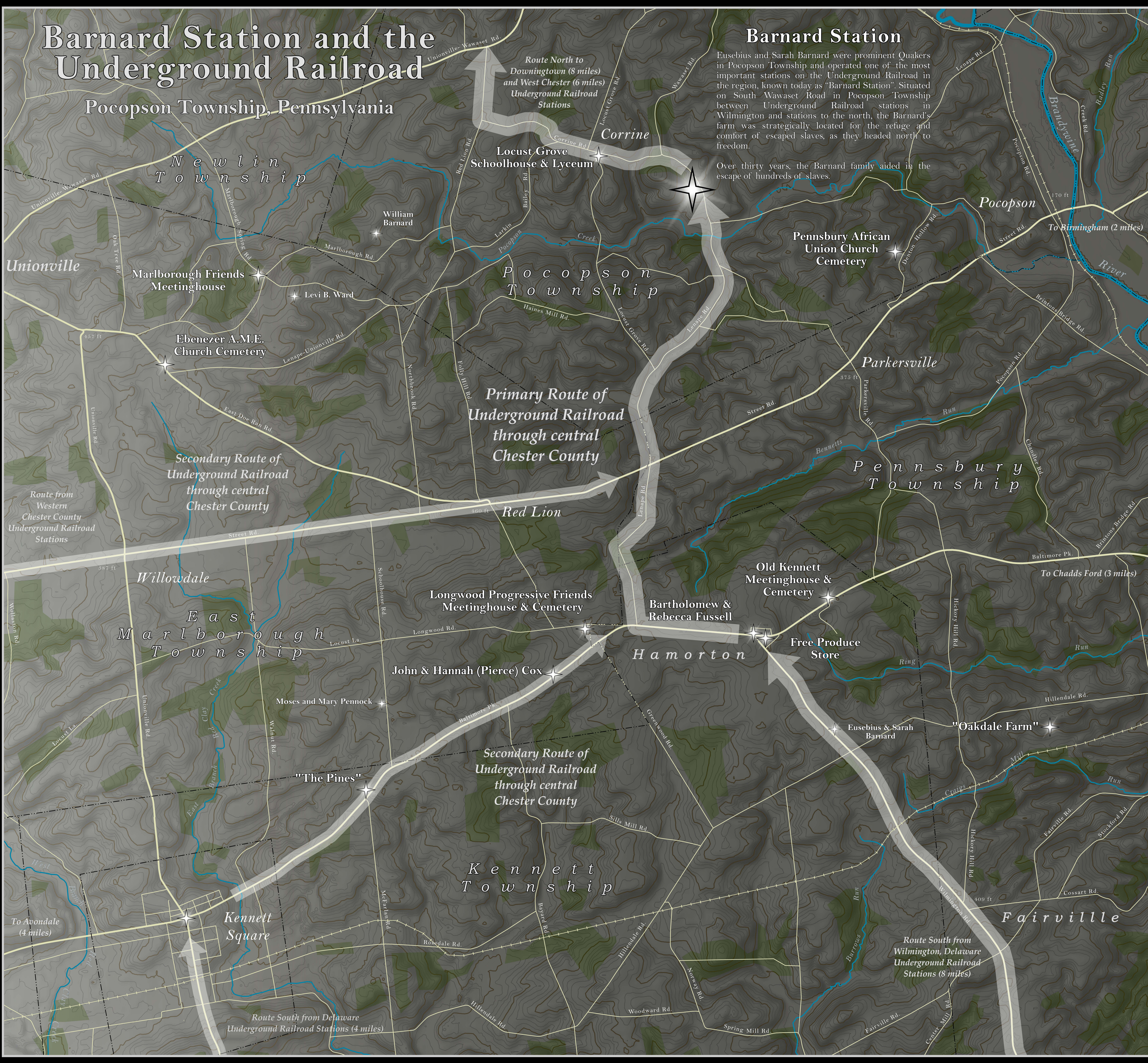


Barnard Station and the Underground Railroad

Pocopson Township, Pennsylvania



Barnard Station

Eusebius and Sarah Barnard were prominent Quakers in Pocopson Township and operated one of the most important stations on the Underground Railroad in the region, known today as "Barnard Station". Situated on South Wawaset Road in Pocopson Township between Underground Railroad stations in Wilmington and stations to the north, the Barnard's farm was strategically located for the refuge and comfort of escaped slaves, as they headed north to freedom.

Over thirty years, the Barnard family aided in the escape of hundreds of slaves.



Chester County, sharing a border with slave states Delaware and Maryland, had one of the highest concentrations of stations on the Underground Railroad network. This region, largely populated by abolitionist Quakers and many free African Americans, proved to be essential in the Underground Railroad's success. From the early 1800's until the Civil War, more than three dozen Underground Railroad stations in southern Chester County aided in the escape of thousands of slaves.

The map at left demonstrates the paths generally followed by the escaped slaves, north through Maryland and Delaware, as they made their way to Barnard Station and points beyond.

Related Points of Interest in Barnard Station Region

John and Hannah (Pierce) Cox Residence, ca. 1797

This couple played a pivotal role in the Underground Railroad in the region. Hundreds of escaped slaves were sheltered, fed, and clothed here, before moving on to the next station. John was president of the Kennett Anti-Slavery Society, and he and Hannah were friends and hosts of famous abolitionists.

