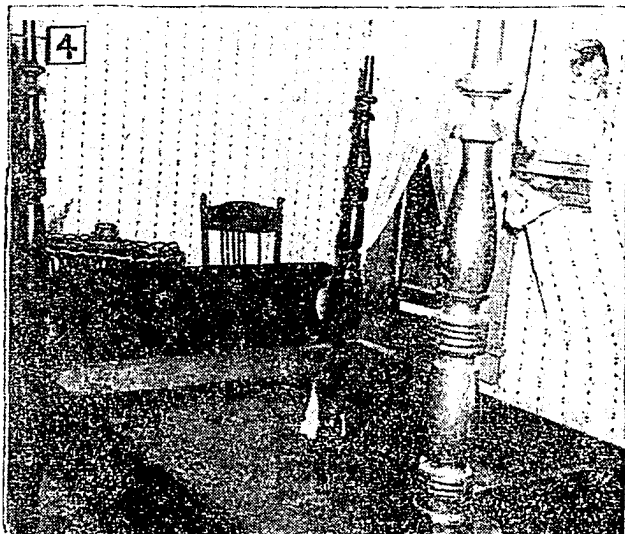


Canadians To Honor Hero Of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'



THE HERO OF Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was a real person. He was the Rev. Josiah Henson, Negro preacher, who finally found sanctuary in the village of Dresden, Ontario, Canada, where he now lies buried. The original

home in which the Rev. Henson lived is now owned by Bill Chapple, who seeks to have the municipality of Dresden take over the home and maintain it as a historical site. Photo No. 1 shows Uncle Tom's original home, now weather-beaten and sadly in need of repair; Photo No. 2, shows Chapple, present owner, view-

ing an old picture of "Uncle Tom"; Photo No. 3 is a view of the monument near the old homestead, marking the burial place of the Rev. Henson, and Photo No. 4 shows the bed, long since dismantled, on which "Uncle Tom" died.—All photos by Carroll, Toronto, Canada.

NORTH OF THE BORDER

Plan Memorial For Josiah Henson, Slave-Hero Of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'

By ALBERT G. BARNETT

It is not generally known that "Uncle Tom," famous slave-hero of Harriet Beecher Stowe's immortal legend, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," actually lived, that he was a high-ranking member of the Masonic Order and also an important cog in the Underground Railroad.

He was the Rev. Josiah Henson, who died May 5, 1883, at the age of 93, in the village of Dresden, Ontario, Canada, where he now lies buried, an impressive monument marking his last resting-place.

The original home where the Rev. Henson found sanctuary after his hazardous flight from the South, is now owned by Canadian-born Bill Chapple, who, with a group of other Dresden residents, is seeking to have the municipality take over the homestead and maintain it as a shrine of great historic interest.

Want Memorial Home

Dresden's local municipal officials are said to be considering Chapple's plan for a Henson Memorial Home and interest in the program has spread to surrounding communities who strongly favor the project.

Many Dresden-ites voice the opinion that, because the Rev. Henson was both an American and a Canadian, the Memorial should take on an international aspect, so that travelers and visitors from both countries could view it and become more fully acquainted with the operation of the Underground Railroad during the hectic, pre-Civil War days.

It was also pointed out that if sufficient interest can be aroused, Dominion officials at Ottawa, sent of the Canadian Government, might lend a tolerant ear and provide funds to assure complete success of the Memorial.

Praise Prime Minister

Canadian Negroes are outspoken in praise of the understanding and tolerance of Prime Minister McKenzie King and his subordinates. They declare that the spirit of friendliness and harmony that prevails between the races in Toronto, Windsor, Montreal and other metropolitan cities, is proof that bigotry and prejudice against Negroes is not a widespread social pattern throughout the Dominion. Residents predict that great progress toward establishment of the Henson Memorial will be made this summer.

The village of Dresden is located in Ontario, largest province in the Dominion, and in the period 1834-1872, was one of the four outstanding Canadian communities which extended a helping hand to runaway slaves and enabled them to breathe the fresh air of freedom.

its apparent isolation, is a thriving community.

Prejudice in Chatham

Chatham, just a few miles from Windsor, has the dubious reputation as being one of the towns in Canada most prejudiced against Negroes. Chatham's Negro population is about 400, many of them native-born and some who have never been to the "States."

These natives who know that Chatham was one of the key stations in the Underground Railroad, are at a loss to explain why their white fellow-townsmen have such a bitter, anti-Negro feeling, which expresses itself in barring Negroes from the city's hotels, cafes and other public places.

Blame Dixie Race

Chatham is the center of that district's tobacco industry and southern whites, going there to work, are blamed for transplanting the Dixie virus of prejudice and Jim Crowism to the soil of Canada.

But the Chatham of pre-Civil War days, was an important link in the brotherhood chain, forged by fearless Americans and Canadians, which reached deep into the "bowels of the South," and by means of its Underground Railroad, brought thousands of hapless slaves first to Detroit, thence across the river to Windsor and on to Chatham and Dresden.

Old residents, to whom the tradition has been handed down by their fore-bears, will tell you that John Brown of Harper's Ferry fame, lived there during those stirring times. The last secret meeting of the abolitionists, just before the Harper's Ferry raid, was held at the John Brown home, corner of King and Adelaide sts.

Half of the old John Brown home still stands but the other half was sacrificed when the Canadian Pacific Railroad routed its new line through that section. Because of its tradition and interest, however, the old John Brown half-house is the mecca for Chatham visitors.

Should the Henson Memorial Home become a reality, prominent space and notice will also be given, old-timers say, to Harriet Tubman, former slave and noted abolitionist, who fled the Simon Legrees of the South, via the Underground Railroad.

"Eliza" Of Famous Novel

Windsor and Chatham legends relate how the thrilling experiences of Harriet Tubman crossing on the ice floes of the Detroit River caused her to be immortalized as the "Eliza" of Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Those familiar with the Tubman legend, also insist that just before John Brown's raid, Harriet Tubman was on a mission to an

East Coast state, securing rifles and ammunition for the raiders.

But, delayed by a sudden storm, Harriet Tubman was unable to get the needed supplies back to John Brown and the raiders at the time agreed upon, and this resulted in one of the greatest debacles in history.

Confirmation of these legends and those woven about the experiences of the Rev. Josiah Henson, will doubtless be given when and if the Henson Memorial is established.

The Windsor Tablet

It will also give point and emphasis to the tablet erected in 1923 in Windsor, on the Dominion Bank Building, Sandwich and Ouellette sts., and which commemorates the humanitarian aid given by Windsor citizens to harassed Negroes fleeing the yoke of slavery.

The tablet reads:

"HERE, THE SLAVE FOUND FREEDOM." Before the U. S. Civil War of 1861-1865, Windsor was THE TERMINAL OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD."