


Haiti Settlement

Anderdon

One of the lesser-known Black enclaves in Amherstburg was the Haiti settlement. Evidence of this community is minimal and there is no explanation as to how it got its name. It was said to have been located in Anderdon, between Concession Road 2 North and Concession Road 7 North. Other research has indicated that the settlement was located on Concession Road 4 North. Given the distance between these concessions, this settlement was likely scattered across farmland to the east of Concession Road 3 North, but there has yet to be evidence that supports this assumption. Areas of Anderdon were previously granted to Indigenous peoples, meaning the Haiti settlement may have occupied some of this space. An obituary for Mary Thomas Davis indicates that she was born in “the old Haiti Settlement in Anderdon.” Given her being 86 years old when she passed, this suggests that the settlement existed during the mid-nineteenth century. Although there is little known about Black settlers living in Anderdon outside of Marble Village, this shows that Black settlement in Amherstburg was likely greater than what we know.



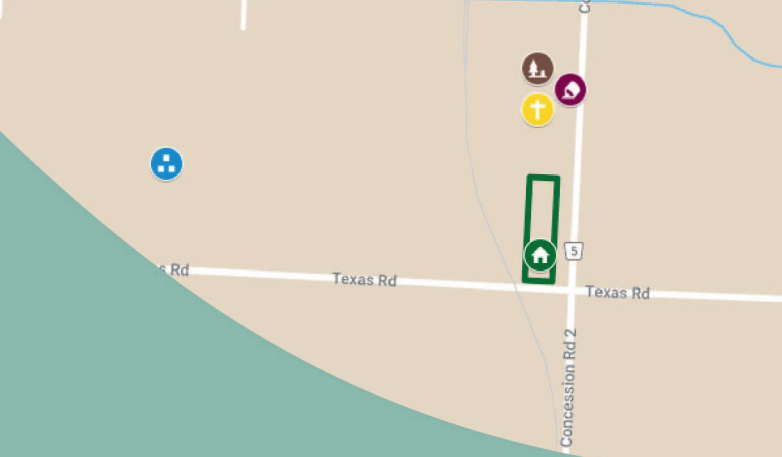
Mrs. F. H. A. Davis passes
—Mrs. Mary A. Thomas Davis, widow of Fred H. A. Davis, died at her home on Sandwich Street, Tuesday, in her 86th year. Mrs. Davis was a daughter of George and Maria Buckner Thomas. She was born in the old Haiti Settlement in Anderdon and had lived in Amherstburg for 75 years. Mrs. Davis was a member of A. M. E.

The Amherstburg Echo, November 12, 1953

Marble Village Settlement

Anderdon

The community on Texas Road to the west of Concession Road 2 North is often associated with Italian Canadians but did you know that going back to the nineteenth century the area was once a predominately Black community known as Marble Village? The Marble Village settlement is one of the more well-known Black enclaves to have existed in Amherstburg. It was located on Lot 10 of the 1st Concession in the Township of Anderdon. The settlement consisted of roughly half of Lot 10 which is north of Texas Road and to the west of the 2nd Concession. Marble Village then stretches westwards up until present-day Knobb Hill Drive. According to the land records for Marble Village (Plan 12), there were 16 lots within this settlement. These lots were sold to mainly Black and Irish settlers by a man named Rowland Wingfield. Marble Village consisted of 88 acres of land, which Wingfield divided into ten 1-acre lots, fifteen 5-acre lots, and one 3-acre lot. The settlement was established in the 1850s on a portion of land previously populated by Indigenous peoples.



The Cypher Systems Group Greenway on Thomas Road in Amherstburg. This trail used to be part of the Canada Southern Railway which ran south of Marble Village.

Photo credit: K. Kochaniec

Marble Village Settlement Continued

Most of the Black settlers living in Marble Village worked in the quarry, which was located across from their settlement on the south side of Texas Road and included the “Indian Stone Quarry Reserve,” the Sloan Quarry (sometimes spelled Sloane), and the Burnell Quarry. Given the settlement’s proximity to these quarries, there is reason to believe that the name Marble Village originated because of its association with stones. Originally, the Sloan Quarry was owned by a man named Captain John Sloan, an abolitionist who was known for hiring Black individuals in his quarry and selling property to Black families. Over time, the quarries were purchased by members of the White family, and the land was later under the ownership of the Brunner Mond Canada Company. Another location in which Black settlers in Marble Village found employment was at Charles Thomas Sr.’s Saw and Grist Mill. The mill was located on the northwestern quarter of Lot 3 on the 3rd Concession of Anderdon. This means that it was likely near the southeast corner of Texas Road and Concession Road 3. Although not often mentioned in research, Marble Village was also close to the Canada Southern Railway, which ran south of Texas Road to the Detroit River. Given this information, and the fact that railroads continued to expand throughout the 1800s, it is likely some of the residents worked for the railway as well. The railway has since been removed and replaced with the Cypher Systems Group Greenway.



