

HISTORIC QUINCY ILLINOIS

GATEWAY CITY

1835-1865



Self-guided driving tour of the Historic City on the Bay

*Twenty significant sites and the compelling stories
surrounding Quincy's prominent role in history as a
place of refuge & a gateway city for freedom seekers*

BLACK HISTORY   MORMON REFUGE
POTAWATOMI SHELTER   GERMAN HERITAGE

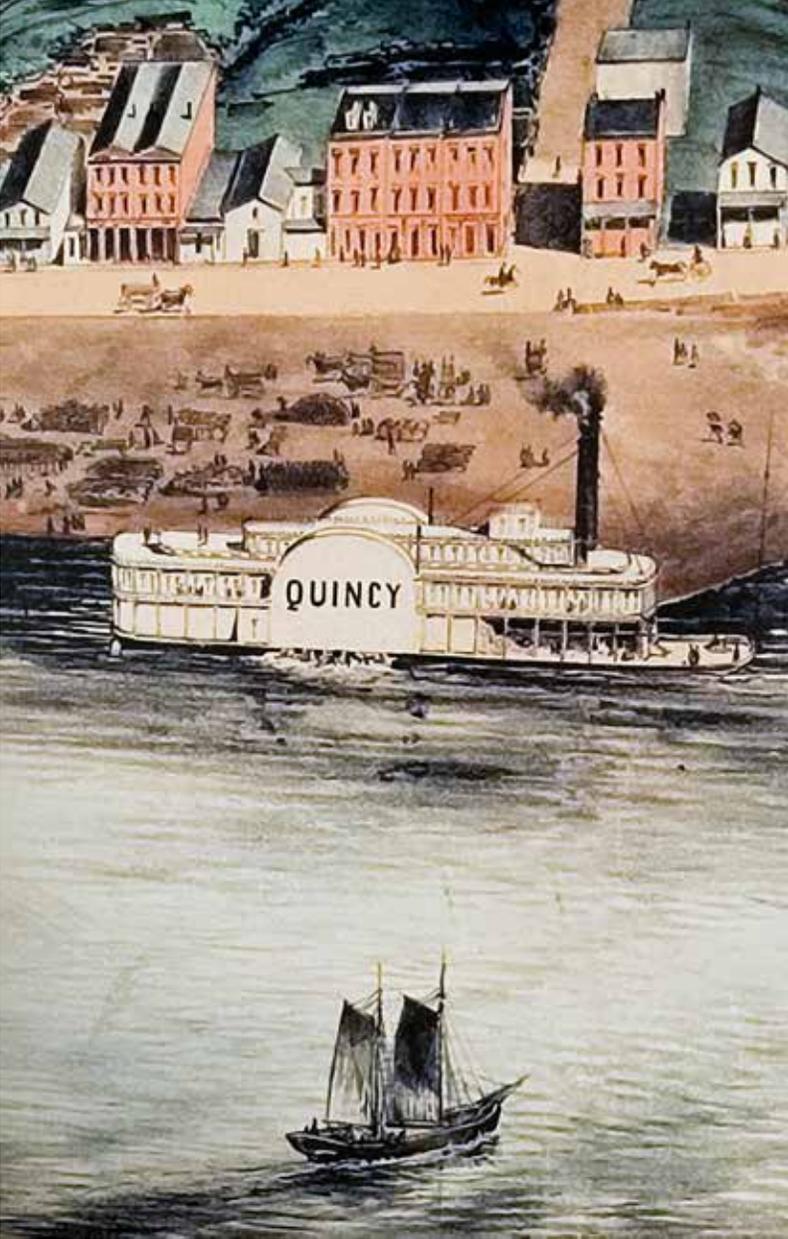
**Quincy's First Three Decades
Timelines + Stories
20-Point Driving Tour Map**

intro / index / timeline

Location, compassion, and determination. For the pioneer city founded in 1825, those three characterizations formed the trilogy that made Quincy a gateway city for sojourners in crisis.

