

# TRAIL TO FREEDOM



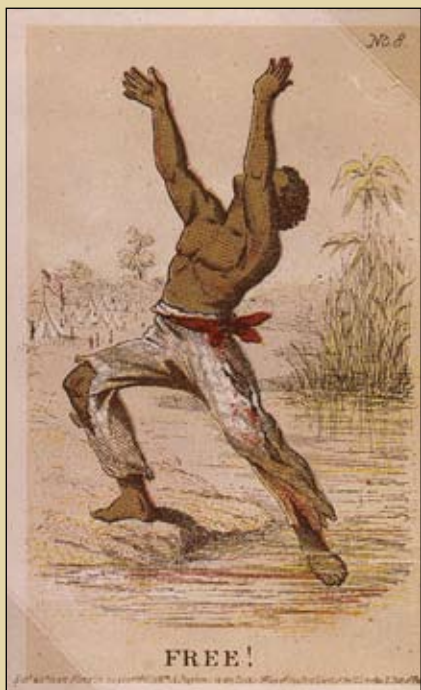
*Photos Courtesy of  
Library of Congress*

The **Trail to Freedom** retraces the routes of those freedom-seekers through the City of **Fredericksburg** and the County of **Stafford, Virginia**. Follow them, listen to their **stories**, and read the **words** of those who aided and observed their movements toward **freedom**.

*"...A Most Memorable night (it) was (when) the Soldiers assured me that I was a free man...Before morning I had began to feel like I had truly escaped from the hands of the Slaves Master and with the help of God, I never would be a Slave no more...Life had a new joy awaiting me."*

—John Washington, a Fredericksburg slave  
April 18, 1862

*On April 18, 1862, the Union Army occupied Falmouth and surrounding Stafford County along the Rappahannock River. On May 2, they crossed the river and occupied the City of Fredericksburg. Throughout the region, slaves saw the arrival of the Federal forces as an opportunity for freedom.*



Many slaves left their masters and sought the protection of Union forces. Some served with Federal troops in support positions. By mid-September 1862, at least 10,000 freedom-seekers had passed through the area, by foot, wagon and rail, months prior to the Emancipation Proclamation.

*Trail to Freedom Information:*  
**Fredericksburg Visitor Center**

706 Caroline Street  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
540.373.1776

**National Park Service Headquarters, Chatham Manor**

120 Chatham Lane  
Fredericksburg, VA 22405  
540.654.5121

*Both sites open daily—easy access from I-95 on exit 130A.*

[www.TrailToFreedom.com](http://www.TrailToFreedom.com)



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