Thomas Saw & Grist Mill, 1894.
Marsh Historical Collection



Brunner Mond office on the
former Sloan Quarry.
Heritage Buildings of Amherstburg
by Meg Reiner

Marble Village Settlement Continued

Residents of Marble Village continued to maintain self-sufficiency through their establishment of the Marble Village School, officially known as S.S. #1. The Marble Village School, also known as the Quarry School, moved from the Sloan property to the Marble Village settlement, near the corner of Concession Road 2 North and Texas Road. According to the land registry for this property, one acre of land was granted to the School Trustees of S.S. #1 in 1856, where the school remained until its closure in 1917. In an article from 1941, Peter Stokes, a former resident of Marble Village, spoke about the school in *The Amherstburg Echo* explaining that “previous to 1850, all races [...] attended the Sloane School on what is today Brunner Mond property, east of Highway No. 18. [Front Road North, County Road 20],” and it did not take long before “narrowminded people raised the local issue” which forced the Black community to apply for a separate school. According to Stokes, the community was able to open a school in 1850 but the Trustees for S.S. #1 faced several challenges getting the school recognized as the official school for Section #1. Some notable individuals who taught at the Quarry School include Julia Turner and John H. Alexander.

TOWNSHIP OF ANDERDON. Lot No. Two (2) in the Marble Concession Village

ITS DATE.	DATE OF REGISTRY.	GRANTOR.	GRANTEE.	QUANTITY OF LAND.	CONSIDERATION OR AMOUNT OF MONEY.	REMARKS.
127. Indenture	15. Aug. 1856. 12. Dec. 1856.	Rowland Mayfield	Trustees of School Section No. one	1. acre.	£13.5.	Village Lot No. 2

Land registry for Village Lot 2 in Marble Village.
Ontario Land Registry Access, Essex (LRO 12), Anderdon, Plan 12

Marble Village Settlement Continued



Students in front of the
Marble Village School ca. 1900.
Alvin D. McCurdy fonds,
Archives of Ontario

In an article from 1941 in *The Amherstburg Echo*, the Marble Village School is described as being “used not only as a school but as a church and in the yard, there was a burying ground. It is believed there are still some bodies there.” It is also said that at some point, workers at the quarry had social and religious gatherings on the property that were called camp meetings. At these meetings, individuals would gather and hold religious services. Given the fact that individuals were holding religious services at the quarry, it is probable that these services would then occur at the Marble Village School after the Trustees for S.S. #1 received the property. Although it is not confirmed in records, the property of S.S. #1 likely had a cemetery and church established by members of the Marble Village community.

Mount Pleasant Settlement

Malden

The Mount Pleasant Settlement was established in the early 1800s and remained active until the beginning of the twentieth century. This settlement was located in Malden, south of Alma Street and to the east of Concession Road 4 South, contained by Lake Erie and the present-day boundaries of Amherstburg. This former settlement now consists of neighbourhoods known as Busy Bee Corners, Malden Centre, and part of Sinasac Corners. The settlement was likely farmland, which is consistent with the present-day geography of the area. Some individuals living in Mount Pleasant received their land as a result of their participation in 'Captain Caldwell's Company of Coloured Volunteers' during the Upper Canada Rebellion (1837-1838). This includes individuals such as Bryson Asberry, Robert Asberry, Joseph Green, and Alexander Green. At the heart of this settlement was Mount Pleasant Baptist Church and Cemetery. Behind the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, there are remains of markers brought from the Mount Pleasant Cemetery.



A headstone for Robert Baylis found at the Mount Pleasant Cemetery, now located at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum.