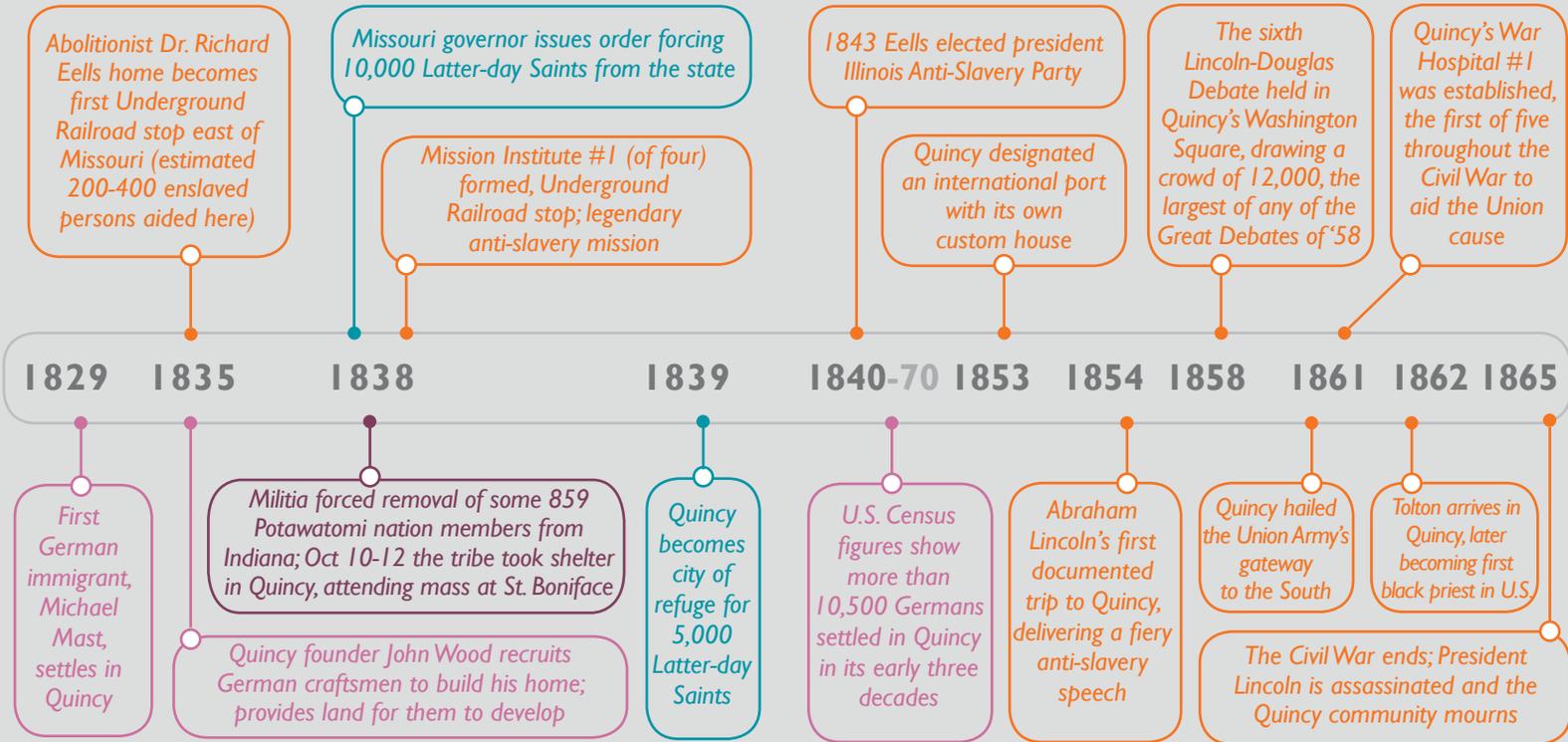
Situated at the western-most point of Illinois on the banks of the Mississippi River, Quincy was founded by John Wood, who regularly demonstrated humanitarian ideals of equality and compassion. Wood was not alone in his quest to build a strong and welcoming city. The community at large opened its gates to those in need, implementing action and generous care to many and diverse groups.

The Gateway City Guide explores Quincy's role as a city of compassion during its first three decades.



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● BLACK HISTORY
 ● MORMON REFUGE
 ● POTAWATOMI SHELTER
 ● GERMAN SETTLEMENT



20-point map / self-guided driving tour



Locations are color coded according to the correlating events in history; details found on the pages noted

■ BLACK HISTORY ■ MORMON REFUGE
■ NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY ■ GERMAN HERITAGE

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Gravesite of Father Tolton [p. 10]
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Underground Railroad location & home of Dr. Nelson [p. 6]

1835-1846

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD Eells House Story

Quincy's role in the Underground Railroad is highlighted in the events that took place at the home of Dr. Richard Eells and his wife, Jane. Eells was an ardent abolitionist from Connecticut who relocated to Quincy to help enslaved people.

In 1835 the Eells built their home on the Mississippi bluffs four blocks from the river. **It is estimated that hundreds of enslaved people channeled through the Eells House.** The most prominent attemptd escape began the night a man named Charley was delivered to Eells' back door by Berryman Barnett, who had spotted him swimming across the Mississippi. Barnett was a formerly enslaved man and one of the first known workers of Quincy's Underground Railroad.

Eells could not safely hide Charley in his home so the pair headed east by carriage to the Mission Institute, but encountered a posse along the way. Charley fled across the cemetery (today's Madison Park) but was captured and returned to Missouri. Eells was arrested and charged with harboring and secreting a fugitive slave. He was tried and found guilty by Judge Stephen A. Douglas, who later gained fame for his political debates with Abraham Lincoln.



In 1844 the Illinois Supreme Court turned down Eells' appeal. Due to the case's notoriety, **Eells was elected president of the Illinois Anti-Slavery Party**; however, the process of the state appeal had drained him financially and emotionally. Eells died at the age of 46 aboard a steamship on the Ohio River while on a trip east to rest.



The Dr. Eells House is recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Parks Service, as one of the forty-two most important Underground Railroad sites deserving recognition and support, due to the Eells case reaching the U.S. Supreme Court and to Eells' prominence in the abolitionist movement.

