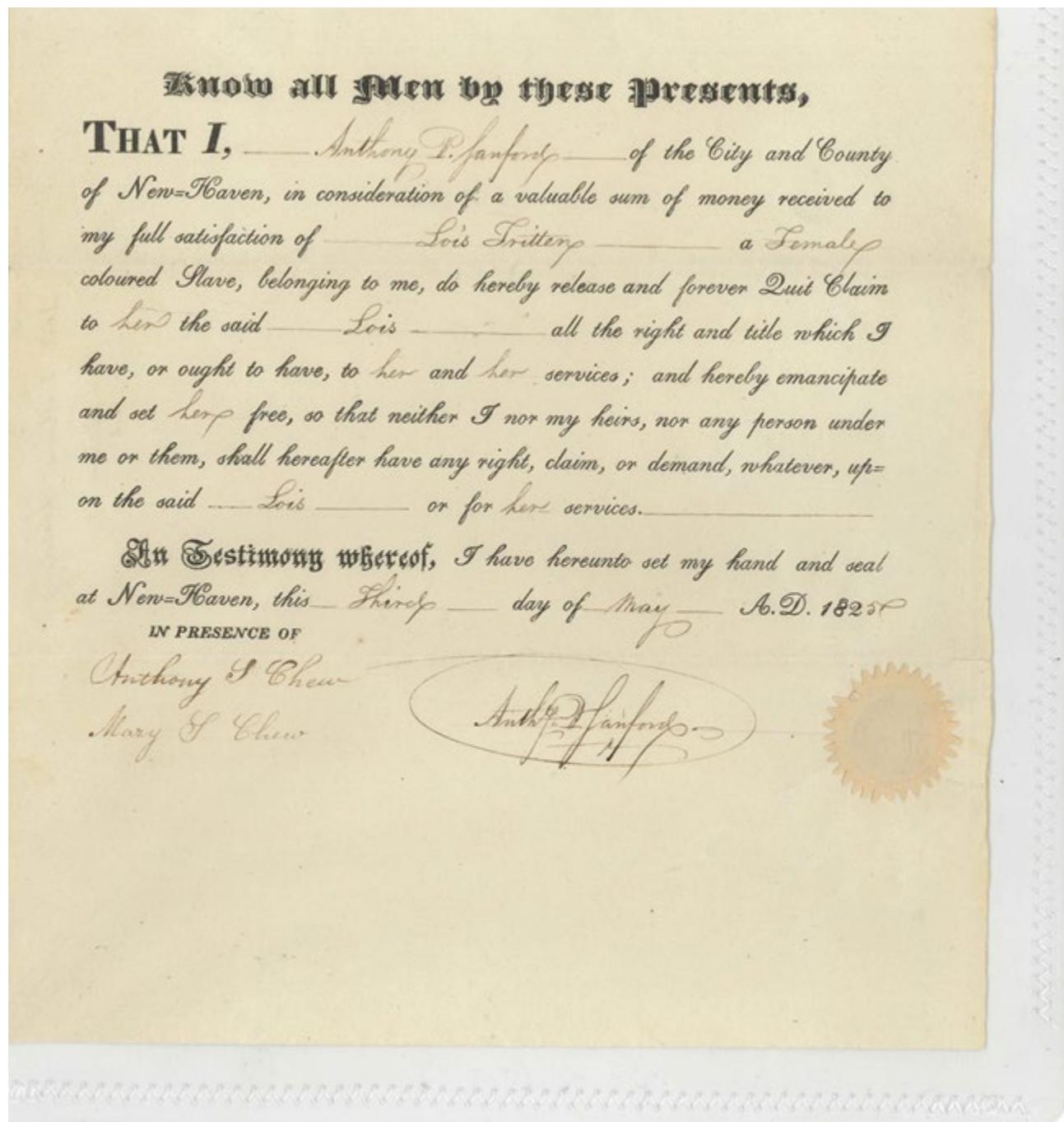


Exhibit 6

Undated newspaper article based on an interview with Lois Tritton. Original source unnamed.
Last accessed from *Ancestry.com/Public member Trees/ Public Member Photos & Scanned Documents 10/15/2025*