Mount Pleasant Settlement Continued

One of the first and vital settlers to the Mount Pleasant community was John Hedgeman, a Freedom

TOWNSHIP OF MALDEN. *N 1/2 of Lot No. (83) in the 7 Concession.*

No of INSTRUMENT.	INSTRUMENT.	ITS DATE.	DATE OF REGISTRY.	GRANTOR.	GRANTEE.	QUANTITY OF LAND.	CONSIDERATION OR AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE.	REMARKS.
<i>No. 295.</i>	<i>Patent. Deed.</i>	<i>21. Aug. 1835.</i> <i>21. June. 1839.</i>	<i>27. Mar. 1840.</i>	<i>Crown-Canada Company</i>	<i>Canada Company John Edgeman</i>	<i>amoy. etc. 100. acrs.</i>	<i>£50.</i>	<i>N 1/2 of Lot 83. N 1/2 of Lot 83.</i>

Seeker from Kentucky who came to Amherstburg in 1832. According to land records, Hedgeman (sometimes spelled Edgeman) purchased the northern portion of Lot 83 on the 7th Concession in the Township of Malden from the Canada Company in 1839. Although it is not documented in the land records, it is said that Hedgeman donated a portion of his property in 1865 to the Mount Pleasant Church in order to construct a church and cemetery for the congregation. The church was not built until after 1865 but Mount Pleasant Church operated from about 1841 to 1906. Before 1865, members would have met in individuals' homes on a weekly basis. Research has shown that the church did not have a dedicated pastor, with the role being vacant for certain years.

Besides the physical remains of deteriorated gravestones, evidence of the Mount Pleasant community can be found in newspaper articles discussing the church's activities and through obituaries of individuals buried in the cemetery. One example from 1889 can be found in *The Amherstburg Echo*, discussing events being held at the church in order to raise funds for the Sabbath school library, as well as to support the minister's salary. Another article from 1883 found in *The Amherstburg Echo* discusses cattle from neighbouring farms roaming all over the graves at the Mount Pleasant Cemetery. The Marsh Historical Collection in Amherstburg also has documents that list individuals who are known to have been buried at Mount Pleasant, including Serlander Green, George Mickens, Mrs. James H. Lee, and Mrs. Cora Washington, to name a few.

Mount Pleasant Settlement Continued

Like many other Black communities in the nineteenth century, the church was also often used as a school for the children who lived nearby. There is proof confirming the existence of a Sabbath school at Mount Pleasant Church, but it is not entirely certain that Mount Pleasant housed a school where children would attend on a daily basis. Although this is not confirmed, there is evidence to support that more than likely, school was taught in the church. Research done by local historian Doris Gaspar demonstrates that Julia Turner accepted a teaching position at Mount Pleasant from 1845 to 1850. Although the church was not built at this time, there is still a chance she taught the children of the community out of someone's home. It is also said that there was a segregated school opened in Malden in 1856 and only operated for six months. This school was located in the #6 school district and was used by the 23 Black families living nearby. Although there is no concrete evidence of a separate school in Mount Pleasant, given that Black children were not permitted to attend school with white children, many Black communities formed their own schools to allow their children to receive the education they rightfully deserved.



A marker on the former Mount Pleasant property.