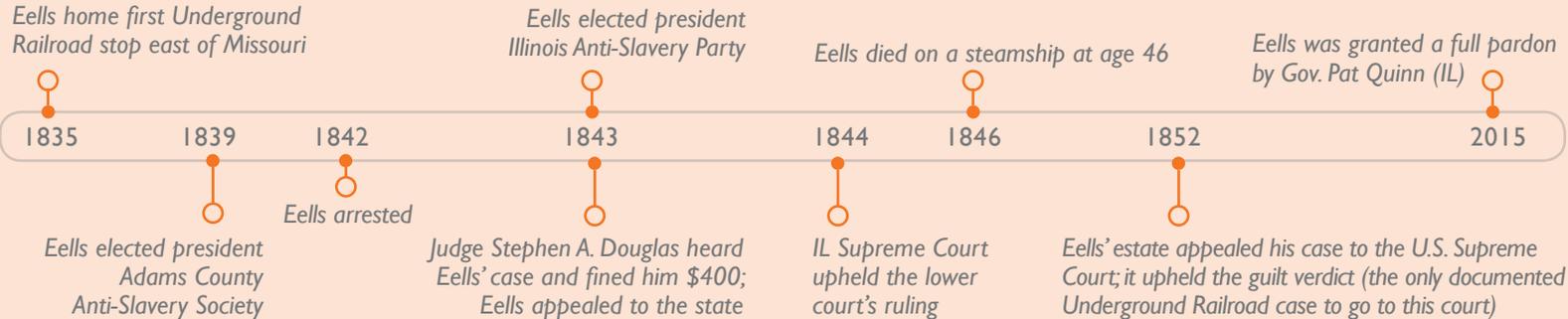
DR. RICHARD EELLS HOUSE | 415 Jersey | 217.223.1800

The first Underground Railroad stop east of Missouri and the oldest surviving 2-story brick home in Quincy. Now a museum dedicated to educational tours about the Underground Railroad.

> Tours : Saturday 1-4p | Apr-Nov or by appointment

STORY WITHIN THE STORY

Richard Eells attended Yale Medical School, where he met and married Jane Bestor (1802-1880), the daughter of one of his instructors. They had two daughters, both of whom died young. Amidst their anti-slavery endeavors in Quincy, Richard established a medical practice and the couple adopted two children.



1836-1844

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD Mission Institute Story

In 1836, American Antislavery Society (AASS) agent Rev. David Nelson established the Mission Institute. It would become recognized as Quincy's best known Underground Railroad station, Mission Institute #1.

The Institute prepared men, and later women, as missionaries to upset slavery across the river in Northeast Missouri, provoking violent reactions from Missouri slaveholders. Most Quincy founders, many of whom hailed from New England and were motivated by the teachings of the Second Great Awakening, supported the endeavor. **The Mission Institute is reknown for its antislavery efforts and Underground Railroad work.**



Rev. Nelson traveled throughout eastern Missouri preaching about the evils of slavery. When tensions erupted during a camp meeting near Palmyra in 1836, he fled to Quincy, where he spent the night in Rufus Brown's hotel, a log cabin on the southeast corner of Fourth and Maine Streets. The next morning several Quincyans arrived who wanted Nelson turned over to them.

When it became clear that Nelson planned to move his family and his troublesome Marion College to Quincy, the "self-constituted committee of citizens" demanded he return to Missouri. John Wood, Quincy founder and leader, brought 30 armed men to confront the mob at Brown's hotel. If they were going to take Nelson, Wood warned, they would have "to take him over our dead bodies." Wood's determination broke up the crowd. Nelson went on to form four institutes:

- #1 61st & Broadway: chapel & 20 log cabins on 80 acres located near the Nelson home at 60th & State (Oakland, the Nelson home, was built with a hiding place for fugitive slaves)
- #2 24th & Maine for two blocks east and north: two-story brick school & 20-30 cabins on 11 acres
- #3 Undetermined; thought to be closer to Payson, IL
- #4 Six miles south of Quincy near Turtle Lake

At 19, David Nelson became a physician; volunteered as a surgeon in the War of 1812

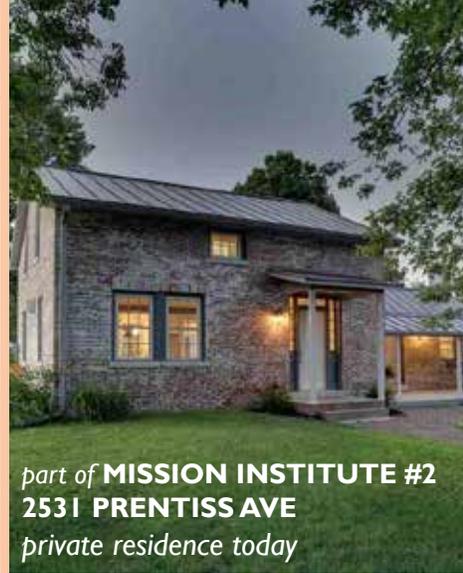
Nelson founded Marion College, Palmyra, MO— the first institution of higher learning chartered by the state

Nelson established Mission Institute #1, Quincy's best known Underground Railroad station

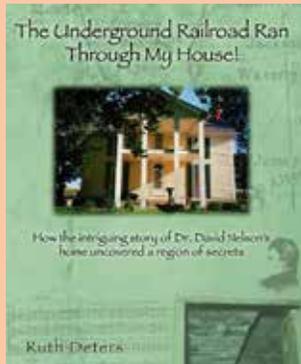
Pro-slavery mob from Missouri burned the Mission Institute; Nelson begins rebuilding