Ebenezer A.M.E. Church Cemetery

Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church was established ca. 1839, as a worship place for dozens of African Americans in the area. The church stood until the 1960s when it was razed. The cemetery remains, and in 1988 the site was reconfirmed as the property of the A.M.E. Church.

Free Produce Store, 1844-1858

The "Free Produce" movement, active from the beginning of the abolitionist movement of the 1790s to the end of slavery in the 1860's, boycotted any goods produced with slave labor. It was seen as a method for combating slavery by having consumers buy only produce from free labor. Eli Hambleton and Hannah Smith operated a Free Produce store at this site.

Kennett Square

Kennett Square was home to the racially diverse East Linden Street, which included the New Garden Memorial Union American Methodist Episcopal (UAME) church, founded in 1825. It also includes the residence of Joseph Carter (1829-1913), an escaped slave from Virginia who served in the Civil War. The neighborhood was home to Edwin Brosius who operated an Underground Railroad station here, in the years leading up to the Civil War. Underground Railroad agents Vincent & Johanna Pennock Barnard and Samuel & Deborah Pennock also lived in the neighborhood.

Locust Grove School

One of three public schools established in Pocopson Township in the mid 19th century. It served both white and black students, ages 6 through 17. The building is a typical example of a rural southeastern nineteenth-century Pennsylvania schoolhouse.

Longwood Progressive Meetinghouse

Built in 1855, this building housed the Longwood Progressive Quakers, for "religious, moral, scientific and literary" purposes and activities. Prominent members of the region's underground railroad were active here, and the meetinghouse was seen as a beacon of reform movements, including slavery women's suffrage, capital punishment, and prison reform. Visiting speakers included Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Susan B. Anthony, William Lloyd Garrison and Lucretia Mott. Longwood Cemetery was established at the same time as the meetinghouse. Its burials include many of the abolitionists involved with the meetinghouse, including Eusebius Barnard and much of his family.

Marlborough Friends Meetinghouse, ca. 1801

This Meetinghouse was built in 1801 on land donated by two local Quaker farmers, the first burial in its cemetery occurred two years later, it also has a significant number of unmarked graves, recalling earlier Quaker traditions.

The meetinghouse was the site of the so-called 'Marlborough Riot' in 1852, when more progressive members became outspoken about abolition and other social issues of the time, during worship meetings. These members were "read out" of the Marlborough Meeting and helped to found the nearby Longwood Progressive Meeting of Friends.

Oakdale Farm: Isaac and Dinah Mendenhall

Committed abolitionists and supporters of the temperance and women's suffrage, Isaac and Dinah Mendenhall served as station masters and conductors on the Underground Railroad for more than 35 years. Their Oakdale Estate was the first stop north of Delaware for many escaped slaves, who found cover on the property's main house barn, and springhouse. The Mendenhall's are believed to have aided several hundred fugitives to freedom.

Old Kennett Meetinghouse, ca. 1701

First constructed in 1701 as a log structure, the Kennett Meeting House, now known as "Old Kennett", took its completed form of fieldstone in 1791. The Meetinghouse witnessed the Battle of the Brandywine in 1777 (some of the killed soldiers are buried in its cemetery) and was also part of the schism between liberal members who were part of the abolition movement, and the more conservative, traditional members.

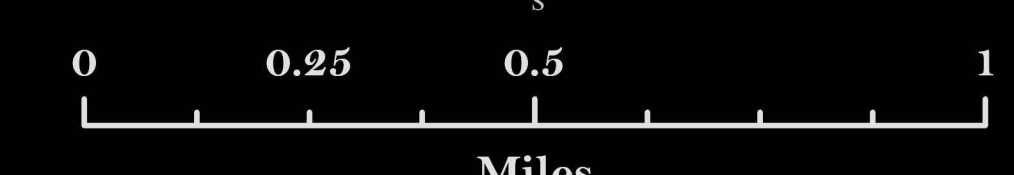
"The Pines"- Bartholomew and Lydia Morris Fussell, ca. 1751

Jonathan and Ann Tomas operated an Underground Railroad station here from 1802 to 1826. Bartholomew and Lydia (Morris) Fussell bought "The Pines" in 1827, and continued its service as a station until 1857. Bartholomew taught school by day and opened a Sunday school for slaves, where he taught them to read the Bible as a defiant action for its time. It is estimated that the Fussells assisted more than 2,000 slaves to freedom.

Pennsbury African Union Church Cemetery

African American church built in 1827 by the Trustees of the African Union Church of Wilmington, Delaware. The church attracted worshippers from as far away as Coatesville and Wilmington, who arrived via train at the nearby Pocopson Station. The church, which has been removed, was active as late as the early 20th century.

The church grounds cemetery contains the graves of dozens of colored troops who had served in the Union Army during the Civil War.



Map Produced for Friends of Barnard Station by Kevin Burkman, GIS Analyst, April, 2024

Data Sources:

- Chester County Historical Society, "Just Over the Line: Chester County and the Underground Railroad"
- Friends of Barnard Station
- Kennett Heritage Center
- Kennett Township
- Kennett Underground Railroad Center
- Locust Grove Schoolhouse
- National Hydrography Dataset
- Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access
- R.C. Smiley, "History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and the Surrounding Counties of Pennsylvania"
- United States Geological Survey