



Front - Title/Description

Abolitionists In Jackson

In the 1830s-50s, a strong antislavery presence grew in Jackson. Opponents of slavery advocated for their cause with prominent speakers and public meetings. The courthouse, located in the southwest corner of what became the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Jackson Street, was a favorite venue. In 1839, Seymour Treadwell, an Underground Railroad contributor and abolitionist author, spoke there. Self-emancipated abolitionist Henry Bibb visited Jackson in 1850. He spoke at the courthouse “on the subject of human rights.” On March 3, 1854, before Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act that permitted new states to decide if they would allow slavery, a group of abolitionists met at the courthouse to discuss the proposed act and formally declared their opposition.

Significant Date:

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

Registry Year: 2019 **Erected Date:** 2020

Marker Location

Address: North Jackson Street and West Michigan Avenue

City: Jackson

State: MI **ZipCode:** 49203

County: Jackson

Township: Blackman

Lat: 42.24792600 / **Long:** -84.40860500

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Abolitionists In Jackson

In the years leading up to the Civil War, several of Jackson’s newspapers supported the antislavery cause. Three were printed near this site, once a corner of the town’s public square. The Jacksonburg Sentinel, Jackson’s first newspaper, originated here in 1837. William DeLand and Norman Allen, two men who assisted fugitives on the Underground Railroad, were among its founders. The newspaper criticized the “diabolical” slave trade. The American Freeman, founded by Underground Railroad participant William Sullivan and his brother Nicholas in the late 1830s, was the first strictly abolitionist paper in Michigan. In the 1850s, the American Citizen was printed at the square. Editor Charles DeLand, also an Underground Railroad member, pled “no more slavery compromises.”