

Manchester Listings on the Connecticut Freedom Trail

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Hart Porter House and Outbuilding

465 Porter Street, Manchester, CT 06040



Hart Porter House and Outbuilding

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Hart Porter built this home between 1840 and 1845. According to oral tradition, the outbuilding was used as a hiding place for fugitives escaping on the Underground Railroad. There is a full basement in the small building that is accessible only through a trap door. Although Manchester is not generally recognized as being on an Underground Railroad route, there is some evidence of abolitionist activity. The Methodist Church hosted anti-slavery meetings and the pastor often preached abolitionist messages. Frederick Douglass spoke in the church at an anti-slavery convention in 1843. Porter was married in the church by an abolitionist pastor, which could indicate abolitionist sentiments. This home is privately owned and not open to the public.



Walter Bunce House

34 Bidwell Street, Manchester, CT 06040



While there are many structures in the Southern states that are attributed to the craftsmanship of African Americans, few such buildings exist in New England. One example, however, is the Walter Bunce House, constructed by Alpheus Quicy. Born in June 1774, Quicy dealt in real estate in southeastern Connecticut along with his father and brother. As a stonemason he built several fieldstone houses for prominent citizens and numerous dams in Manchester. The Walter Bunce House is the only fieldstone dwelling constructed by Quicy that still stands today. This home is privately owned and not open to the public.

The Bunce house is also featured in Christopher

Wigren's book, *Connecticut Architecture: Stories of 100 Places* (Garnet Books) published 2018, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Mr. Wigren spoke about the book and about this house at the Manchester Historical Society April 7, 2019. *Photo on right*, from Mr. Wigren's book, available for sale online.