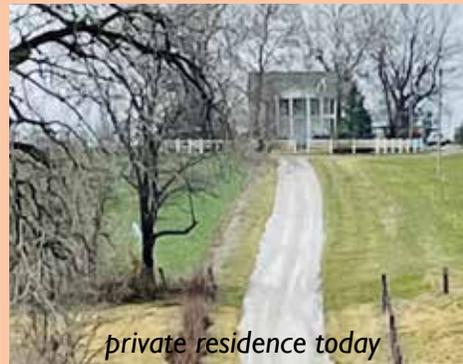
**MADISON PARK
25TH & MAINE**



part of **MISSION INSTITUTE #2
2531 PRENTISS AVE**
private residence today



**MISSION INSTITUTE #1 | DR. DAVID NELSON HOME
5931 STATE ST** private residence today



private residence today

Ruth Deters resided in the former Nelson home for 75 years with her husband Bill. Upon learning of the home's significance, Ruth set about extensive research which culminated in publishing "The Underground Railroad Ran Through My House!" at the age of 81. Her work documents over 32 Underground Railroad sites in addition to the Mission's efforts, only a few of which remain standing today. Deter's book is available for purchase at the Villa Kathrine Gift Shop; 532 Gardner Expressway, SeeQuincy.com and Amazon.com. {In memory of the author, 12.27.1927-3.22.2021}

STORY WITHIN THE STORY

In 1842 a pro-slavery mob from Marion County, MO crossed the frozen Mississippi River to Quincy during the night and burned the buildings of the Mission Institute, 24th & Maine. Nelson rebuilt them and continued his abolitionist activities. Enslaved persons continued to cross the river and make their way to Quincy. In 1853 local papers noted that eleven enslaved persons from farms near Palmyra escaped as a group to Quincy and onward.

1853-1865

ANTI-SLAVERY IN QUINCY The Lincoln Era

By the 1850s the United States had become radically divided by specific regional identities. The South supported slavery, while the North opposed the expansion of slavery into western territories. **In 1853 Quincy was designated an international port with its own custom house.** Its population had migrated from both Southern and Northern states, an influx of German and Irish immigrants, and a small community of African-Americans. This diversity led to strong, differing emotions regarding the expansion of slavery.

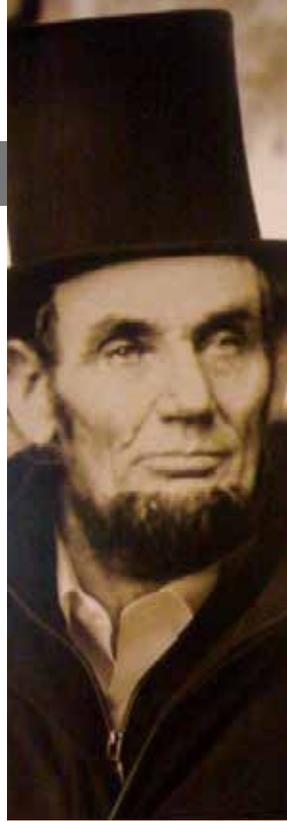
In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act reversed long-standing compromises by providing that each new state of the Union would decide its posture on slavery. In that same year, Abraham Lincoln made his first documented trip to Quincy to address opposition of the bill on behalf of the Congressional candidacy of Archibald Williams, a fellow attorney and comrade of Lincoln's. Sharing Archie's political philosophy, Lincoln delivered an impassioned speech attacking the immorality of slavery.

An exhausted but determined Lincoln would return to Quincy four years later for the sixth of the Great Debates of 1858, arguing slavery issues with his opponent, Stephen A. Douglas. **"Who shall say, I am the superior, and you are the inferior?"** he posed before the crowd of 12,000 attendees. Lincoln lost the senatorial race against Douglas, but was victorious two years later for the Presidency in 1860.

QUINCY'S CIVIL WAR HOSPITALS 1861-1865

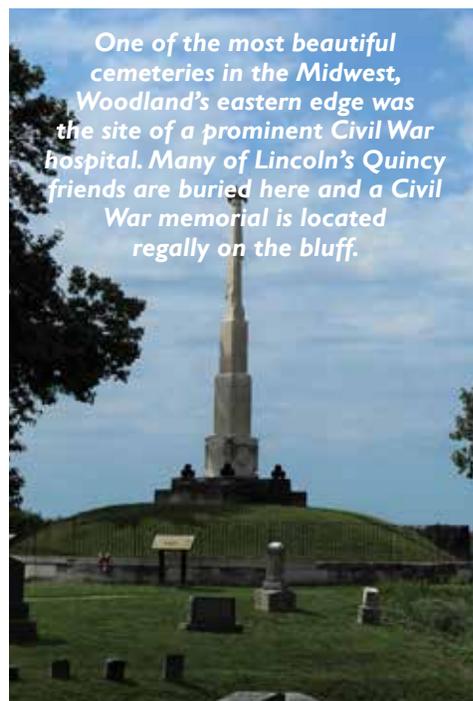
During his 1858 visit, Lincoln saw Quincy as a transportation hub that within three years made **Quincy the Union Army's gateway to the South.** Thousands of the President's troops boarded trains and riverboats on their way to battle, and many returned for care in Quincy's five military hospitals.