Photo credit: K. Kochaniec with permission from Kathy and Jon

Parks

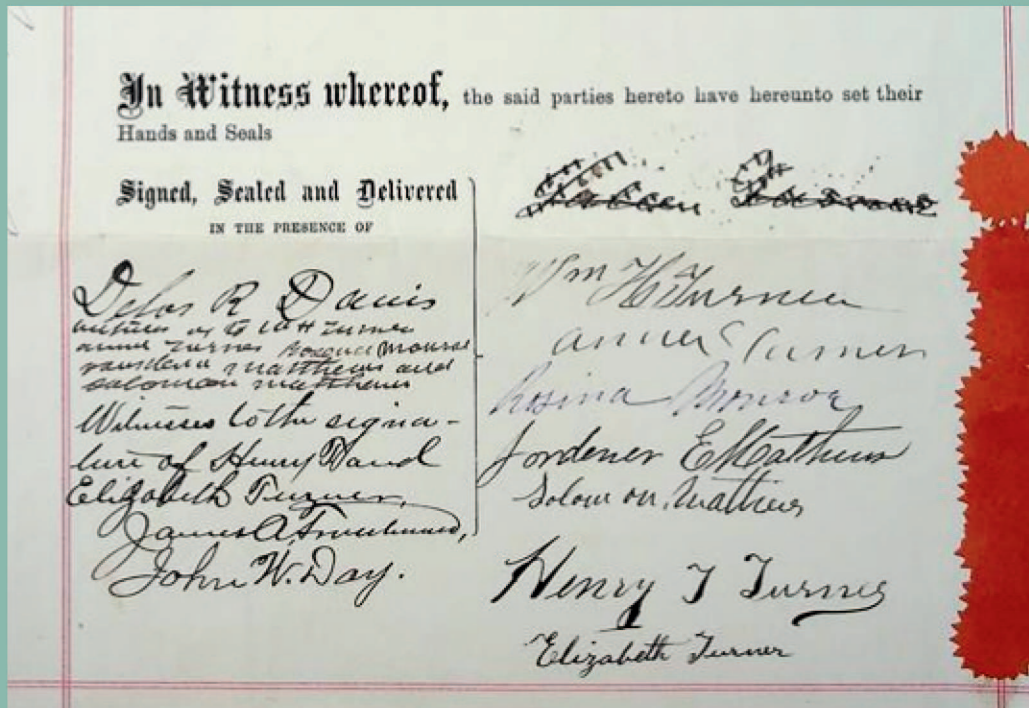
George-King-Seymour Streets Settlement

Amherstburg

A pocket of settlement within Amherstburg that was never given a name was located on George, King, and Seymour Streets to the south of Richmond Street and to the north of Simcoe Street. Given the space this settlement occupied, for now, we will refer to it as the George-King-Seymour Streets (GKS) settlement. A possible explanation for the concentration of Black families on these streets is abolitionists such as Captain John Sloan (former owner of the Sloan Quarry near Marble Village) and Captain Charles Stuart purchasing properties and selling them to Freedom Seekers and other Black individuals.

Deed for Lot 33 on the west side of Seymour Street in Amherstburg, 1882.

Marsh Historical Collection



GKS Settlement Continued

Like other Black settlements, the GKS settlement was centred around a church and a school. In 1851, a separate school was created under the *Common Schools Act*. This school was located on King Street and was first held in a home owned by an individual known as 'Mr. Lewis.' In 1864, King Street School was moved from the location they were renting from Mr. Lewis, to Lot 27 on the west side of King Street, which is presently the location of the Mount Beulah Church of God in Christ at 246 King Street. The log building that was on the site was replaced in 1875 by a stone-cut structure. Starting in 1879 or 1880, John H. Alexander ran the King Street School until the early 1910s when it was integrated with the new public school, resulting in the closure of King Street School. During its operation, King Street School was used by the community outside of schooling hours for Sunday School, a place to socialize, and somewhere for organizations such as the local temperance society and the Amherstburg Literary Society to gather.



John H. Alexander and his students standing outside the King Street School, ca. 1890s.
Alvin D. McCurdy fonds,
Archives of Ontario



Mount Beulah Church of God in Christ.
Photo credit: K. Kochaniec

GKS Settlement Continued

Throughout the nineteenth century, Black individuals living in the GKS settlement usually attended Amherstburg First Baptist Church or the Nazrey African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. First Baptist Church, located at 232 George Street, is known as the 'Mother Church' for the Amherstburg Regular Baptist Association, which is made up of several Baptist churches in Ontario and Michigan. First Baptist Church was founded in 1836 and in 1845 it was decided to construct the church building. The first pastor of the church, the Reverend Anthony Binga Sr., worked to raise funds to construct the building. Rev. Binga was also a conductor of the Underground Railroad and First Baptist Church was a final station.



First Baptist Church.

Nazrey AME Church.

Photo credit: K. Kochaniec



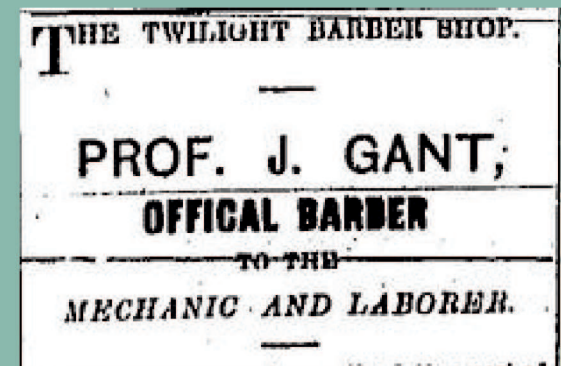
The Nazrey AME Church was founded in 1826 and the building was constructed in 1848. Like First Baptist Church, the Nazrey AME Church was also used as a final station for the Underground Railroad. It is located on Lot 8 on the east side of King Street, which is now part of the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. Nazrey AME Church was named after Reverend Willis Nazrey, and was established by Reverend Noah C. W. Cannon, who along with church trustees, purchased the land for the building. The last service held at the Nazrey AME Church was in 1988 and in 1999 the Nazrey AME Church was designated as a national historic site.

