

Historical Marker - S637 - Erastus Hussey: Stationmaster / "Working for Humanity"
(Marker ID#:S637)



Front - Title/Description

Erastus Hussey: Stationmaster

Erastus Hussey came to Michigan from New York State in 1824 and purchased land in Wayne County. Hussey returned to New York for a time, but in 1839 he and his wife, Sarah, purchased a building located about 125 feet east of this site to house their dry goods store and residence. As Quakers, the Husseys had strong antislavery sentiments, and in 1840, Erastus became stationmaster of the Underground Railroad's Battle Creek station, located in his home. He was assisted by fugitives like Samuel Strauther who settled in Battle Creek after escaping slavery. As a Free-Soiler, Hussey served in both houses of the state legislature in the 1850s. On July 6, 1854, he attended the "Under the Oaks" convention in Jackson, where the Republican party was founded.

Significant Date:

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

Registry Year: 1992 **Erected Date:** 1992

Marker Location

Address: One Michigan Avenue

City: Battle Creek

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Calhoun

Township: Battle Creek

Lat: 42.31924500 / **Long:** -85.18252200

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

"Working for Humanity"

A May 1885 edition of the Battle Creek Sunday Morning Call featured an interview with "the Abolition patriarch," Erastus Hussey. The eighty-five-year-old former editor of the antislavery Michigan Liberty Press recalled Battle Creek's role with the Underground Railroad, beginning in 1840. The Central Michigan route began in Cass County and had stations every twelve to fifteen miles in communities like Climax, Battle Creek, Marshall, Albion, Grass Lake, Ann Arbor, Plymouth, and on to Detroit. Hussey stated, "I have fed and given protection to over 1,000 fugitives, and assisted them on to Canada." After 1855 the Michigan underground was less traveled—the runaways took shorter routes through Ohio. When asked if any stationmasters received pay, Hussey replied, "No. . . . We were working for humanity."