**QUINDARO UNDERGROUND RAILROAD:**
**A Unique Ethnic Unity in America's Past.**
**by**
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"*From its settlement Quindaro had been the Canada of the escaped slave*." *Clarina Nichols*

**Abstract**
This article defines the part that the town of Quindaro played in the struggle for ethnic social justice on the Territorial Kansas Frontier. The unique characteristics and personalities that combined to create the Quindaro Underground Railroad are presented and analyzed. This Underground Railroad managed to bridge the seemingly insurmountable political gap between the proslavery town of Parkville, Missouri, and the brazenly abolitionist Territorial town of Quindaro. The article emphasizes the Native Wyandot foundation of the town, the town's role in helping rescue the abolitionist movement in the Territory, and provides pathways to future research about Quindaro which can help enrich our understanding of this multi-ethnic collaboration and provide a model for ethnic solidarity today.

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**Introduction**
Ethnic social injustice is one of the greatest obstacles to cultural unity facing our national and global communities today. In the United States, introductory history courses reflect the significance of ethnic conflict as history is divided first into the era of legalized human misery caused by slavery before the civil war, and second, the era from the civil war to the present, consisting of an uneven and incomplete healing of the wound slavery cut into our ethical consciousness. In the midst of the first era arose courageous figures such as Harriet Tubman and John Brown who championed the Underground Railroad that became a key strategy to help defeat slavery. While the civil war legally ended slavery and began the second era, there remains a simmering racism which erupted in the lynching, mutilation, and burning of Will Brown in 1919, the brutal murder of Emmett Till in 1955, and most recently the events in Jena, Louisiana, to name only a few examples. The search for a means to bring about social justice remains a central task of our educational institutions. Without an extensive knowledge of the success of past multi-ethnic collaborations, how are we to overcome social injustices today?

The 1857 town of Quindaro stands as an example of multi-ethnic collaboration that fought social injustice in Territorial Kansas. The contributions of Native, European, and African Americans played a crucial role in re-opening the Territory to abolitionist supporters of a free Kansas and created a unique model of the Underground Railroad. The lessons we learn from Quindaro bring us closer together as we face the continuing task of building a stronger and more just society. Our essay outlines a new understanding of Quindaro, its Underground Railroad, and future research about Quindaro needed to enrich our knowledge of ethnic unity in America's past.

**In the Eye of the Border Storm**
The ancient practice of slavery and its nemesis, the Underground Railroad, both run deep through our history, ultimately having profound influence on the development of the Territorial Kansas town of Quindaro. Hundreds of thousands of slaves kidnapped and brought to America would, through their labor, help create the wealth upon which the country would prosper. But early America was not of one mind on the slave question, as Underground Railroads emerged in 1786 run by the "society of Quaker settlers" wrangling against the wall of colonial support for the peculiar institution (Africans in America, 2007:1). In a politically choreographed dance, states were carefully ushered into the union in tandem, one free and one slave, as the young country expanded westward. As long as this formula held, the institution of slavery, legitimated by the U.S. Constitution, would survive.

Then in 1854 a shockwave struck at the heart of the slavocracy when, for the first time, residents of the newly created Kansas Territory were allowed to vote whether or not their state would enter the union as free or slave. Chance had been introduced that challenged the traditional formula. Slave owners were stunned with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the legal vessel that placed this uncharacteristically democratic option on the menu for state formation. Many millions of dollars in human *property* could be

lost through a state policy of manumission (The Financial Revulsion and Slavery. *Quindaro Chindowan*, November 14, 1857). Resistance to a free Kansas quickly rose to mortally violent proportions as the Territory prepared for a microcosm of what would become the civil war. Conflicts between the forces of slavery who favored Kansas coming into the union as a slave state (who will be referred to as "Border Ruffians") and those who favored a free Kansas (who will be referred to as "Jayhawkers") resulted in the period known as "Bleeding Kansas." [1]

Border Ruffians quickly created a formally legitimate Territorial government at Lecompton, which legalized slavery and the death penalty for anyone hiding or assisting escaping slaves. In response, Jayhawkers forged an insurrectionary government at Topeka that resisted slavery. The forces unleashed by these two antithetical entities resulted in the loss of dozens of lives between 1854-1856 including five people who fell under John Brown's saber attack near Pottawatomie Creek, an act of revenge for the burning and murder of citizens of the free-state stronghold of Lawrence by Border Ruffians (Cohen, 1999:22).

Near the apex of violence a new crisis emerged for Jayhawkers. Their towns were situated primarily inland and had become cut off from re-supply and reinforcements because Border Ruffians blockaded all the Missouri river ports and overland routes into Kansas Territory against them. Nearly every Jayhawker was turned back and all property and supplies were seized by Border Ruffians. Chances for the survival of the free-state cause rested on re-supply, but no one could get through.

At this critical juncture the blatantly Jayhawker town of Quindaro was born in the eye of this border storm (Our Position. *Quindaro Chindowan*, May 13, 1857). Quindaro was built on Wyandot lands that faced the slave state of Missouri just across the river. Quindaro soon became a thorn in the side of Border Ruffians who deemed it a "_____ abolition hole" (Quindaro: Its History. *Quindaro Chindowan*, June 12, 1858).
A conductor on the Quindaro Underground Railroad, Clarina Nichols, writes that:
From its settlement Quindaro had been the Canada of the escaped slave and as such, obnoxious to the pro-slavery element of [the nearby city of] Wyandotte, which was outvoted at the polls and oftener outwitted on the underground rail-road, by what it was pleased to term, the philanthropy of Quindaro (Gambone, Part Three 1973: 427).

Little by little research is uncovering the story of Quindaro but much remains to be detailed. What conditions led to the emergence of both the town of Quindaro and its unique Underground Railroad? Who participated in the Quindaro Underground Railroad and what was the nature of the stations that served its escaping passengers? How was Quindaro able to survive and its Underground Railroad thrive when it was on the very frontline, i.e. the border between the slave state of Missouri and Kansas Territory? To begin to answer these questions one looks to the Huron, that group of American Natives who became known as the "Wyandot," and after whom contemporary Wyandotte County, Kansas, would be named. [2]

**The Wyandot Roots of the Quindaro Underground**
In 1843, more than a decade before Quindaro's opening revived the Jayhawker movement the Wyandot Tribe was forced to relocate from their Ohio reserve to Kansas Territory. After a tragic first winter in the Kansas River bottom, the Wyandot eventually purchased land from the Delaware Tribe that stretched westward from the mouth of the Kansas River. At a location three miles up the Missouri River, a magnificent natural limestone landing was discovered that would later serve as the port of Quindaro. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act signaled the decline of the Wyandot dominion over their new reserve, seeing many of the tribesmen moving to Indian land in Oklahoma (Smith, 1973: 131-147). Those who remained became bound up in the border wars that would soon follow.

