

Woman's Rights National Historical Park  
Name of Property

Seneca County, NY  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The Women's Rights National Historical Park (NHP) Historic District has two periods of significance: 1836-1862 and 1915-1927. The majority of the contributing resources within the district are associated with the first and primary period of significance, which begins in 1836 when the M'Clintock Family moved to Waterloo, setting in motion the events leading to the First Women's Rights convention held in Seneca Falls in 1848. The period ends in 1862 when Elizabeth Cady Stanton moved away from Seneca Falls, having established herself as a seasoned and nationally recognized reform leader of the organized Women's Rights Movement in the United States. The second period of significance is associated with the locally significant Visitor Center building, a contributing resources owned by the NPS. It begins when the

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- SOCIAL HISTORY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- COMMERCE
- ARCHITECTURE
- ARCHEOLOGY: HISTORIC NON-ABORIGINAL

**Period of Significance**

1836-1862; 1915-1927

**Significant Dates**

- 1836: M'Clintock Family moved to Waterloo
- 1847: Stanton Family moved to Seneca Falls
- 1848: First Women's Rights Convention
- 1862: Stanton Family moved from Seneca Falls
- 1915: Visitor Center constructed

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

See Continuation Sheet

**Cultural Affiliation**

Euro-American

**Architect/Builder**

- Van Kirk, Martin—architect, Visitor Center
- Adams, Lloyd Philo—architect, 1927 renovations to Visitor Center

building was constructed in 1915 and continues through its conversion in 1927 from an automobile garage to the Seneca Falls Village Hall.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)**

The Women's Rights National Historical Park (NHP) Historic District possesses significance under National Register Criteria A, B, C, and D. The Wesleyan Chapel Site, the Elizabeth Cady Stanton House, the M'Clintock House, and the Hunt House all have national significance under Criterion A in the areas of Social History and Politics/Government as the sites of the planning, organization, and occurrence of the First Women's Rights Convention in the United States, which was a defining moment in American history. The Stanton House possesses significance at the national level under Criterion B for its association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902). The M'Clintock House is nationally significant under Criterion B for its association as the residence of Thomas M'Clintock (1792-1876), Mary Ann M'Clintock (1800-1884), and their daughters Elizabeth Wilson M'Clintock Phillips (1821-1896) and Mary Ann M'Clintock Truman (1822-1880). The Hunt House possesses significance at the national level under Criterion B for its association as the residence of Richard Pell Hunt (1797-1856) and his third and fourth wives, Sarah M'Clintock Hunt (c. 1807-1842) and Jane Clothier Master Hunt (1812-1889). It is also significant at the local level for its association with Richard Hunt as a major local industrialist and landholder. The Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home Site and the M'Clintock House Site have national significance under Criterion D in the area of Archeology as properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. These sites also contribute to the significance of the properties under Criteria A and B. The Visitor Center has local significance under Criterion A in the area of Commerce as an example of the automobile-related development that occurred in Seneca Falls in the early decades of the twentieth century. It is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an example of a relatively rare building type, an early twentieth-century automobile sales room and service center.

**Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)**

**CRITERION A – SOCIAL HISTORY AND POLITICS/GOVERNMENT**

The majority of the resources within the Women's Rights National Historical Park district are historically significant for their associations with the First Women's Rights Convention and the early Women's Rights Movement in America.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Except where noted, information used to develop the historical contexts, background, and historical development of individual resources contained in this document was compiled from existing cultural resource management reports prepared for the Women's Rights NHP. The main sources include the *Historic Resource Study, Women's Rights National Historical Park, Seneca Falls, New York*, Judith Wellman (2008); Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Women's Rights National Historical Park, Judith Wellman, Vivien Rose, Anne Derosie, and Tanya Warren (2008); *Women's Rights National History Trail Feasibility Study: Final Study Report*, National Park Service (2003); *Wesleyan Chapel Historic Structure Report, Women's Rights National Historical Park*, Barbara A. Yocum and Terry Wong (1992); *Stanton House Historic Structure Report, Women's Rights National Historical Park*, Barbara A. Yocum (written 1989, published 1998); *Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Stanton House, Women's Rights National Historical Park, Seneca Falls, New York*, National Park Service (originally published 1996, revised 2004); "Chamberlain House Historic Structure Report, Women's Rights National Historical Park," Barbara A. Yocum (2001); "Hunt House Historic Structure Report, Women's Rights National Historical Park," Partial Draft, Barbara A. Yocum (2009); *Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Hunt House, Women's Rights National Historical Park*, Robert Mooney and David Uschold (2003); *M'Clintock House Historic Structure Report, Women's Rights National Historical Park*, Barbara A. Yocum (1993); *Cultural Landscapes Inventory, M'Clintock House, Women's Rights National Historical Park*, Jodi Gee, Mat Gonshorowski, and David Uschold (originally published 1996, revised 2004); and *Village Hall Historic Structure Report, Women's Rights National Historical Park*, Stacey A. Matson, Barbara A. Yocum, Maureen K. Phillips, and Terry L. Wong (1988).

