

Historical Marker - L2150C - Resisting Slavery / Robert J. Cromwell (Marker ID#:L2150C)



Front - Title/Description

Resisting Slavery

During the mid-nineteenth century a small number of African Americans settled in Genesee County where they found cheap land and employment as barbers, laborers, farmers, carpenters, and domestics. At this time differing opinions in Genesee County reflected growing tension nationally. The Genesee Weekly Democrat ran articles unsympathetic to Blacks, but also printed editorials opposing slavery. The Genesee Whig promoted abolition. In 1841 residents formed the Genesee County Anti-Slavery Society and held meetings at the courthouse, which became a venue for national figures who lectured about the evils of slavery. Author, publisher and activist who escaped slavery, Henry W. Bibb, and Liberty party presidential candidate James G. Birney spoke here, among other notable lecturers.

Significant Date:

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

Registry Year: 2005 **Erected Date:** 2005

Marker Location

Address: 900 S. Saginaw Street

City: Flint

State: MI **ZipCode:** 48502

County: Bay

Township:

Lat: 43.01217300 / **Long:** -83.68813300

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Robert J. Cromwell

Robert J. Cromwell escaped enslavement in Missouri in 1840. He settled in Flint around 1846 and opened a barbershop. That year Cromwell wrote a letter to his former enslaver, a man named Dunn, in an effort to purchase his daughter's freedom. Dunn noted the Flint postmark and began searching for Cromwell. This advertisement, which appeared in the Flint Republican, confirmed for Dunn that Cromwell was indeed in Flint. Cromwell fled to Detroit. Dunn pursued him, but was foiled by African American and Irish American Cromwell sympathizers there. By 1851, an African American barber named Robert Cromwell had opened a shop in Chatham, Ontario.