[Map of the Wyandott Purchase showing the locations of Parkville, Missouri, and Quindaro and Wyandott Cities in Kansas Territory. Image Courtesy of Wyandotte County Historical Society and Museum.]
On the land that Wyandots' had purchased, communities were begun consisting of well-educated tribesmen with some professionals among them. They were aware of the Underground Railroad and had hosted a maroon community of former slaves at "Negrotown" located on their Ohio tribal reserve at Upper Sandusky Ohio, beginning in 1808. "Some of the blacks living in the area [Negrotown] were runaway

slaves who had escaped from their masters in slave holding states and sought refuge on [Wyandot] Indian Land" (Wyandot County's Negrotown. *Daily Chief-Union*, September 19-22, 1984).
Wyandot Native and Tribal historian Genevieve Sweetgrass, writes, "In Ohio, slaves were picked up by traveling Indians and brought to the southern shore of Lake Erie where they were left in the custody of the Wyandot Nation." Slaves became part of the community according to Sweetgrass and were allowed to remain on tribal lands:
… as long as they did their share of hunting and other work for the tribal good until Indian groups were going to Canada, either by land through Detroit River route or most often, slaves were taken by boat, island to island, across Lake Erie until the Canadian shore was reached." (Personal Communication, Sweetgrass: 2004).

John Stewart, a black missionary in the Methodist church, lived and preached among the Wyandots at the Methodist mission established at the Ohio reserve (Mitchell, 1999: iii). Also living among the Wyandots was an educated free black named George Wright, who along with his family were adopted members of the Wyandot Tribe (Smith, 1973: 97). George Wright had been born at Negrotown at the Ohio Wyandot reserve and followed the tribe's move to Kansas territory in 1843 (Wyandot County's Negrotown. *Daily Chief-Union*, September 19-22, 1984).

The Wyandot belief in abolitionism was tested soon after their arrival on the frontier. Mrs. Lucy B. Armstrong, a respected member of the Wyandot tribe, addressed an old settlers' reunion held at Bismark Grove, Kansas, in 1879. She remembered the evening in 1848 when head Wyandot Chief, George I. Clark, had urged his members to "hold on in our opposition to the slave power"(Gleed, 1880: 87-88). Armstrong remained proud of the fact that her tribe was "the first in the Territory… to oppose slavery" (ibid) as the Wyandot council enacted a law forbidding the introduction of slaves into their land in 1843. She went on to explain that:
We had our border ruffian war before you had yours. We were mobbed; and after my husband's death, the ruffians would sometimes shoot into my yard and call us abolitionists. More than three-fourths of the Wyandots were anti-slavery. Those who were proslavery were descendants of Virginians who had been taken prisoners (ibid).

The potential for alliance between African and Native American populations is founded on the mutual dislike held by both against a government that enslaved and murdered their peoples and continually treated them as disposable instruments. There was every reason for Wyandots to help their African American contemporaries find freedom. The Wyandots had created a near perfect farming community at their Ohio reserve assimilating to white expectations more than any other native tribe, yet had been rewarded by a forced removal to the frontier when whites hungered for new farmlands. The Wyandot's sympathies and potential resistance to slavery were also understood by Border Ruffian observers.

It was Judge William C. Price, a leader in Atchison's Missouri proslavery Democratic Party, who realized that the Wyandots had been aware of the Underground Railroad in Ohio, and Price feared the Wyandots would continue to be involved in the Underground Railroad on their Kansas Territorial lands. "No one supposed that they would buy land of another tribe; such a thing had not been thought of" (Smith, 1973: 120). When Wyandots bought land from the Delaware and obtained control of the mouth of the Kansas River, Price was "fearful that it was not for our best interests; there were too many white men in the tribe. *Then the tribe came recently from Ohio where there was much opposition to slavery and where existed the most successful underground railroad for conveying slaves to Canada*" (ibid, emphasis added).
The Wyandots were in Kansas Territory and were sympathetic to the Jayhawker cause, had a strategic location and controlled a vital Missouri River site with access to an excellent steamboat landing. The conditions for the birth of Quindaro were nearing conjunction. All that remained to join Wyandot abolitionists and Jayhawkers was an event that threatened the survival of the Jayhawker movement in Kansas.

**Quindaro's Opening**
In an article entitled "Quindaro History," John Walden, managing editor of the *Quindaro Chindowan* Newspaper, explained that:

It was during the reign of terror, whilst Kansas City, Delaware, Leavenworth, and Atchison, and every other town on the Missouri was under pro-slavery [sic] control, that Gov. Robinson conceived of the plan and determined to establish a point at which free state men could enter or pass from the Territory in safety. When it was almost impossible for any of this class to pass from the Territory at any of the towns established on the river, several had at different times, by the assistance of Mr. A. Guthrie embarked here and passed down the river in security. This, probably, first suggested the selection of this point as the site of a future town intended to become the Free State landing on the Missouri (Quindaro: Its History. *Quindaro Chindowan*, June 12, 1858).

However, Quindaro would not be built in a climate conducive to Jayhawker politics. Just as the Wyandots had suffered the consequences of their anti-slavery position in the late 1840s, abolitionists like Clarina Nichols have left us vivid examples of the kinds of intimidation Jayhawkers experienced at the hands of Border Ruffians even before they set foot in Kansas Territory.

Several Missourians met our party at Kansas City, even came on-board before we landed and told all sorts of frightful stories about Kansas, with the evident intention of preventing us from going further…Missourians met several of our party yesterday a few miles from here, and told them we were all 'starving to death at Lawrence' and that they 'had given the women and children from their own provisions what they could ill spare'"(Kansas News-Letter From Mrs. Nichols. *Weekly Republican*, November 18, 1854).

Border Ruffians went beyond verbal harassment and used violence to turn back eastern Jayhawkers attempting to enter the Territory, and those who did get through faced the continuous threat of attack. One could hardly conceive the state of affairs during this period. The Reverend Pardee Butler was "tarred and cottoned" and sent down the river on a raft from Atchison. George M. Brown and Garns Jenkins were "waylaid between Kansas City and Westport," and Territorial Governor Reeder had to …go down the river in disguise while at Leavenworth the reign of terror was complete. Teams sent to that city for supplies of provisions and goods were seized and the drivers held as "prisoners of war." *The roads were strewn with dead bodies, thirteen mutilated corpses being found in one place. The "regulators" decided that all Free-State men who did not leave would be killed, and they were sent down the river by hundreds* (Wyandott. Kansas City Journal, February 17, 1882 emphasis added).