Quincians supported thousands of soldiers passing mustering and training, and were known for their generous provisions. Four months after the start of the war, Quincy opened the first of five hospitals. The Needle Pickets and the Good Samaritans, organizations of Quincy women dedicated to the Union cause and war relief, supported the hospitals and sent provisions to the troops. The numbers of soldiers ministered to ranked in the thousands. By 1864, The Quincy Whig reported **"We are glad to learn that Quincy is to be made the general rendezvous for all the sick, wounded and disabled soldiers of our State."**



The Civil War effectively ended on April 9, 1865, when Confederate General Lee surrendered. The Confederacy collapsed, slavery was abolished, and four million enslaved African-Americans were freed. The war-torn nation then entered the Reconstruction Era in a partially successful attempt to rebuild the country and grant civil rights to formerly enslaved people.

On April 15, 1865, the U.S. suffered a devastating loss with the assassination of President Lincoln. The manager of the Quincy telegraph station delivered the news to former Governor and Quincy's founder, John Wood. From there, word spread to a stunned and heartbroken community.



One of the most beautiful cemeteries in the Midwest, Woodland's eastern edge was the site of a prominent Civil War hospital. Many of Lincoln's Quincy friends are buried here and a Civil War memorial is located regally on the bluff.



CHANGING SLAVERY WASHINGTON PARK 5TH & MAINE

Site of the sixth Lincoln-Douglas Debate, the park features a designated plaza plus six Lincoln Storyboards, part of a trail of eighteen.

Across 5th Street is the Lincoln-Douglas Debate Interpretive Center.

Quincy is a Gateway Community of the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area.

AMERICA'S FIRST BLACK PRIEST Augustine Tolton

Augustus Tolton was born in Missouri to Peter Paul Tolton and Martha Jane Chisley Tolton, who were enslaved. His mother, who was raised Catholic, named him after an uncle named Augustus. He was baptized Augustine in St. Peter's Catholic Church near Rensselaer, Missouri. After the Civil War broke out, Peter fled to St. Louis hoping to join the Union. In 1862, Martha, unsure of her husband's fate, escaped to Quincy with her children.

Upon arrival in Quincy, 9-year old Augustine attended St. Boniface School intermittently while working at Harris Tobacco Factory. His family attended the 2,000-member church which was predominantly German. Young Gus learned the German language from attending the church before being forced to leave school due to prejudice.

The Toltons transferred to St. Peter Church, where Fr. Peter McGirr welcomed them and took steps to ensure that Augustine would flourish in his parish school. The tenacious learner studied at St. Peter for the next several years for 3-4 months at a time, working the remainder of each year at the tobacco factory. At the age of 16, Augustine received his First Communion at the Church of St. Peter on the Feast of Corpus Christi. He graduated from St. Peter at the age of 18.

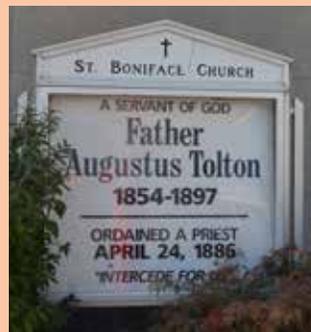
Despite McGirr's support, Tolton was rejected by every American seminary to which he applied. Several Quincy priests outlined a study plan for him and in 1878 St. Francis Solanus College (now Quincy University) enrolled Augustine. Upon graduation he attended the Pontifical Urbaniana University in Rome, where he became fluent in the Italian language as well as studying Latin and Greek. He was ordained at St. John Lateran Basilica.

Augustine returned to Quincy as the first black priest in the United States and celebrated his first Solemn High Mass in the community at St. Boniface in 1886. In that same year, Augustine Tolton became Pastor of St. Joseph Church in Quincy. After three years of overseeing the church & school, Fr. Tolton was reassigned to Chicago due to extreme opposition from a new priest at St. Boniface. While in Chicago, Tolton led the development and construction of St. Monica's Catholic Church as a black "national parish church."

At the age of 43, Augustine collapsed and died the following day at Mercy Hospital as a result of the 1897 heat wave in Chicago. After a funeral which included 100 priests, Tolton was buried in the priests' lot in St. Peter's Cemetery in Quincy, which had been his expressed wish.



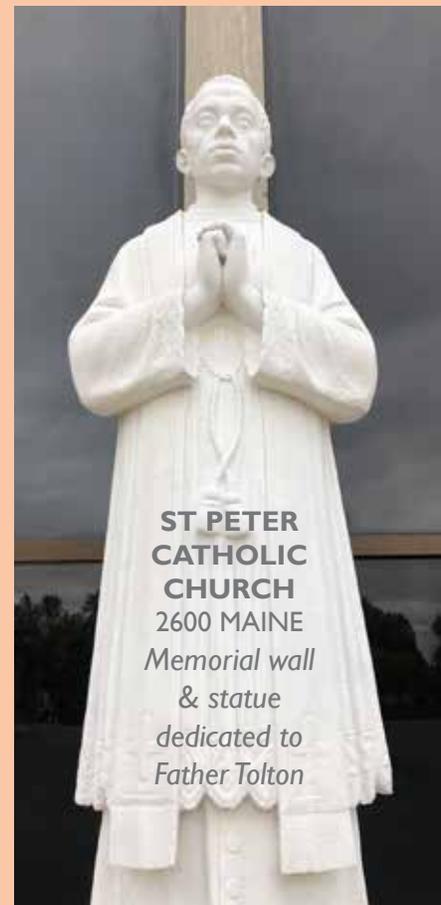
1854-1897



ST BONIFACE CHURCH
117 N 7TH



ST PETER CEMETERY
3300 BROADWAY



ST PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH
2600 MAINE
Memorial wall & statue dedicated to Father Tolton