The district includes the convention site, the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, as well as two residences where much of the planning and organization of the event took place.<sup>12</sup> A small group of women developed the idea and wrote the call for the convention at the Hunt House in Waterloo. Members of the M'Clintock Family met with Elizabeth Cady Stanton to draft the Declaration of Sentiments at the M'Clintock House in Waterloo. The district also includes the residence of the convention's key organizer, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, which is significant for its role in Stanton's development as a nationally recognized women's rights leader. Her experience of daily life in the Stanton House directly affected her ideas on women's rights. In addition, during the 14 years following the Seneca Falls convention, the Stanton House served as a home base for the continued development of the Women's Rights Movement.

Over three decades of scholarship have documented the antecedents and reach of the early Women's Rights Movement, substantiating the long-held view that the convention held at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, in July of 1848 was a significant turning point within the movement. While not the first time that women's rights as American citizens were debated, the 1848 event was the first convention in the country devoted entirely to women's rights as a separate and distinct issue and provided the momentum and ideology necessary to strengthen subsequent women's rights activities. Inspired by movements for the abolition of slavery, religious equality, and legal reform, women's rights advocates applied the ideals of the Declaration of Independence for the first time to all Americans, including women. The Seneca Falls convention served as a model for future organized women's rights efforts. It also precipitated Elizabeth Cady Stanton's rise over the next decade to a position of nationally recognized leadership in the movement.

Several important social and political factors combined to create an environment conducive to such an unprecedented event. The impetus for the convention sprang from a broad movement for social reform that swept through the United States, and particularly the central and western regions of New York, during the Antebellum Period.<sup>13</sup> The country's new focus on reform efforts led to civil rights activism for a wide range of groups, including the poor and African Americans. Discussions of social inequities often incorporated ideas on women's rights, but the issue of equality for women was generally subsumed within other movements. Women took predominant roles in many social reform efforts beginning with their organization of and participation in early nineteenth-century religious revivals. Women advocated on behalf of causes ranging from better living conditions for the poor to temperance, as well as other types of benevolent reform. Within these spheres, they confronted discrimination at various levels and debated the issue of their right to participate in politics, religion, activism, and public speaking (Altschuler and Saltzgeber 1983; Cott 2000:203,217).

During the 1830s and 1840s, women's active roles in anti-slavery and legal reform efforts (in the latter case, specifically with regard to married women's property rights) informed a growing concern for women's rights on a broader scale. In Waterloo, New York, beginning in 1836, the M'Clintock Family and their network of kin and reform-minded Quakers led the anti-slavery movement. In neighboring Seneca Falls, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, organized in 1843, attracted many abolitionists and encouraged lively debate over many types of social reform. By July 1848, the presence of a strong reform sentiment in the two towns and the surrounding area, combined with the national social and political context, enabled the women in the M'Clintock, Hunt, and Stanton families, along with other supporters, to organize the event that became the cornerstone of a new Women's Rights Movement.

### **The Early Women's Rights Movement in America**

An understanding of the injustices endured by women emerged within the framework of their growing social activism in the early part of the nineteenth century. Their work on behalf of the Abolition Movement in particular, which endeavored to dismantle a well-established societal institution, led them to challenge the status quo for women and directly contributed to the framework in which the Seneca Falls convention developed. Persistent efforts by women activists to reform property rights law in New York in the 1830s and 1840s also informed and encouraged the nascent Women's Rights Movement in the region. Both topics are discussed here in some detail to provide the larger context for the events associated with the district.