By the summer of 1856, Border Ruffians had completely blocked Jayhawker reinforcements from entering any port along the Missouri River. Seen from the Jayhawk standpoint, it was a grave understatement that a "free state port was needed in the Territory" (Morgan, 1911: 103; Phifer, n.d.; Clothing Received. *Daily New York Times*, Randolph, December, 1856).[3]

Charles Robinson, the Quindaro Town Company secretary and agent for the New England Emigrant Aid Society, met Abelard Guthrie in July of 1856. Guthrie is one of many whites who had been adopted into the Wyandot tribe through marriage. He married Quindaro Nancy Brown, the daughter of one of the Wyandot Chiefs, Adam Brown. As options dwindled for a Jayhawker port, Robinson negotiated with Guthrie and his wife, Quindaro Nancy Brown Guthrie, for the purchase of 693 acres of land from members of the Wyandot tribe to begin a town (Wyandott. *Kansas City Journal*, February 17, 1882). Guthrie named the town "Quindaro" in honor of his wife's key diplomatic role in securing the land for the future town (Old Quindaro. *The St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, October 27, 1895). When Quindaro opened as a Free State town, it was the only freely accessible landing for Jayhawker immigrants on the river. Robinson, whose plan to create Quindaro would destroy the blockade against Jayhawker emigrants, was encouraged when "*the whole Free State world seemed bound for Quindaro*" (Wyandott. Kansas City Journal, February 17, 1882, emphasis added). [4]

Quindaro symbolized the beginning of the end of the Border Ruffian movement to bring Kansas into the union as a slave state. The Jayhawker emigrants, who disembarked at Quindaro's prime limestone riverboat landing, brought with them life saving supplies and a knowledge of eastern Underground Railroad tactics. [5]

**The Quindaro Underground Railroad**

Quindaro was not only an openly Jayhawker town, but also created its own cluster of Underground Railroad stations. The existing sympathy for abolitionism among many Wyandots coupled with their resentment over forced removal, helps explain how an Underground Railroad could become operational so quickly in the newly opened town. A letter, written on January 24, 1858, by Samuel Tappan (a member of the first Jayhawker party to arrive in Kansas Territory) to General Higginson, an enthusiastic eastern Jayhawker minister who had financed Underground Railroads in the past, provides crucial evidence about Quindaro. Tappan writes that the Underground Railroad has been and is in "full blast" noting that several persons have taken the train with only a few "accidents." He implores Higginson:
…Our funds in these hard times have nearly run out, and we need some help, for the present is attended with considerable expense. If you know of any one desirous in helping the cause, just mention our case to him, and ask him to communicate with Walter Oakley at Topeka, James Blood or myself at Lawrence, or *Sam C. Smith at Quindaro* (Sheridan 1998: 49, emphasis added).

Because of the need for secrecy, it is rare to find as much information about so many sites with associated Underground Railroad officers in one document as is found in the Tappan letter.[6] The letter refers not only to the existence of the Underground Railroad in Quindaro, but by its date implies the railroad had been in operation the previous year of 1857, the date of the opening of Quindaro. Smith (secretary and aid to Robinson) is introduced as a central figure of the Quindaro Underground Railroad. The Tappan letter links three station masters and connects the station of Quindaro, (as an *intentional* and organizationally significant site), with the Lawrence and Topeka stations in the highly covert operation of the eastern Territorial Underground Railroad. The letter both reinforces Nichol's report that the Quindaro Underground Railroad was in existence from the first year of the town's life, and emphasizes the scope of the organization within which Quindaro was bound.

Most known maps of the Territorial Kansas Underground Railroad focus on the famous Lane Trail that led north from Topeka to the Nebraska border, e.g. Connelly's map shown below (Connelly, 1918: 610). Quindaro is listed as a site, but we are only beginning to understand the full range of personalities who conducted the underground trains at Quindaro.
[William Connelly's Route and Station Map of the Territorial Kansas Underground Railroad. Image from Connelly, 1918.]
However, Charles Leonhardt, a member of the militant secret society of the Jayhawkers known as the Danites, did leave a pencil drawn map of the Territorial Underground Railroad in1858. (Leonhardt, 1857-58). [7]
[Leonhardt's Pencil Drawn Route and Station Master Map of the Territorial Kansas Underground Railroad circa 1857-1858. "Complete map: Quindaro Segment. Images Courtesy of Kansas State Historical Society]
Leonhardt's map is the first known document to identify John Walden as a person associated with the Underground Railroad in Quindaro. The name "Walden" was penciled in next to "Quindaro" and this referred to Rev. John Walden, editor of the *Quindaro Chindowan*.
[John Walden, Editor of the Quindaro Chindowon and identified as a station master on Leonhardt's map. Image Courtesy of University of Chicago Library]
The Leonhardt map adds another tantalizing path of research for students of the Quindaro Underground Railroad. Leonhardt's accompanying notes list Quindaro as one of the stations on the Underground Railroad "North of the Kaw River" along with "Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Soldiers' Creek, Grasshopper Falls, Holton, Seneca, and New Brothers, Pittsburg …. " (ibid).
However, even Leonhardt's map, representing a *single* name by each station, implies only a single station/conductor at each of the towns. But Quindaro's Underground Railroad was structured differently than most rural stations of the period.

**A Cluster of Stations and Conductors**
Clarina Nichols left a rich description of stations and escapes through Quindaro. [8] Nichols was for a time co-editor of the *Quindaro Chindowan* and one of the conductors on the Quindaro Underground Railroad (Novak, 1996: 11; Eichoff: 2006: 134-144). In 1882, the editor of the *Wyandotte Commercial Gazette* invited Nichols to write her reminiscences of Quindaro. Her letters to the editor contain one of the few surviving eye witness accounts of Quindaro Underground Railroad operations. She explains that a town residence known as "Uncle Tom's Cabin was dedicated to emancipation without proclamation, and as such

one of the most convenient stations on the Underground Railroad, which had several branches and termini in the interior of the Territory. Uncle Tom's boys could tell of some exciting escapes from Quindaro to the interior, by day and night"(Gambone 1974: 540-543). She noted that only one of the slaves who came through Quindaro was ever caught and returned. In 1858 she carried manacles removed by Uncle Tom's boys from a slave who "had escaped from the vicinity of Parkville, having drawn one foot from the encircling iron and brought the chain still attached to the other, in his hand"(ibid). The slave concealed himself in brush just above the Quindaro landing and was later taken to Leavenworth by freight wagon driven by a Mr. T. In route Mr. T passed by Bartles Hotel near Quindaro and was greeted with "Hello T--, where going…to Lawrence? What you got in your boxes …" to which Mr. T responded, "Well, what do you think?" and the "…trembling freight was carried leisurely and safely through" (ibid). Mr. T had been known by Bartles in Indiana as a conductor on their Underground Railroad (ibid).

