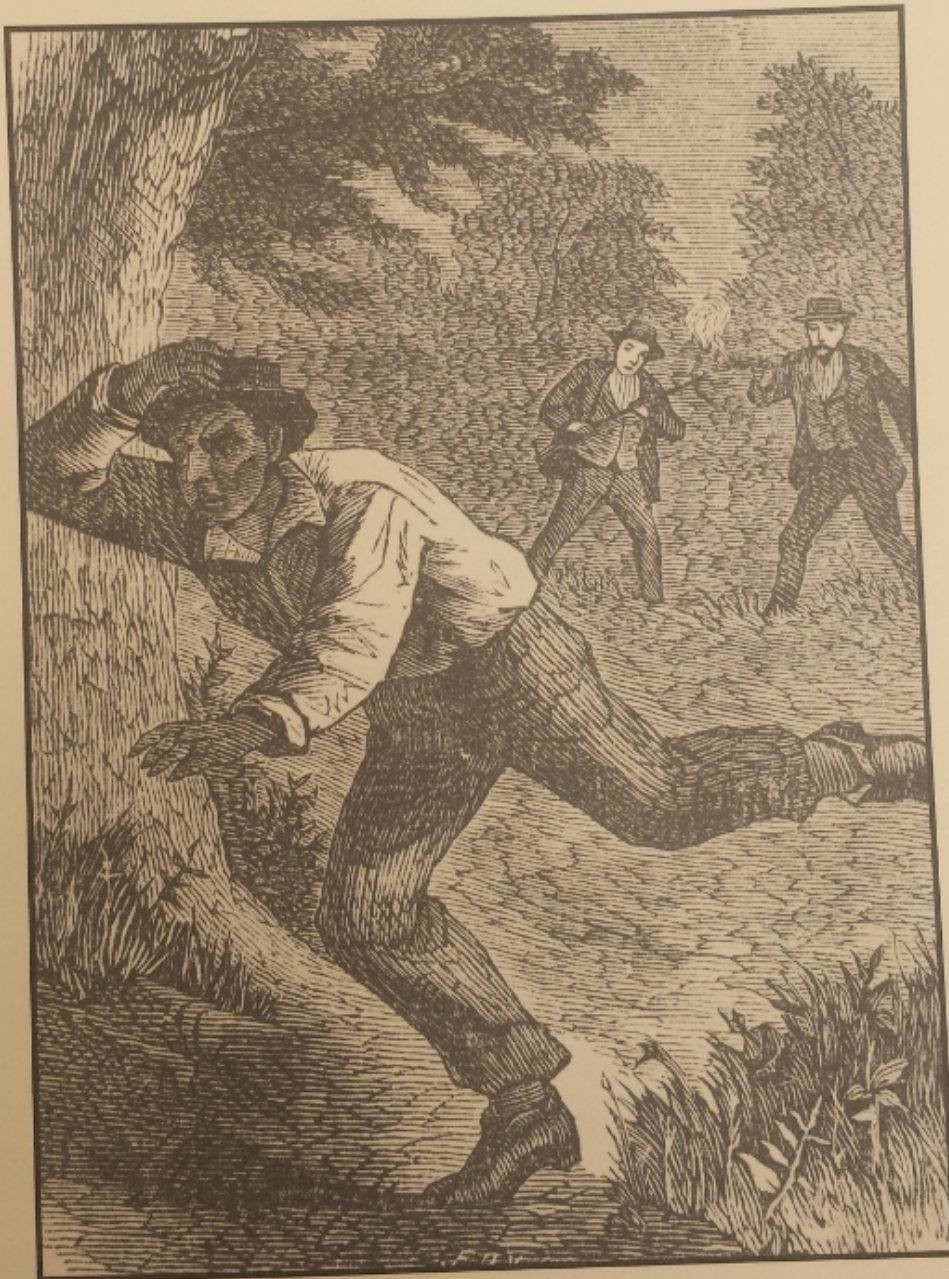


OHIO HISTORY

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9. *The Isaac Buchanan House*

This early log house on State Route 545 at the first crossing southwest of Savannah in Ashland County no longer exists, but the current owner of the property reaffirmed the story that the cabin had served as an underground railroad station, as had a later house that still stands to the east. Tradition places a tunnel under the latter building.⁴⁷ Visual inspection in a crawl space under a modern addition to the latter building revealed some small, unremarkable construction anomalies, but nothing suggesting a tunnel; an archaeological excavation, impractical under present circumstances, would be required in order for the claim of a tunnel to be investigated, but the prospects are not promising.