<sup>12</sup> Only two other known sites related to pre-Civil War women's rights conventions are still standing. The first state women's rights convention in Pennsylvania was held in 1852 at Horticultural Hall in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Women's rights advocates held the Tenth National Woman's Rights Convention at Cooper Union in New York City in 1860.

<sup>13</sup> See the discussion of the "Antebellum Climate of Social Reform" under additional context.

## Abolition

Women acquired a philosophy and vocabulary of equality from the Abolition Movement of the 1830s and 1840s, drawing inspiration and leadership from Garrisonian anti-slavery activists in particular. The most radical abolitionists—those who worked for the rights of all free people of color, created bi-racial organizations, and attracted many Quakers, Congregationalists, and Unitarians—tended to become early women's rights advocates. These reformers transferred the organizing tactics, administrative skills, and ideology of equal rights they developed in the Abolition Movement to the parallel issue of women's rights (Braude 1989:60; Cott 2000:235,241; Marilley 1996:16-43).

By the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Americans who opposed slavery began to develop widespread community-based campaigns advocating for the eradication of the institution through the signing of petitions and through organized political action. Throughout the nation, both blacks and whites organized, usually along racial lines. Blacks held annual national anti-slavery conventions from 1830 to 1835, and again in the 1840s. White-dominated abolitionist groups soon followed. In January 1831, William Lloyd Garrison began to publish the abolitionist paper *The Liberator* in Boston (in print through 1865). Other abolitionist papers appeared across the Northeast. In January 1832, abolitionists in Boston formed the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. Over the next year, two more societies in Massachusetts and one in Ohio were formed. In 1833, Garrison called for the founding of a national anti-slavery organization. In December of that year, male abolitionists met in Philadelphia and formed the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS). The AASS recruited numerous members over the next decade, holding annual May meetings and acting as a central base for a rapidly growing community of abolitionists (Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.9-11).

The strong religious fervor that characterized upstate New York's "Burned-over District" directly contributed to its development as an early and major center of abolitionist activity.<sup>14</sup> The Gradual Emancipation Act of 1799 gave limited rights to slaves in New York born after July 4 of that year, and in 1817 the state passed another gradual abolition law. The towns of Utica and Geneva established free Sunday schools for blacks in 1815 and 1816. Statewide emancipation was achieved in July 1827, but many forms of legalized discrimination still existed. In 1833, Utica abolitionists organized the earliest anti-slavery groups in New York, and several delegates from central New York attended the founding AASS meeting in Philadelphia that year. Radical abolitionism swept the entire state in 1835. On October 21, the New York State chapter of the AASS organized in Utica, but the group reconvened at the Gerrit Smith house in Peterboro after rioters threatened violence. By May 1836, New York had 104 out of the 527 anti-slavery societies in the Northeast. By April 1838, at least 287 county and local societies were affiliated with the AASS. By 1839, at least 43 counties had anti-slavery organizations (Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.6-7,12,16).

The issue of women's public participation drove a wedge in the nascent Abolition Movement. Many staunch abolitionists, particularly the evangelically-inclined conservative group, did not espouse the issue of women's rights. They argued that assigning public roles to women was so controversial that it would detract from the achievement of freedom for the slave. Consequently, women were initially barred from joining the AASS in 1833. However, they found other ways to advocate against slavery. Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister and one of the earliest advocates for women's rights in America as well as a leading participant in the First Women's Rights Convention, and about 30 other women including Mary Ann M'Clintock immediately founded the bi-racial Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society (PFASS). Mott's biographer noted that the organization "rapidly became the springboard for the woman's rights movement" (Bacon 1980:61).

The Grimké sisters first brought the intertwined issues of abolition and women's rights to a national audience. Angelina and Sarah Grimké were born into a slaveholding family in the South but moved to Philadelphia and converted to the Quaker faith in the late 1820s, joining the PFASS in 1833. In December 1836, the sisters were the only women among a group of abolitionists who attended a special AASS agent-training session held in New York City, led by Theodore Weld (who later married Angelina). The following year, Angelina became the first woman to speak before the Massachusetts legislature. Congregational ministers were horrified, and in response, Sarah wrote an essay entitled *Letters on the*

<sup>14</sup> See the discussion of the "Second Great Awakening" under additional context.