Nichols described her own role in the Underground Railroad at Quindaro. She helped a passenger named Caroline who was brought to her home by her neighbor Fielding Johnson who pleaded, "You must hide Caroline. Fourteen slave hunters are camped on the [Quindaro] Park - her master among them"(ibid). Caroline had been beaten, her arm broken, and needed shelter. Nichols hid and consoled Caroline all that night until "Seven o'clock in the morning the slave-hunters rode out of town into the interior. When evening fell again Caroline and another girl of whom the hunters were in pursuit found a safe conveyance to Leavenworth friends" (ibid).
Nichols identified herself, Fielding Johnson, Mr. T, and Uncle Tom's boys as conductors and Uncle Tom's Cabin and Nichols' home as two stations. Because of his role in hiding Caroline, Fielding Johnson's residence is a potential station at Quindaro. [9]

Samuel Tappan's previously noted letter to General Higginson asking for funds to continue Underground Railroad operations in the Territory informs us that Sam C. Smith participated in the Quindaro Underground Railroad as an officer. Smith took out an advertisement in the *Quindaro Chindowan* as a forward and commission merchant along with his business partner Joel Grover (Advertisement. *Quindaro Chindowan*, May 13, 1857). Joel Grover is present at Quindaro in May, 1857 (Crosswhite, 1981:1). Grover writes the word, "Quindaro" on the inside cover of his diary, and below it the words, "Lawrence, Prairie Home" followed by "Kansas, Aug. 31, 1858," denoting two residences (ibid). At Grover's farm, (his prairie home) his barn becomes a station on the Underground Railroad where, in 1858, John Brown and the slaves he rescued from Missouri were harbored on their way to Canada (Sheridan, 1998: 133-134). Smith's close association with Grover establishes another connection between the participants within the eastern Kansas Underground Railroad at Lawrence and Quindaro. We are also intrigued with the possibility that Joel Grover may have been conducting underground trains while at Quindaro. The presence of all these personalities at Quindaro illustrates the observations of one historian that "many of the officers of the Underground Railroad lived at Quindaro" (Morgan, 1911: 227).

Rev. Sylvester D. Storrs was a resident of Quindaro, and minister of the Quindaro Congregational Church, arriving in 1857. Rev. Storrs founded the "Andover Band" of ministers who were committed to an anti-slavery position and who met regularly at his home in Quindaro. Mrs. Storrs later writes that "before the war, fleeing fugitives from slavery often passed our way. They always found sympathy when they reached our side of the river" (Storrs, 1904:84-85). One slave found refuge and passage on one of the Quindaro trains and:
...the conductor of the underground road that day was one of us. Many such exciting incidents gave interest to the passing days ... the Band' (Andover Band) met several times at our Quindaro Home. My memory dwells lovingly on those gatherings, where our dear brothers, Bodwell and Cordley, led in songs (ibid).[10]
Rev. Cordley is a well-known associate of the Jayhawkers in Lawrence KT, and represents another link between Quindaro and that town. Rev. Storrs, Abelard Guthrie and a "Mr. Brown" are portrayed acting together in underground intrigue in another important document about the Quindaro Underground Railroad, the Mudge letter.

Benjamin Franklin Mudge came to Quindaro in 1861 because of his "strong anti-slavery feelings" (Mudge, 1991: 218). Often conductors would be required to hide slaves for periods of time before they could be moved safely. Additional mouths to feed and shelter account for the continual need for financial support of the Underground Railroad, as long winters might extend for months at a time until overland travel was

possible. While in this vulnerable circumstance, the conductor was open to potential dangers. Mudge tells us of just such an incident at his residence in Quindaro in a letter to his brother, Rev. Zachariah Atwell Mudge, dated February 27, 1862. "About two weeks ago 8 contrabands came over from Mo. one night, & we took a woman & 3 children to keep till they could get a better place" (ibid). The slave's master lived in sight of Quindaro across the Missouri River. A local (Wyandot) Indian alerted Mudge that the master was coming after his slaves. Mudge "went over to Mr. Storrs' and borrowed his gun" (ibid).

The slave hunters confronted Mudge late at night saying, "their master is here and we have come for those blacks that ran away from the other side of the river" (ibid). Mudge refused to surrender the slaves. Knowing that trouble was imminent Mudge asked his sons to "go over to Mr. Storrs & get aid" (ibid). As the slave hunters loomed in the moonless dark outside his home, his sons soon "came back with Mr. S. Storrs & Mr. Brown, a lawyer" (ibid). The slave hunters thought better than to fight against the growing odds and quickly left, and Mudge noted that "we have not seen them since" (ibid). Mudge continued saying that "we kept the slaves till Monday afternoon when I took them out 3 miles & on Tues. Mr. Learned & myself took them and one other contraband to Leavenworth" (ibid). Mudge believed that the colonel of the Regiment at Quindaro was proslavery "…which emboldened the slave catchers…" (ibid). Mudge made a significant point which we will return to later when he added that: ...their master offered $50 a head to recover his slaves. The blacks are frequently coming over on the ice & very often go back to get others away. Leav. [Leavenworth] is full of contrabands (ibid: 221).

As a conductor on the Underground Railroad, Mudge used his home as a station and safe house, harboring four of the eight contraband slaves for nearly two weeks. Mudge names a Mr. Learned as a participant in the Underground Railroad train to Leavenworth. The remaining four contraband slaves were cared for by other conductors not mentioned in Mudge's letter, and represent additional unnamed conductors associated with Quindaro. [11]

In the winter of 1861-1862, George Washington, a slave owned by Jesse Miller whose farm was located near the contemporary K.C.I. airport in Platte County, Missouri, broke free with the aid of a fellow slave and took the well established escape route through Parkville to Quindaro where unnamed conductors assisted his movement to Leavenworth (Johnson 1999:115).