GKS Settlement Continued

What is unique about the GKS settlement is that it was located near the urban centre of Amherstburg. This meant that there were several businesses nearby, including businesses owned and operated by members of the Black community. Dr. Daniel Hill argues that many Black individuals living in Amherstburg who were labourers began to leave their occupations in the 1850s to open their own businesses. The passing of the *Fugitive Slave Act* (1850) in the United States resulted in an increased number of Freedom Seekers arriving in Amherstburg and in turn, the demand for Black-owned businesses grew. One example of a well-known business owner in Amherstburg includes Levi Foster, who operated a livery stable, a stagecoach, and a tavern for some time as well. Business directories from the era also document several Black individuals as business operators including John Gant, a barber, and Mrs. T. J. Harris, the owner of a confectionery, who are listed in the 1886 directory. These are only a few of the known Black-owned businesses in Amherstburg. The majority of businesses for which their address is known were located right outside of the GKS settlement in the current downtown core of Amherstburg. The existence of these businesses emphasizes the prosperity and self-sufficiency of Black settlement in Amherstburg.



John Gant, owner of the Twilight Barber Shop, and his wife, Martha Gant. Alvin D. McCurdy fonds, Archives of Ontario



The Amherstburg Echo,
November 9, 1877

Julia Turner: An Extraordinary Woman

Julia Turner was born circa 1828-1831 to parents Henry and Rosina (sometimes spelled Rosena) Turner, who were Freedom Seekers that arrived in Ontario in 1828, from Kentucky and Virginia, respectively. According to Dr. Afua Cooper, the couple operated a grocery store and rooming house in Amherstburg, as well as a carpet business. Henry Turner also served as a Sergeant in 'Captain Caldwell's Company of Coloured Volunteers' during the Upper Canada Rebellion (1837-1838).

Julia Turner began working as a teacher in a separate school at the age of fourteen. At the time, it was common for children to begin working at a young age in order to help support the family. According to Dr. Cooper, Julia Turner was a teacher for over thirty-five years. Her first teaching position was likely in the Mount Pleasant settlement, as research from local historian Doris Gaspar argues that Turner accepted a teaching position there from 1845 to 1850. Later, Turner worked as a teacher for the King Street School in Amherstburg beginning in 1854. In 1855, abolitionist Benjamin Drew described the King Street School in *Narratives of Fugitives Slaves in Canada*, as lacking resources and being "comfortless, and repulsive." This speaks to the difficulties Turner faced in securing funding for the school, which was a familiar struggle for racially segregated schools after the passage of the *Common Schools Act*.



Present-day image of the area near Julia Turner's property on Lot 47 in Malden.

Photo Credit: K. Kochaniec

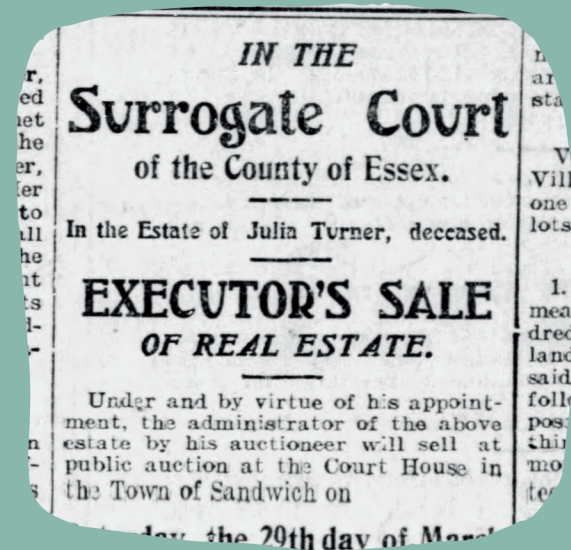
Julia Turner Continued

In 1856, Turner was forced to leave King Street School after a petition called for her to be replaced by a male teacher.

