

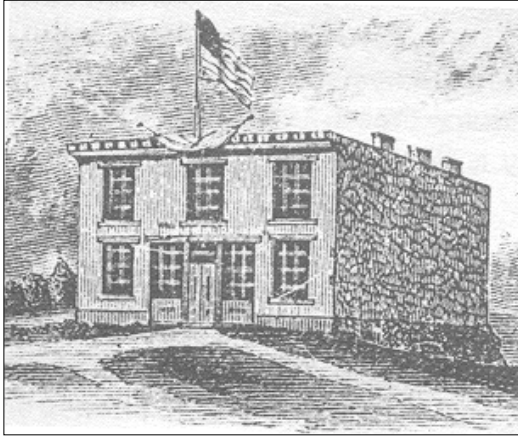
Emancipation to Integration *Topeka and the Road to Freedom*



The Underground Railroad

Prior to the Civil War, Kansas became a haven for abolitionists and escaped slaves. Through a network of safe-houses, slaves made their way across the south to freedom. These "Exodusters," as they were called, established communities, such as Nicodemus in western Kansas, and Tennessee Town here in Topeka.

Several buildings remain in Topeka that evoke that time. The John Ritchie House (above left) was home to that famed abolitionist. In North Topeka, the Asbury Methodist Church (above) was founded by ex-slaves. The Free State Capitol (left) once stood at 427 S. Kansas, and was besieged by Federal forces on order of pro-slavery President Pierce.



Brown vs. Board of Education

The landmark Brown vs. Board of Education case defined how civil rights legislation would be applied to education. In the wake of this Supreme Court decision, the doctrine of "separate but equal" was discarded, and segregation in the classroom ceased to be the norm.

The three buildings that symbolize this decision are Monroe School (above), Sumner School (right) and the Federal Courthouse where the case was originally heard (below). The schools have been declared National Landmarks.