Unlike most stations on the Underground Railroad which were isolated and generally about a day's wagon ride apart, Quindaro was home to a cluster of stations and conductors. Quindaro's Underground Railroad is structured in a more urban model than was usually present in the western Underground Railroad.
It is noteworthy that both Nichols and Johnson mention the Parkville-Quindaro escape route across the Missouri River to Quindaro. But how could such a successful escape route exist when Parkville's founder was targeted by Atchison's Border Ruffians for publicly advocating free elections in Kansas Territory and when Quindaro, the brazenly abolitionist river town, had been openly accused of stealing slaves? Documentary evidence and oral histories may help in understanding this seemingly contradictory circumstance.

**The Parkville-Quindaro Escape Route**
In one account of the routes used on the Territorial Underground Railroad, "the eastern trails [routes of the Underground Railroad] came primarily through Quindaro, Lawrence, and Oskaloosa. These routes carefully skirted towns that were considered proslavery centers, such as Franklin and Lecompton" (Novak, 1996: 11). It is reasonable that avoiding Border Ruffian towns decreased the probability of intercepting an Underground Railroad run, yet the Parkville-Quindaro slave route was a different matter.
Parkville was begun by George Park, a newspaper publisher sympathetic to the Jayhawker cause. Although he oversaw the development of a town on the proslavery side of the Missouri river, his beliefs drew small shopkeepers and farmers around him who settled in the town. Slave powered plantations were spread over the valleys and river bluffs that surrounded Parkville, but in the heart of the town, private sentiment swayed toward a free Kansas. Morality (religiously inspired), economics (through the position of free-laborites), and simple human concern for freedom, might sway a person's actual loyalty away from the Border Ruffian cause even though he or she lived on the edge of slave country. Park's intellectual leadership led to a covertly liberal niche in Missouri.

At the most basic level, "The … town [Parkville] … could be plainly seen from Quindaro up the river on the opposite shore" (Old Quindaro. The St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat, October 27, 1895). When Parkville is understood through Abelard Guthrie's memoirs, they were politically and economically close as well.

Guthrie kept a daily diary during the Quindaro years. He documented numerous visits between Parkville and Quindaro residents. Quindaro Nancy Brown-Guthrie spent the night in Parkville to attend a protracted Presbyterian church conference (Guthrie, 1858:7), and a resident of Parkville, Mr. A. Goodyear, spent the night in Quindaro at Guthrie's residence for social and business talks (ibid:24). Mr. Park visited Guthrie's home to retrieve a deed for land bought from Wyandot native Boyd Peacock with Park and Guthrie as partners; and Park left a railroad charter with Guthrie during the same visit (ibid:6). A building started by Park in Quindaro is reported in the *Quindaro Chindowan* as being a five story stone building under construction on Levy Street (Mr. Park of Parkville, Mo. *Quindaro Chindowan*, May 23, 1857). Guthrie, Governor Robinson and Judge Wright took the Parkville-Quindaro Ferry to Parkville to discuss business concerning railroad matters (Guthrie, 1858:12). Even earlier events initiated alliances between leaders of the two towns. In 1855 George Park had his press thrown in the river by Border Ruffians incited by Border Ruffian leader, David Atchison, because of Park's newspaper's support for free elections in Kansas Territory, a stance for which Park's life was threatened. In 1858 it was not uncommon for Guthrie to make weekly visits to Parkville to buy food, dry goods, have grain ground, and to settle land purchase arrangements as well as discuss legal proceedings in which he was involved (Guthrie, 1858:51).

One reporter explains that "As practically the whole population of Quindaro consisted of Jayhawkers from the East, Quindaro became a station of the underground railroad. Citizens of Quindaro owned a fleet of steamers and these all assisted in the traffic" (Phifer, n.d.). Was the Parkville-Quindaro ferry a means to freedom for slaves? Travel through this route would also have been possible without riding the ferry by simply launching skiffs, logs, and horses across the river to Quindaro. However, the captain of the Parkville-Quindaro ferry, Otis Webb (a resident of Quindaro and after whom a 100 by 26 foot steamer packet was named), had ample opportunity to visit Parkville (several times daily during good weather based on his advertisements in the *Quindaro Chindowan*. "The Quindaro and Parkville Ferry." *Quindaro Chindowan*, December 19, 1857; "The Quindaro and Parkville Ferry." *Quindaro Chindowan*, May 15, 1858) and through these frequent contacts to develop affable relationships with the Parkville townsfolk and to know and appreciate their political views. Active support of escapes by Parkville residents could have resulted from as little effort as turning one's head at just the right moment to allow secreted passengers to be stowed away on the ferry; the upshot was no great risk on their part. Motive and opportunity were certainly present.

It is important to remember that there was no wall of slavery in Missouri, nor was there a totality of abolitionism in Quindaro; the former saw resistance to Border Ruffians in the form of Park's newspaper columns favoring free elections in the Territory and the latter actually hosted a proslavery rally and had for its first town company president a man who owned slaves, the Wyandot Native Mr. Joel Walker. Through the complicated reality of history we find a most cordial relationship between the leaders of two towns who would at first seem to be at the longest of odds with each other. Under these conditions secreted slave passengers on the Parkville-Quindaro ferry, i.e. the packet *Otis Webb*, are not at all out of the question. No matter how a slave found himself on the southern bank of the Missouri river at that point, open doors awaited him at the Quindaro end of the Parkville-Quindaro escape route. One of these entries was on land close to the Missouri River owned by Elisha Sortor whose family had a long history of support for the Underground Railroad reaching back into New York State.

Elisha Sortor accumulated farmland on the southern and western borders of the town of Quindaro, the later not far from the Parkville crossing. One of the family homes was located in Sortor Hollow just west of historic (and present day) Quindaro park. Although the structure no longer survives, this residence was a station on the Underground Railroad. Elisha Sortor's great-granddaughter-in-law, Beulah Sortor, recalled the country house in Sortor Hollow:

The house was built into the side of a hill, and there was an apple orchard there and there were living quarters down below. And Norman, [Elisha's grandson and Beulah's husband] told me that there were two

rooms in the back, and he said this was supposed to have been a safe house for the underground railroad …when they took the slaves in, they kept quiet about it, it was protection for the slaves, and protection for themselves (Sortor Interview, 1999). [12]

The stories of Robert Monroe, an escaped slave who made his home in Quindaro after escaping to Quindaro over the Parkville-Quindaro escape route, and Elisha Sortor continue to be intertwined even today in the oral histories of both of their families.