On June 12, 2019, Pope Francis authorized the promulgation of a "Decree of Heroic Virtue," advancing the cause of Servant of God Augustine Tolton. With the promulgation of the decree of heroic virtue, Tolton was granted the title "Venerable." The next steps would lead to recognition of Tolton's sainthood.

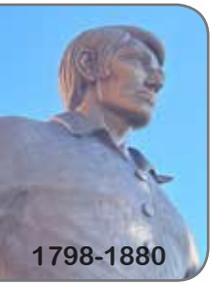
1839-1844

LATTER-DAY SAINTS REFUGE Mormon Migration

"In our time of deep distress Quincy nobly came forward to our relief and like the good Samaritan, poured oil into our wounds and contributed liberally to our necessities." – Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sydney Rigdon

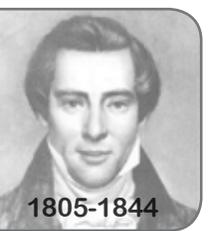
In October of 1838 an order was issued by Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs causing thousands of Latter-day Saints to flee the state and seek refuge in Illinois across the Mississippi River. They were ordered to leave or be killed. By the bitter cold of January 1839, there were hundreds of men, women, and children strung along a 200-mile trail leading east. By February, hundreds of Mormon refugees lined the west bank of the Mississippi River.

Meanwhile, from across the river, citizens of Quincy saw first-hand the miserable drama of human suffering and desired to relieve the Mormon exiles of their homelessness and hunger. A committee was formed and **the small community of Quincy numbering fewer than 2,000 people, somehow absorbed more than 5,000 Mormons**, giving them not only shelter but also food, clothing and jobs. When the Quincy area citizens couldn't provide any more from their own stores, they sent out pleas for assistance as far away as Washington, D.C.



1798-1880

The cry for compassion was led by Quincy's mayor and founder, John Wood. Also the twelfth Governor of Illinois, Wood was the architect of the community's scaffolding of equality and growth. He entertained Joseph Smith and his Nauvoo peers over dinner at his home. *Statue shown left, located at John Wood Community College, 1301 S 48th.*



1805-1844

Joseph Smith Jr. was an American religious leader and founder of Mormonism and the Latter-day Saint movement. At 24, Smith published the Book of Mormon. By the time of his death, 14 years later, he had attracted tens of thousands of followers.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER & FRONT STREET CLAT ADAMS PARK 501 ALL AMERICAN PARK

Crossing point of the Mormons from Missouri to Illinois in the winter of 1839.

The wide expanse of the partially frozen river posed difficulties to the Mormons fleeing Missouri seeking shelter in Quincy. The 2002 monument commemorates the 5,000 exiles who found refuge in Adams County.



THE HISTORY MUSEUM ON THE SQUARE 332 MAINE | 217.214.1888

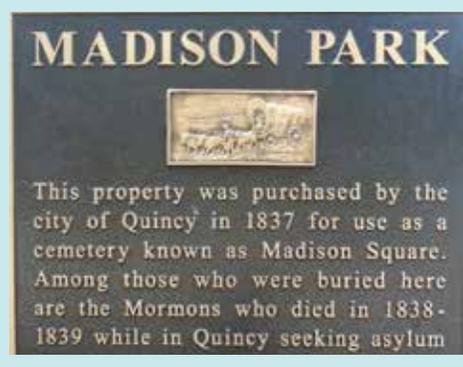
Mormon City of Refuge display, including the keys to the original Nauvoo Temple. Plus rotating exhibits, stained glass gallery & gift shop.

City founder, John Wood overlooks the museum from historic Washington Park, location of a plaque at the site where many Mormons camped during the winter of 1839. Wood was instrumental in welcoming the Saints. > Tues-Sat 10-4 | hsqac.com



MADISON PARK 25TH & MAINE

Among those buried in the former cemetery are Mormons who died in 1838-1839 while in Quincy. In 1857 many bodies were moved to Woodland Cemetery.



Missouri governor issued order forcing 10,000 Latter-day Saints to leave the state

Refugees hunkered down on the river shore waiting for it to freeze to traverse the ice to Quincy

Joseph Smith escaped prison in MO and found his way to his family in Quincy

"They burst the chains of slavery and proclaimed us forever free! Quincy, our first noble city of refuge when we came with our garments stained with blood, should not be forgotten" –Joseph Smith

1838 jan-feb 1839 apr-jun 1839 1844

Violence flared in Missouri to hasten the Mormons' exit, mobs preyed upon them

"A large number of families are encamped on the opposite bank of the Mississippi... If they have been thrown upon our shores destitute, common humanity must oblige us to aid and relieve them all in our power" –The Quincy Whig

For three brief months, Quincy was headquarters of the Latter-day Saints; Smith and the first wave of Saints moved 50 miles north to Commerce to build a new city that would later be Nauvoo

Joseph Smith traveled to Carthage, IL to stand trial but was killed when an angry mob stormed the jailhouse

POTAWATOMI SHELTER Trail of Death Location

The Potawatomi Trail of Death refers to the forced removal by militia in 1838 of some 859 members of the Potawatomi nation from Indiana to reservation lands in what is now eastern Kansas.