Despite Turner having taught for roughly a decade at the time of her departure in 1856, sexist stereotypes led parents in the community to believe that their children would be better off with a male teacher. This demonstrates that Turner faced challenges not only because of the colour of her skin, but also because she was a woman. Despite this, Turner continued to teach, and from 1862 to 1863, records show that she taught at the Marble Village School in Anderdon. In 1863, she began teaching at a separate school in Sandwich (now West Windsor), where she spent the rest of her teaching career.

Turner never married but she continued teaching and accumulated significant amounts of property throughout Windsor-Essex. Turner likely had four properties in Amherstburg, two in Anderdon, two in Malden, two in Colchester (now Essex), and nine in Sandwich (now West Windsor). Of the nineteen properties found, seventeen of them have been located on the virtual map of this exhibit. The remaining two unknown locations are found somewhere in Sandwich. Some of Turner's properties are described in an article published in 1902, in *The Windsor Star*, two years after her death. This article lists properties that she owned in Sandwich, Anderdon, Malden, Amherstburg, and North Colchester, which were being sold at a public auction.

According to Dr. Cooper, at the time of Turner's death, her real estate was valued at \$4,200 (worth approximately \$153,000 in 2023), and her personal estate and effects were valued at less than \$1,800 (worth approximately \$65,500 in 2023).



Julia Turner Continued

In 1878, an advertisement in *The Amherstburg Echo* lists three properties being sold by Julia Turner and her brother, James Turner. What is interesting about this is that in the land records for all three of the properties advertised, Julia Turner is the sole owner, while James Turner is not mentioned. In this case, it is possible that James Turner was simply helping his sister with the sale of her properties but given the fact she had owned many properties within her lifetime and dealt with the sale of land several times, it is also possible her brother's name is listed for the advertisement to appear more reputable. Given that in the 1800s many women were restricted from land ownership because of societal norms and economic barriers, it could appear unusual for a woman who had never married to be selling land. Julia Turner's life was remarkable, especially for a Black woman in the 1800s, as many systemic barriers were put in place to prevent her, and all women, from attaining the levels of social and economic wealth she achieved.

BY TO JACQUES LAFRANCOISE on the premises.

FARMS FOR SALE - The gore in rear of Lots 14 and 15, in the Township of Anderton, 23 acres, 12 cleared, a small house and good young orchard on the place. - East half of Lot 20 8th concession, Township of Malden, 30 acres, 25 improved; a hewed log house on the premises. - Lot No. 13, South Malden Road, Colchester, 100 acres, 4 acres cleared. Apply to JAMES TURNER, Amherstburg, or JULIA TURNER, Sandwich.

PLENDID LOT FOR SALE. - That bonu-

TOWNSHIP OF ANDERDON. Lot No. Seven (7) in the Marble Concession Village

No. of INSTRUMENT.	INSTRUMENT.	ITS DATE.	DATE OF REGISTRY.	GRANTOR.	GRANTEE.	QUANTITY OF LAND.	CONSIDERATION or AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE.	REMARKS.
L. 4962	Deed	1 Nov 1901	Nov 1901	re Julia Turner Estate by Arthur S. P. Ellis	do.			Lot 7 Marble Village
8319	Deed	23 Apr. 1902	23 Nov. 1902	Arthur S. P. Ellis	do.			

Land registry for Village Lot 7 in Marble Village.
Ontario Land Registry Access, Essex (LRO 12), Anderdon, Plan 12

About the Exhibit

Beyond the Underground Railroad: A History of Black Settlement in Nineteenth Century Amherstburg was created by Karleigh Kochaniec, a Master's Student in the Department of History at the University of Windsor.

This exhibit was made possible through the Local Black History Internship, an initiative established between the Amherstburg Freedom Museum and the Department of History at the University of Windsor. Thank you to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum Board of Directors and Mitacs for their financial support. Thank you as well to Dr. Gregg French, Dr. Lorene Bridgen-Lennie, and Mary-Katherine Whelan for their contributions to this project. Without their support, this exhibit would not be possible.

This exhibit continues in an online format, which features an interactive map that provides a more detailed view of Black settlement in Windsor-Essex. Visitors can explore the online map by scanning the QR code provided. Please note that this exhibit is not a complete history of Black settlement in Windsor-Essex. We invite visitors to contact the Amherstburg Freedom Museum if they have further information to fill in the gaps within the research and continue to build on these stories. A list of suggested resources is available for guests at the front desk or can also be accessed online by scanning the QR code provided.



University
of Windsor



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