The story of the Monroe's is related by a family member and resident of the contemporary neighborhood of Quindaro, Mr. Jesse Hope. Hope's ancestor, Mr. Robert Monroe had escaped to Quindaro in the 1860s. The Sortor story is told by the late Beulah Sortor, whose ancestors Elisha and Effe Anne Sortor came to Quindaro in 1857. Elisha Sortor was a conductor on the Quindaro Underground Railroad.
Robert Monroe escaped to Quindaro from Missouri from the area around Parkville, Missouri. Jesse Hope relates that his family came to this area through the Underground Railroad and his great-great-grandfather, Robert Monroe, is buried at the Quindaro cemetery.
During really cold weather, the [Missouri] river would freeze over, and they walked across the ice. They hid in stocks of corn and basically lived outside waiting for the time to cross the river. When my great-great-grandfather came over here from Parkville, he settled in Sortor's hollow, over off of Emmon's drive (Hope Interview, 1999).
Jesse Hope's family history included the Elisha Sortor family:
I know that they [the Sortors] were abolitionists. And they managed to help escaping slaves. I know my grandfather did work for them later, he did some washing. There was generally a good feeling about the Sortors. We had one of the Sortors, Judge Norman Sortor, come to our family reunion with his wife (ibid).
Beulah Sortor said that she and her husband, Judge Norman Sortor, the great grandson of Elisha Sortor, had attended the Monroe family reunion because of the past association between the Monroe and Sortor families. Together, the Monroe/Sortor oral histories reflect the multicultural cooperation that existed on the Underground Railroad in Quindaro.

The late Geneva Creal, Jesse Hope's aunt, recalled the family story of the escape of her relatives to Quindaro:
...and they came by night … and they hid in these shucks of fodder as they ran. But when the owners discovered they were gone, they turned the dogs a loose…and they ran for all they were worth, until they could get to the river's edge. And the dogs were gaining ground on them, but they got to the edge … they came from that area [Parkville] into the Quindaro area. And that's how they escaped (Creal Interview, 1999).

The late Quindaro Historian, Orrin Murray said that:
In 1864 after receiving word that his Parkville master planned to sell his slaves, Murray's relatives sprang into action. Grandpa went down to the [Missouri] River and put his family in a skiff. Then he swam the horse across beside the boat. He got to Quindaro and some white people in the Underground Railroad took him in (Eckland, February 1976).

Murray says, "the Sortor family residence was the biggest [Underground Railroad] depot there was because whenever anyone in need came by, the family would give him something to eat and a place to sleep" (Rupert, February 1983).

The Hope, Sortor, Creal, Murray, Johnson, and Nichol's reports describe slaves crossing the Missouri River by the Parkville-Quindaro escape route to Quindaro. Further, Murray's comments extend the range of time through which the Underground Railroad operated through the Parkville-Quindaro escape route to the year 1864.

If slaves were still seeking shelter at Quindaro because of the fear of being returned to slavery in 1862 (noted in the Mudge letter) and 1864 (in the case of Owen Murray's explanation), then the label *contraband* (meaning freed slave) noted by Mudge, is misleading, and the use of the term itself does not signal the end of the need for Underground Railroads. Though defined as a free black person by the Union Army,

contrabands lived with the potential for *recapture* because Border Ruffians did not recognize the legally free status assigned them by the Union. The Underground Railroad was necessary at Quindaro, even during and near the end of the civil war, and even for those labeled contrabands.
Parkville and Quindaro were physically close enabling and encouraging the ease of escapes, especially when townspeople from both sides of the Missouri River worked together. Clarina Nichols, James Johnson, Jesse Hope, Geneva Creal, and Orrin Murray refer directly to Parkville as the point of departure from Missouri in their accounts of escaped slaves. Geographic proximity and important residents of both towns who shared similar views favorable to the Free-State party and who owned property in each other's towns suggest a material and ideological foundation for the Parkville-Quindaro escape route.

**Conclusion**
The birth of Quindaro and its Underground Railroad are realized from several interesting and somewhat ironic circumstances. The U.S. Government's decision to force Wyandots to move from their Ohio reserve to the Territorial frontier in1843 resulted in their tribe establishing control over highly strategic land at the mouth of the Kaw River. Wyandots brought with them sympathy for abolitionism, and even though a small number brought slaves, the majority of the tribe actively resisted slavery in the territory before 1854 including enacting a tribal ordinance against slavery on their land. They also presented a proposal to the National legislature to prohibit slavery in Kansas Territory. National politics resulted in the Kansas-Nebraska Act which created a backdrop for the confrontation between Border Ruffians and Jayhawkers on the Missouri-Kansas Territorial border. The resulting Border Ruffian blockade of Jayhawker immigrants to Kansas Territory created a desperate need for a town that would reinforce Jayhawker strongholds that had been cut off by the blockade for months. The relationship between Abelard Guthrie and Charles Robinson soon created an alliance that brought about the birth of Quindaro on land made available by the Wyandot tribe with the help of Nancy Quindaro Brown Guthrie. A river port blockade intended to kill the Jayhawker movement in the Territory actually created the circumstances for its continued success and provided initial windfall profits for Jayhawk merchants of the town of Quindaro.
From its beginning, Quindaro hosted an array of conductors and a cluster of Underground Railroad stations not typical of the usual arrangement of isolated stations found in the countryside. Conductors at these stations include Clarina Nichols, Fielding Johnson, Sam C. Smith, Elisha Sortor, Benjamin Franklin Mudge and the not yet fully identified participants who contributed at "Uncle Tom's Cabin" as well as the associates of the Andover ministers. By way of the Leonhardt map and notes, *Quindaro Chindowan* editor John Walden is now identified as a candidate for officer/conductor among the Quindaro Jayhawkers. Mr. Joel Grover is a known Lawrence conductor who along with Mr. T and Mr. Learned should become the object of further research concerning their roles in the Quindaro Underground Railroad.
The hub of documented Underground Railroad stations at Quindaro include Clarina Nichols' home, Uncle Tom's Cabin, located at "62 P Street"(Quindaro Literary Association Advertisement. *Quindaro Chindowan*, March 13, 1858:1), the Elisha Sortor farm house, and the Benjamin Mudge home. This cluster of stations span the years 1857 - 1862. Rev. Storr's home, the residences of those associated with the Andover band, John Walden's home, Mr. Learned's residence, and Joel Grover's domicile at Quindaro in 1857 are also important targets of research as potential sites within the cluster of stations at Quindaro. Future investigation may uncover an even more pervasive cluster then is known at this writing.
Perhaps the most significant potential station to be investigated is Fielding Johnson's one time home, (known as the Brown-Blachly House) which is the oldest known Quindaro home still standing in Kansas City, Kansas. This house was first owned by Chief Adam Brown, then purchased by Fielding Johnson who resided there during the development of the town of Quindaro, and finally bought by Rev. Eben Blachly who began Freedman's University in Wyandotte County, Kansas.
Brown, Johnson and Blachly all worked for the ideal of freedom in Quindaro. Memorializing the residence through continued research would enhance Quindaroan history and also provide a broader basis from which to secure preservation funds to maintain this residence as a unique monument to American history.
The foregoing list does not preclude other potential conductors not yet rediscovered, in fact, Sam C. Smith and John Walden have only come to light within the last eight years of investigation. How many others remain to be illuminated is a matter of time and committed research effort and stands as an open invitation to all scholars and interested persons of the community.