*Condition of Women and the Equality of the Sexes*, which became a critical turning point in many women's transition from abolitionism to women's rights.

Women organized as many as 200 female anti-slavery societies in many parts of Pennsylvania, New England, New York, and the Midwest. Historians have noted that as a result of their having to organize independently from men, women abolitionists were able to take on more leadership roles and participate more comprehensively in all of the activities associated with public meetings, thereby "building their skills and confidence." Women's groups often crossed lines of race, class, and religion in their membership. National women's anti-slavery meetings were held in 1837, 1838, and 1839. These events established procedural and structural models for female conventions that later informed women's rights activists. In central New York, local anti-slavery societies generally decided their own policies with regard to women. Most included only men, some were strictly for women, and some allowed both women and men to attend the same meetings. Women from the area were equally as active in the movement as elsewhere, though (Salerno 2005:4).

Women first entered the political arena through their extensive involvement with anti-slavery petitioning. Between 1831 and 1863, about 3 million women's signatures appeared on anti-slavery petitions. In New York State, 60 percent of anti-slavery petitions sent between 1837 and 1841 were signed by women. The presentation of signed petitions to local, state, and national legislatures was a central component of antebellum political culture, although prior to the late 1830s its practitioners were primarily white men. However, petitioning was considered by many to be a political activity that women could undertake without risking their womanliness, at least within circumscribed limits. Women's increased participation in anti-slavery petition campaigns throughout the 1830s and 1840s gradually widened their sphere of influence and provided them with invaluable practical skills related to running meetings, writing appeals, holding conventions, developing social networks, and speaking in public. Anti-slavery petitioning also sparked numerous debates over women's political rights that ultimately linked the right to petition with the right of suffrage and helped women to formulate a collective identity as citizens. Historian Susan Zaeske has noted that the largest female petitioning campaign of the 1840s occurred in 1848, the same year as the First Women's Rights Convention, and was also the first campaign in which the signers identified themselves as "women of America." The shift in women's self-perception engendered by their prominent role as anti-slavery petitioners undoubtedly facilitated their ability to organize as a group around the issue of women's rights (DuBois 1981:7; Zaeske 2003:1-2,157-159,175-176).

### *Anti-slavery Politics*

The development of so-called "political abolitionism" in the United States was closely related to the early development of the Women's Rights Movement, as both issues created division among anti-slavery advocates. The First Women's Rights Convention had a decidedly political nature, largely because of the introduction of women suffrage to the group's agenda by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. This radical departure from earlier discussions of women's rights resulted from Stanton's ties to political abolitionists, the Liberty League, and the Free Soil Party.

Abolitionists had initially stayed out of the political arena in favor of using "moral suasion" to advance their cause. They maintained that focusing on the inarguable immorality of slavery, regardless of political interests, would serve best to hasten its eradication and that direct political action, such as voting, was unwarranted. Many members of the movement were strongly opposed to the concept of voting as a whole. William Lloyd Garrison in particular supported the idea of "no human government," and many Quakers agreed. Nationally, the AASS took an apolitical stance, but by the 1830s many of its members were frustrated with the lack of progress toward abolition and began to consider more politically-related tactics. Henry Brewster Stanton (1805-1887), the future husband of Elizabeth Cady, was an executive of the AASS, a renowned anti-slavery lecturer and organizer, and, by 1840, a political abolitionist (Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.21-23).

In contrast to most New York City abolitionists, Garrisonians and Quakers generally supported women's rights. The most radical followers of Garrison believed that they were fighting for freedom as an ideal and that denying it to women would hinder its achievement for slaves. At the May 1839 AASS convention held in New York City, "control turned on whether Garrison's female supporters would be allowed to participate. The first day and a half of the convention was spent in a discussion of this question." The final vote was 180 for to 140 against (with both Richard Hunt and Thomas M'Clintock voting in the affirmative), but a special national conference held in Albany two months later went the

opposite way, excluding female abolitionists from participation. In May 1840, Abigail Kelley Foster, a young Quaker woman from Lynn, Massachusetts, who insisted on women's right to speak publicly about politics, was appointed to the Executive Committee of the AASS (Sewell 1976:37).