In 1817, a year after Indiana became a state, an estimated 2,000 Potawatomi Indians settled along the rivers and lakes in northern Indiana. Around the same time, state and federal governments decided to open those lands to settlement and development by European Americans.

In the days preceding the Potawatomi exodus from Indiana, the militia invaded their community, burning their crops and destroying the village, which consisted of approximately 100 structures. The 660-mile journey from Twin Lakes, Indiana, to Osawatomie, Kansas, began on September 4, 1838. During the 61-day pilgrimage, more than 40 Native Americans died, most of them children. It marked the single largest Indian removal in Indiana history.

For three days in the fall of 1838 (October 8-10), the group of over 850, along with 400 horses and 50 wagons, camped near Quincy, where they went on to cross the Mississippi River on a steam-powered ferry to Missouri. During this time, three children died. While in Quincy, some Potawatomi attended Mass at St. Boniface Catholic Church.

The Trail of Death was declared a Regional Historic Trail in the mid-1990s by the state legislatures of Indiana, Illinois, Kansas and Missouri. There are over 80 Trail of Death markers along the route. They were located at the campsites set up every 15 to 20 miles (a day's journey by walking). **Two Trail of Death markers are located in Quincy.**

PRESERVING SACRED GROUNDS Indian Mounds

At one time the state of Illinois may have had as many as 10,000 mounds, but only about 500 are left— many on private land. **One of the best preserved complexes still evident in the Upper Mississippi River Valley lies on the Quincy bluffs in Indian Mounds Park, with 23 mounds, encompassing 37 acres and adjacent to historic Woodland Cemetery.**

The mounds and nearby earthworks date from 200 BCE-1000 CE. A series of timeline panels in the park tell the Native American history of Quincy. The last one commemorates the Trail of Death.

The purposes of some of the mounds are still shrouded in mystery. Some societies buried their dead in mounds with great ceremony, and all had sacred associations.

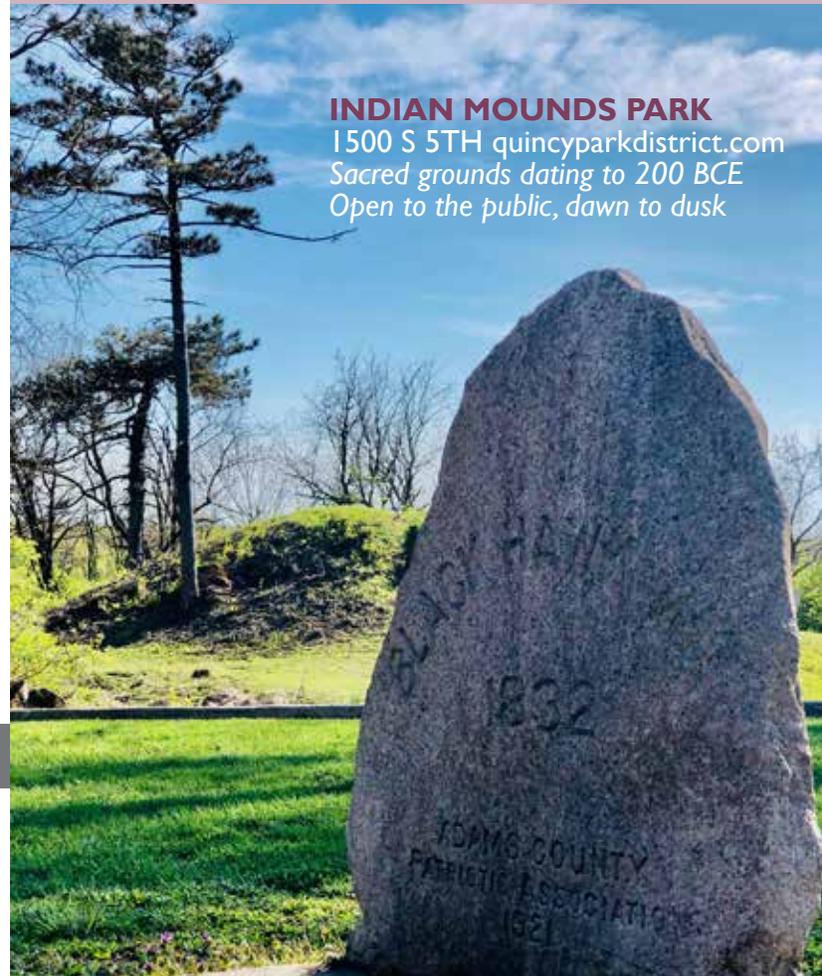


ST BONIFACE CHURCH | 17 N 7TH

Bronze plate on front of the church commemorates the site of mass celebrated by the Potawatomi Indians before crossing the Mississippi on their forced march to Kansas

QUINSIPPI ISLAND | 100 QUINSIPPI ISLAND RD

Encampment site of Potawatomi Indians in October 1838



INDIAN MOUNDS PARK

1500 S 5TH quincyparkdistrict.com

Sacred grounds dating to 200 BCE

Open to the public, dawn to dusk



1829-1870

GERMAN IMMIGRATION Quincy Settlement

German settlers migrated to the Quincy area in increasing numbers during the late 1830s, many drawn by a mixed topography with agricultural potential. Others seeking labor and business opportunities settled on small city lots on the south side on land provided by John Wood. This influenced much of Quincy's historic architecture. Collectively, the South Side German Historic District became known as Caltown, due to the fact that nearly every household possessed a cow.

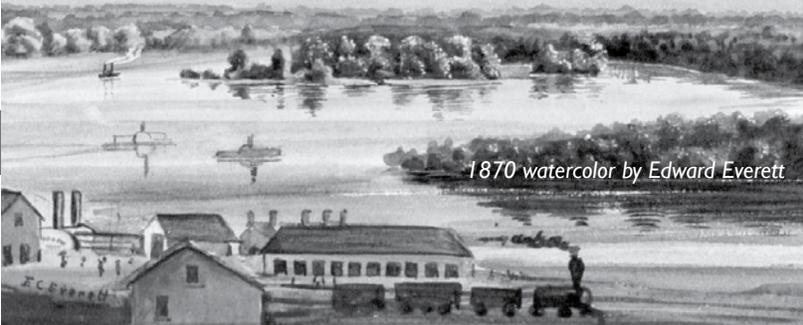
Starting in the 1840s, migrants fled their birthland to escape revolutions among the German provinces. As Quincy's population exploded from the mass migration, its culture was changed by the new arrivals, who brought enviable skills and alternate styles from their home country.



1837-1918

One notable woman of German-American descent from Quincy's Southside was Louise Maertz, an educator and a nurse during the American Civil War. Her volunteer war efforts took her to widespread locations in the U.S. Despite contracting malaria in 1863, she successfully continued her humanitarian endeavors. She helped found the New Orleans Soldiers' Home, donated money to Quincy Blessing Hospital to build a separate men's ward, and was a founding member of the "Friends in Council," chartered in 1869 and the oldest continuing women's literary club in America [12th & State].

Maertz penned several books, including *A New Method for the Study of English Literature*, a biography of her father, and a memoir of her time with the Union Army. Late in life she served on the board of the Quincy Historical Society, and in that capacity saved the John Wood Mansion from demolition in 1907. **A plaque on the Quincy Women's City Club grounds, honoring "Pioneer Women" of the town, salutes Louise.** At her death, her estate funded the establishment of a "waif's home" for African-American children in Quincy.



1870 watercolor by Edward Everett

The early German immigrants to Quincy faced a long and perilous trip, often taking 60 days. Anton Delabar arrived in 1833 and contributed greatly to the young community. He erected the first sawmill in Quincy, as well as the first brewery (pictured above).



GOV. JOHN WOOD MANSION [c. 1835]
425 S 12TH | 217.214.1835

Greek Revival masterpiece built by German craftsmen recruited by its owner and Quincy's founder. Wood provided personal land to German settlers, instrumental in their Quincy roots.
> Tues, Wed, Fri 10-2
Sat 10-4 | hsqac.com



SALEM EVANGELICAL CHURCH [c. 1877]
437 S 9TH | 217.222.0601

Primarily built for its neighboring German congregation; Victorian Gothic style with a wide preaching auditorium feature inside.
saalemquincy.org



TRAPP ROW
303-321 S 10TH
[c. 1889]

Small houses referred to as "Shotgun cottages" were built on 30-ft lots in "Caltown."

Quincy's first German immigrant arrives: Michael Mast, a tailor & lifelong bachelor who owned five rental houses

Quincy's first brewery est.: Anton Delabar Brewery

Quincy is incorporated; Anton Delabar acted as an election judge

Delabar organized the German military company, the Quincy Jaegers, continuing till the Civil War as the nucleus of Co. N of the 16th Illinois Infantry

43 percent of Quincy's 24,052 population was comprised of people of German ancestry

City founder John Wood begins building his mansion, recruiting skilled German-born craftsmen from St. Louis, MO

U.S. Census figures show more than 10,500 Germans settled in Quincy

The German voting block became an important element; the Quincy Whig quoted "His Whig friends say he's the only man in the district who can carry the 'Dutch' vote. Should John Wood ever remove from Quincy, the 'Dutch' would follow him." [Wood served seven terms as mayor of Quincy]

The South Side German Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1992

{check SeeQuincy.com for updated events}

jan GREAT RIVER EAGLE DAYS

may LINCOLN IN THE DISTRICT FESTIVAL / DOGWOOD PARADE

june-sept / saturdays FLAVOR TOURS

june LINCOLN DAYS CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTMENT

sept FRONTIER SETTLEMENT DAYS

sept/oct OKTOBERFEST

1930S AG MUSEUM RURAL QUINCY
217.430.3036 / 217.430.9250 / 217.430.9249

ABE LINCOLN'S TALKING HOUSES 224 W WASHINGTON
PITTSFIELD / 217.285.2971 pikelincoln.com

ALL WARS MUSEUM 1707 N 12TH / 217.222.8641

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