Last, this article has attempted to explain how a successful Underground Railroad could develop and flourish between two towns on opposite sides of the Missouri River and theoretically at least on opposite

sides of the question of slavery. The seeming paradox is better understood in light of the evidence that suggests that there was both economic and political collaboration between the leaders of both towns that led to cordial relationships between the two settlements. Park felt enough sentiment for fair elections and freedom to make his ideas known publicly through his newspaper and to make his alliances with leaders of Quindaro public as well. Quindaroans were quite willing to pay social, business and religious calls to Parkville and reciprocate when Parkville guests visited Quindaro, using the conveyance of the Parkville-Quindaro Ferry. The Parkville-Quindaro escape route was a usual and expected route into Quindaro for escaping slaves and for maintaining bonds of cooperation between the residents of both towns.
As American society formed, the global sinister institution of slavery was imported into her birthing process, and as a result we are still struggling with what Gunnar Myrdal called our "American Dilemma" (1949). This investigation of the Underground Railroad at Quindaro provides both a realization of the continued need for research about Quindaro and a way of thinking about the contemporary need for cooperation, not only across party lines, but through and across ethnic lines to achieve a truly civil and thriving society, not as a slogan, but as a reality. Quindaro is an exemplary model of multi-ethnic collaboration, a model to be emulated today. Understanding how Quindaro and its Underground Railroad succeeded takes us another step toward resolving our own contemporary ethnic dilemma.

**ENDNOTES**

**In the Eye of the Border Storm**

[1]The term "The term "Border Ruffians" is used to refer to all the supporters of the extension of slavery into Kansas and who favor admitting Kansas into the union as a slave state. The term "*Jayhawkers*" is used to refer to all the supporters of those opposed to the extension of slavery into Kansas and in favor of admitting Kansas into the union as a free state. No attempt is made to analyze the complex combinations of territorial people representing differing economic and ethical motivations, political philosophies, and degrees of association with either a proslavery or abolitionist position. The use of these terms is not an attempt to cast all free state supporters as abolitionists, nor all supporters of slavery as committed supporters of the slavocracy. The usage of these terms merely simplifies a very complicated situation within the short confines of the current article. For more thorough analyses of the issues, please consult the following bibliography:
*Territorial Kansas Online* published by the Kansas State Historical Society:
http://www.territorialkansasonline.org/cgiwrap/imlskto/index.php?SCREEN=bibliography/bleeding_kansas . (From the main page click on "Completed Bibliography." Last accessed October 24, 2007).Researchers may also want to consult the Kansas City Kansas Public Library website for an excellent presentation on Territorial Quindaro: http://www.kckpl.lib.ks.us (From the main page click on "Kansas Collection" and then on "See the Quindaro exhibit." Last accessed October 24, 2007).

[2]The word *Wyandot* refers to the American Native Tribe of Indians living on the Missouri River at the time Quindaro was opened. *Wyandott* and *Wyandotte* are spellings that came into fashion after the Wyandots were forced to move into Kansas Territory in 1843. The word Wyandot refers to the American Native Tribe of Indians living on the Missouri River at the time Quindaro was opened. Wyandott and Wyandotte are spellings that came into fashion after the Wyandots were forced to move into Kansas Territory in 1843. The word "Wyandot" will be used throughout to mean the American Native Tribe after which Wyandotte County, Kansas, was named.

**Quindaro's Opening**

[3]Today it is hard to imagine the courage required to resist proslavery forces in Kansas Territory. Immigrants faced the unenviable task of *choosing between two opposing governments*. Literally, joining the insurrectionary Jayhawker government against the legitimate proslavery government was tantamount to declaring war on federal troops who had the authority to treat any attacks as those launched by terrorist rebels. Immigrants who came to Kansas Territory found themselves in very dangerous circumstances which would not have been treated lightly.

[4]Robinson continued saying that Robinson continued saying that "Leavenworth, Atchison, Delaware, and even Kansas City, Missouri, became open and friendly to Jayhawkers. Thus in a few months, if not weeks, [of Quindaro's opening], every town on the Missouri river changed front …. Never was there such a conversion since the day of the Pentecost. With this conversion came an end of civil strife, and, after a few

well fought political contests, freedom was secured to Kansas, and later, as a consequence, to the union" (Wyandott. *The Kansas City Journal*, February 17, 1882). The *Quindaro Chindowan* played a part in one of those last political contests, i.e. the defeat of the English Bill. It was touted as the "English Dodge" as it offered land (interpreted as a bribe) to settlers in the Territory if they would vote for a new Kansas Constitution that legalized slavery. The defeat of this particular bill may well have been the final political blow to the Border Ruffian movement in Kansas Territory.

[5]Quindaro's declaration of a Free State position (Our Position. *Quindaro Chindowan*, May 13, 1857) led to a criticism from the Westport, Missouri, proslavery newspaper the Star of Empire (Incendiary. *Quindaro Chindowan*, August 1, 1857). Quindaro was accused of being a slave stealing and abetting town, which for practical reasons it denied. Proslavery steamboat captains either denied the existence of Quindaro, or charged unrealistically high passage fares to travel there (Advertisement. *Quindaro Chindowan*, May 13, 1857; *The St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, October 27, 1895).

The continuous Border Ruffian assault on Jayhawker immigration actually backfired economically as well as politically, as it created windfall profits for Quindaro merchants when the town opened becoming the first Free State port on the river. During the first 18 months of the town's existence, it was not unusual for Quindaro to tally from five to seven times the weekly business revenues of the neighboring city of Wyandott.