10. *The "Mayor's House"*

This structure, named for its best-known resident, William L. Long, Mayor of Wooster during 1934-1939, is located at 658 Pittsburgh Avenue in Wooster (Wayne County). It is one of several houses clustered in an old area of the city where underground railroad traditions have long existed. Folklore attaches several claims to this house, one of which is that a tunnel led from the basement to the track of the Pennsylvania Railroad, located only 75 feet to the north, so that fugitive slaves could stow away on passing trains. A more extravagant claim is that a tunnel led from the house to the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, situated three miles away with an intervening valley, stream and hills. Examination of county maps revealed that this house was constructed near the end of the 19th century, as for that matter was the first building of OARDC.

11. *The Pittsburgh Avenue School*

This old school in Wooster has been razed, but a long-time employee claims to have entered a basement tunnel while the building yet stood, where

46. Interview with Warren Jordan, February, 1991.

47. Interview with Clarence Mosley, February, 1991. The log cabin is listed on the Satterfield tabular sheet.

she saw what appeared to be makeshift benches or beds dug into the walls of the passageway. Although she did not claim to have walked the length of the tunnel, the informant stated that the passage continued in a westerly direction toward the Jeffries House (no. 12). One of two persons whom the informant alleged could verify her statement had, however, no recollection of any tunnel, much less of having entered one. If there was a tunnel of any sort, it was not connected with the underground railroad, since the building was constructed in 1902.

12. *The Jeffries and Pardee Houses*

The Jeffries House, at 745 Pittsburgh Avenue in Wooster, was built in 1843 by Judge John P. Jeffries, and has long been rumored to have been an underground railroad station with a tunnel leading to another house, but Lola Jeffries, daughter of Judge Jeffries, emphatically stated in 1952 that her father had nothing to do with the underground railroad and that there was no tunnel in the house.⁴⁸ Interwoven in local tradition with the Jeffries House was the nearby Eugene Pardee House, a large structure no longer extant that was situated about 100 feet north of Pittsburgh Avenue, which was the home of a 19th-century Wooster attorney and strong abolitionist.⁴⁹ A red-brick barn or carriage house associated with the Pardee mansion still stands at 124 Massaro Street, converted into a two-story single-family dwelling. Local rumor alleges not only that the basement of this structure was an underground railroad station but also that Harriet Tubman found refuge there. Some persons whose property adjoins the converted barn mention the existence of unexplained depressions in their lawns, as if caused by a collapsed tunnel, and one inhabitant reported that a clothesline pole once abruptly sank into the ground. Such cavities are not, however, unusual in old urban areas and may represent any number of phenomena having nothing to do with escape tunnels. Inspection of the basement revealed no evidence of a tunnel or any sealed openings in the walls.

13. *The Watters House*

This house, situated at 714 Pittsburgh Avenue in Wooster, was alleged to have contained two tunnels, one linking the basement with that in another

48. E. H. Hauenstein, "Underground Depots in Wayne Help Free Slaves," *The Wooster Daily Record*, February 9, 1952.

49. *Ibid.* Pardee is perhaps identical with the "Perdu" (no first name given) who appears in Siebert's list of underground railroad operators in Wayne County (*The Underground Railroad*, 430).

house of the same street, and the other extending toward the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks. Listed among the "Pioneer Homes" of the city and perhaps constructed prior to 1860, the structure no longer exists.

14. The "Ohio House"

This house, a former stagecoach tavern located at Madison Avenue and Spruce Street in Wooster, was alleged at an early date as an underground railroad station. There is no documented evidence of any tunnels or hidden chambers in the building, which was razed in the 1940s.

15. The John H. Kauke House

This now-razed residential building, which stood on the northeast corner of the intersection of Bowman Street and Beall Avenue in Wooster, is rumored to have had shackles in the basement to keep slaves from wandering around the town during daylight while waiting to move to the next underground railroad station. The absurdity of the idea that operators of stations would shackle those whom they were helping to liberate is patent. No secret rooms or tunnels are documented. Historical research has shown that the building was, in fact, constructed after the Civil War.

16. The Creston Antique House

This residence on State Route 3 at the south edge Creston, Wayne County, which has been used in recent years as an antiques shop, is an alleged underground railroad station. A former owner of the shop stated in an interview that there was a small tunnel leading off from the basement in the direction of a house located directly across the street, and that his wife had fallen into a hole in the yard that presumably was a collapsed portion of the tunnel.⁵⁰ Although the building may predate the Civil War, the basement has been remodelled and the house across the street no longer exists.

17. The Deer Lick Farmhouse

This house, located approximately two miles southwest of Burbank at the northern edge of Wayne County, is a local favorite for rumors of secret construction related to the underground railroad. Built by a wealthy railroader fol-

50. Interview with William Firebaugh, January, 1991.