

# SOUTHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## CELEBRATING SOUTHFIELD'S 1860s FREEDOM FINDERS



Station on the Underground Railroad – Covenanter's Church

Along the Underground Railroad across to Canada, Freedom Seekers primarily from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri stopped, found refuge, and made a home – on Southfield land.

Here are some of their stories:

(as reported from the United States Census of 1860)

Map information taken from the 1857 Hess map unless otherwise noted. Courtesy of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society.

# GEORGE TAYLOR (1823 – 1901) and wife **Eliza Ann (1827 - 1902)**

George was born in Kentucky in October 1823. In 1860 he was living and working as a laborer on the farm of J.P. Stewart (son of David Stewart, founder of the Covenanters' Church). The Stewart property was worth \$3000 located in section 11 of Southfield Township.

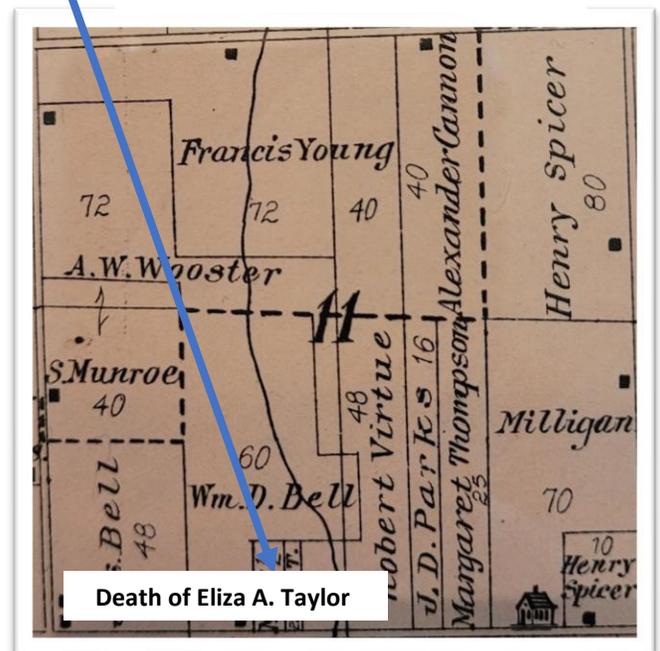


In 1870 the census shows that George had married, and he and his wife, Eliza Ann, had started their family: John (1860-?), Sarah (1863-?), and later Clara, born in 1877. By 1880 the Taylors were able to acquire 8 acres in Southfield Township, Section 11 on the north side of 12 Mile Road. They built a home about

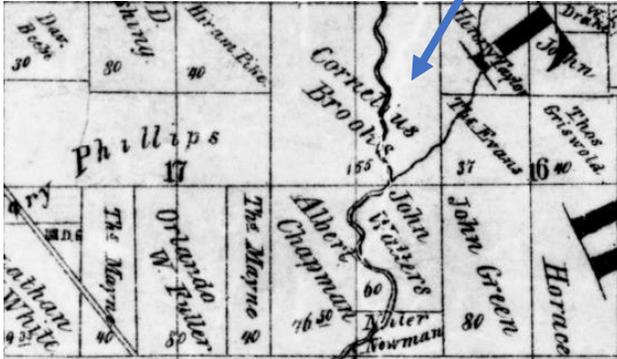
midway between Evergreen and Southfield Roads. The Taylors owned property in 1880 worth \$1070 and livestock worth \$121, including one horse. The value produced by the farm for the year 1879 was estimated to be \$500.

George and Eliza continued to occupy their farm until their deaths in 1901 and 1902 respectively. They are both buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Birmingham, Michigan.

1896 map of Southfield Township



**WILLIAM BROX (1830 - ?)** Born in Kentucky, William moved to Southfield Township with his 1-year-old son, James. They lived in the home of a local farmer, named Cornelius Brox, most likely Brooks. The property was split between section 16 and 17 and is on what is now the southeast and southwest corners of Telegraph and Twelve Mile Roads.



**CHARLES DAVIS (1830 - ?)** and his mulatto wife **Mary Davis (1832 - ?)** were born in Pennsylvania. They were probably living in rented quarters in 1860, near Ten and a Half Mile Road [Civic Center Drive] and Berg Road. No occupation is recorded in the census.

**JOHN FLEMING (1844 - ?)** In 1860 Fleming, a mulatto born in Missouri, was living in the home of Mathew Erwin, a farmer who owned two large properties in sections 22 and 23. The property in section 22 is midway between Evergreen and Lahser, north of Ten and a Half Mile Road [Civic Center Drive]. The 80-acre property in section 23 is east of Evergreen where the Mary Thompson Farm is now located.



**JOHN FOUCH (1837 - ?)** A literate mulatto born in Kentucky, John Fouch lived in the household of M. J. Logan, a widow who owned real estate valued at \$1600. Her property was in section 10, located on the northeast corner of Lahser and Twelve Mile Roads. Although no occupation is listed, Fouch was most likely employed as an agricultural laborer.



**WORDEN McGLACHLIN (1823 - ?)** A mulatto born in Canada, in 1860 Worden resided in the home of Robert McGlachlin, most likely



McLaughlin, an Irish farmer with real estate holdings valued at \$6000. In 1857 Robert owned the southeast quarter section of section 22. This property is located south and west of Evergreen Road between Ten and a Half Mile [Civic Center Drive] and Ten

Mile Roads. This property in section 22 is across Evergreen Road from the Erwin farm in section 23 and south of the Erwin property in section 22.

**GEORGE PARMER (1830 - ?)**, and his wife Hannah (1832 - ?) were born in Virginia. Their son John (1858-?) was born after the couple arrived in Michigan. They live down the road from Charles and Mary Davis, near Ten and a Half Mile [Civic Center Drive] and Berg Roads. No occupation for George or Hannah is recorded by the enumerator.

**GEORGE RILEY (1823 - ?)** Born in Kentucky, Riley resided in the home of Alexander Bell, a 40-year-old farmer. The Bell farm is located in section 11 just west of the Stewart farm (where George Taylor lived.) This property is on the northeast corner of Evergreen and Twelve Mile Roads.



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**JOHN TURNER (1840 - ?)** In 1860 John Turner was a literate mulatto who lived in the household of William Smith, an Irish farmer who owned real estate valued at \$10,000. This property is located in section 23, north off Ten Mile Road midway between Evergreen and Southfield Roads.