**The Quindaro Underground Railroad**

[6]Scarce documentation of the Underground Railroad results from practical considerations of safety. Scarce documentation of the Underground Railroad results from practical considerations of safety. "The reason for the paucity of evidence is obvious - even in the free states the operators of the secret lines were chary about recording anything concerning their unlawful actions" (Merkel, 1946: 272). William Still notes that "the slave and his particular friends could only meet in private to transact the business of the Underground Railroad. All others were outsiders. The right hand was not to know what the left hand was doing" (Still, 1968: 4). Proslavery newspapers were spewing inflammatory threats such as "We will continue to tar and feather, drown, lynch and hang every white-livered abolitionist who dares to pollute our soil" (The Fallacy of the New York Tribune. *Squatter Sovereign*, August 28, 1855). The "bogus laws" passed at Lecompton but not submitted to a vote of the public, called for two years in prison for resisting a slave hunter in his attempt to arrest an escaping slave, and the death penalty for raising a rebellion, writing or speaking against the Lecompton government, or aiding a slave in his escape (Wilder, 1911: 73). Lucy Armstrong's speech addressed the life threatening harassment that she and her tribe had to endure prior to Bleeding Kansas (Gleed, 1880: 87-89). Later, after the proslavery Lecompton Constitution assigned the death penalty for hiding slaves, participants in the Underground Railroad would be even less likely to advertise their own possible imprisonment and execution by writing down the evidence that would convict them if presented to a proslavery court.

To reveal any part of the Underground Railroad was to threaten not only oneself and family, but many others who were involved. The fear of accidentally exposing one's family and allies also helped to keep the secret trains running as silently as possible. These considerations render the Tappan letter all that more important as evidence of the Underground Railroad at Quindaro.

[7]The relatively unknown Jayhawker and Danite, Charles Leonhardt, has been the focus of a fascinating exposé of the Danites (Mildfelt, 2004). It was Mildfelt suggests that the Danites were the original "*Jayhawkers*."

**A Cluster of Stations and Conductors**

[8]Clarina Nichols was known as the "Forgotten Feminist of Kansas" by Gambone who published her letters in consecutive installments of the Kansas State Historical Quarterly beginning with Vol. 39, No. 1 Spring in 1973 (Gambone, 1973). She was important as a temperance and family law advocate and suggested that women and blacks be given the vote in the constitutional convention of 1861, but without success. Diane Eickhoff portrayed Nichols in the Chautauqua performances given at Lawrence, Kansas, June 28, 2004, with many additional performances since that time and has authored the groundbreaking book *Revolutionary Heart* about Nichol's life. Nichols helped edit the *Quindaro Chindowan* newspaper for 3

months in 1857, and frequently traveled to the East, lecturing to raise money for the Free-State cause. Her son fought alongside John Brown at the battle of Black Jack and was wounded.

Clarina Nichols' letters to the *Wyandotte Commercial Gazette* in 1882 are vivid descriptions of Quindaro life. Nichols outlines the origin of the town, the political climate, the Underground Railroad, and offers a rather well thought out series of reasons for the town's ultimate failure. Nichols is credible as a writer and historian. She holds substantial credentials as newspaper editor, correspondent, and manager; she was a political activist for movements concerning temperance, women, and black suffrage; and her connections included personal relationships with significant figures of the time, such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and more locally, Susan Wattles of Linn County, Kansas Territory. She successfully lobbied the Kansas State Constitutional Convention bringing about the first law to allow women to vote in the United States, even though it was restricted to local school board elections (Eickhoff, 2006:100-112). Because of her efforts, the University of Kansas, from its inception, became the first school to allow women to attend classes alongside men (A Feisty Champion. *Wichita Eagle*, March 16, 1998: 1b).
[9]The Wyandotte County Recorder of Deeds lists the oldest remaining house in Kansas City, Kansas, from the period of Quindaro as the Brown-Blachly house. The house, with hand hewn floor joists and 24 inch thick foundation walls, was built by Wyandot Chief Adam Brown, and later owned by Rev. William Blachly. However, this naming excludes the period of ownership by Fielding Johnson, a conductor in the Quindaro Underground Railroad. This is surprising since local historians are well aware of the history of the property. Research should continue to focus on the hypothesis that it may be among the cluster of Underground Railroad stations at Quindaro. Should this be confirmed, the name should be reconsidered as the Brown-*Johnson*-Blachly House.

[10]In the summer of 1856 a Kansas Band was formed in Andover Seminary in Massachusetts. It consisted originally of four members of the Middle Class, Sylvester Dana Storrs, Grovesnor A. Morse, Roswell Davenport Parker and Richard Cordley. These four agreed to go to Kansas after graduation and make that territory their field of labor. The band owed its existence to the heart and brain of Sylvester D. Storrs, who first suggested it and worked persistently for its success. For Rev. Cordley's description of the Andover band, consult the following website. http://www.kancoll.org/books/cordley_pioneer/cordley.01.html
[11]In Mudge's letter, the slave hunters call the fugitives "slaves." Mudge refers to the fugitives as "contrabands." The fact that a slave owner was willing to pay $50.00 a head for the return of his slaves indicates that in February, 1862, slaves were still regarded as property by slave owners. Further, this suggests that Underground Railroad operations at Quindaro and other locations were still necessary to free fugitives, even though they were called contrabands during the Civil War and were considered free by the Union. Had the contrabands been free to move as they please, no slave hunters would have threatened Mudge at his residence demanding the slaves be returned. The distinction is important because even though contrabands are formally freed by the 1863 emancipation and the Union Army, Border Ruffians are still sending paid hunters after them, and slaves are still fleeing these hunters. Therefore, Quindaro's role on the Underground Railroad remains important *even after the civil war begins*.

**The Parkville-Quindaro Escape Route**
[12]The fear of being caught not only kept written records of the Underground Railroad to an extreme minimum, but the same fears kept many descendents of slaves from talking about their past during contemporary interview research. While collecting interviews concerning Quindaro, an older black gentleman declined an interview. Like Jesse Hope, this man's family had also kept verbal records instructing them never to talk about having been a slave to anyone. The fear of being recaptured by slave hunters reverberated down through the 21st century.

Fortunately, a collection entitled "Quindaro Oral History of an African American Community" 1996, consisting of tape-recorded interviews is found in the Kansas Collection of the Kansas City Kansas Public Library. Interested researchers may contact the Kansas Collection Librarian at the main library for access to these materials, some of which provide information about the Underground Railroad in old Quindaro.
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