

Route from North Bend, Hamilton County, through  
Auglaize and Putnam Counties [then Indian  
Country].

(Ohio, Fulton County)

Reply of Hon. D. W. H. Howard of

Wauseon, Ohio.

Second Vice-President of the Maumee Valley

Monumental Association

To the U. S. R. R. Circular.

Wauseon, Ohio,

Aug. 22, 1894.

W. E. Siebert,

Ass't. Professor,

Columbus, Ohio.

Dear Sir:

Yours 18th received, and in answer say- That in  
the prosperous days of the "Underground Railroad" I was  
somewhat familiar with its God favored work—and will, in  
brief (after answering your interrogatories) give you my  
early recollections.

(1) I think the main and principal route crossed the Ohio  
river near North Bend<sup>[Hamilton County]</sup>—thence on as direct a line (following  
the streams when practible) to the upper Auglaize and the  
Blanchard's fork of the Auglaize, passing near the Shawnee  
village where is now the city of Wau-pau-ken-ne-ta, and to  
Ooque-noie's town on the Blanchard, where is now the village  
of Ottawa<sup>[Putnam County]</sup>—thence to the Grand Rapids of the Maumee, (where  
the river could be easily forded most of the year), and at  
the Ottawa village of Chief Kin-je-i-ne where all were friendly

North Bend

Hamilton County  
Auglaize Co

Putnam County

Indian friendly

and the poor slave treated kindly, thence by a plain trail  
north to <sup>[Fort]</sup> Malden, Canada.

1816 to 1840

(2) Period of activity of the "road." This I can not answer definitely-but I think from 1816 to '35 or '40.

(3) Method of operation &c. This I cannot answer, other than that my mother (God bless her!) baked the corn bread, and roasted or boiled the venison, and pork for their onward trip to Canada, and my father piloted the poor blacks on the road to freedom.

(4) Memorable incidents. I can recall many, but will cite but one here: Ten miles below the "Rapids" at Roche Teboul (commonly pronounced Roch tebe or Standing Rock) lived one <sup>a slave catcher</sup> Richardson, a Kentuckyan, who made his living by catching slaves. At one time my father, Edward Howard, was piloting a party of <sup>Edward Howard</sup> slaves north, and the trail passed only three miles west of <sup>pilots slaves</sup> Richardson's, of whom it was necessary to keep a close watch, to avoid being surprised by him; and the trip north from my fathers, was always performed in the night; we had a whisper from an Indian friend that this party, (which we had kept concealed in the thick swampy forest near our cabin, for some time), was being watched and would likely be ambushed on the way. The night they moved out on the trail, we (I was then but a boy, but often accompanied my father) took a circuitous route, hoping to elude pursuit, and fearing this, were very cautious, and after veering to our right and re-entering the old trail, my father left a boy to guard, and bring up the rear: we had not advanced more than three miles, when we plainly heard beat of horses' hoofs behind us: the guard was

hidden near the trail, with orders, if necessary to shoot the horse: in a few minutes two horsemen approached the ambuscade, and in a second more, the sharp crack of a rifle echoed through the dark forest, and the poor innocent brute, with a groan, pitched forward to the earth; this checked the pursuing party, and gave stimulous and speed to the feet of the fugitives.

The slave catchers were now afraid to advance, and re-treated over the trail, and the fugitives were permitted, the badly frightened to continue their further march to freedom unmolested.

(5) History of your own connection with the U.G.R.R..

The above incident will give you an idea of the doing and life of a boy and young man, during early days of the "Underground Railroad". Hunger, fatigue, vigilance, and sometimes the report of the hunter's rifle, along the trail will give the history of the Underground Railroad.

(6) Names and present addresses of others, etc. This is easily answered, for all without an exception, who joined in the work in this part of state, have long since passed "on" and at nearly 80 years I am answering your letter: My connection began in 1831.

(7) Short biography. Enclosed I send the scribblings of a reporter of the Toledo Bee, taken on the train, on our way to the Centennial Celebration of Wayne's Battle of "Fallen <sup>timbers</sup> Timbers", August 20th, stolen while in a conversation with a friend, relating a few of the incidents of early life.

Yours truly

D. W. H. Howard.