These issues all came to a head in May 1840 at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where male delegates spent the first day debating whether or not to allow women delegates on the floor, ultimately deciding against it. Henry Brewster Stanton, spending his honeymoon at the convention with his new bride Elizabeth Cady, was not among the majority who voted against women's participation. Garrison left the floor of the convention to sit with the women in protest. Elizabeth Cady Stanton first met Lucretia Mott in London, and both women recalled discussing there the idea of a convention solely to address the topic of women's rights.

The growing tension among the members of the AASS over both political abolitionism and women's rights finally precipitated an official split in the organization. Those who opposed women's influence by and large supported the political abolitionists in the new American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (AFASS). The Garrisonians were then free to mix both women's rights and religious radicalism with apolitical anti-slavery agitation. Henry Brewster Stanton joined the AFASS, siding with the political abolitionists, although his views on women's right to participate in the anti-slavery movement were less pronounced than many others in the AFASS (Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.21-23; Sewell 1976:37).

In central and western New York, many abolitionists chose a middle ground between the two sides of the political debate. As early as 1837, anti-slavery activists in the region had considered asserting political power in pursuit of their goals. The idea of an abolitionist political party emerged at the grassroots level around 1839. Over 800 abolitionists from the six western counties of New York, including Henry Stanton, met in January 1840 and called for a national convention to meet in Albany in April. The 121 delegates at the national convention nominated two abolitionist candidates for President and Vice-President. They called themselves the Liberty Party, as explained in press releases they sent out:

we are for that liberty which knows no distinction in the blessings it confers between a sable or a light complexion, but recognizes in the sooty African a brother . . . . We are Whigs, we are Democrats; but neither the one or the other, if as such we must blot out from the charter of our liberties the self-evident truth, 'that all men are created free and equal.'

In August, the executive committee of the New York AASS endorsed the Liberty Party ticket. In September of 1840, the chapter voted unanimously not to affiliate with either of the national anti-slavery organizations (*Seneca Falls Democrat*, 10/14/1841, 11/4/1841; Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.22-24).

The organization of the Liberty Party did not fully address the issue of women's right to participate in politics and abolitionism, however. In 1847, a splinter group of political abolitionists, led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton's cousin Gerrit Smith (1797-1874), broke from the Liberty Party to form the Liberty League. Smith was one of the most active leaders in the Underground Railroad in central New York and introduced Elizabeth to both the Abolition Movement and her husband. His views on women's rights were as progressive as those on slavery. The Liberty League invited women to vote for the party's nominees for national office, the first time this had occurred in the United States. In June 1848 (one month before the First Women's Rights Convention), the Liberty League met in Buffalo and publically endorsed "universal suffrage in its broadest terms, females as well as males being entitled to vote" (*Liberator* 6/23/1848, quoted in Wellman 2008:56).

At the same time as Stanton's cousin was forming the Liberty League, her husband was actively involved with the organization of another new political party, the Free Soil Party. The end of the Mexican War brought urgency to the question of slavery in the new territories acquired by the United States. In response to an increased commitment by the major political parties and the government to the expansion of slavery, Henry Brewster Stanton joined other abolitionists throughout the North and Midwest in establishing the Free Soil Party. Stanton organized the first meeting of the Free Soil Party in Seneca Falls on June 14 and 15, 1848. Many of the men in attendance at that meeting also came, along with their family members, to the women's rights convention held in the town a month later. Free Soil advocates formed the single largest group of signers of the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments. At the national Free Soil convention in Buffalo in August of that year, the party nominated Martin Van Buren as their presidential candidate. Historians have

described the creation of the Free Soil Party as a “turning point in the political war against slavery” (*Seneca County Courier*:6/13/1848; Sewell 1976:158; Wellman 2004:207-208).

From both Gerrit Smith and Henry Brewster Stanton, Elizabeth Cady Stanton learned to value the importance of electoral strategies for reform in the context of abolition. As early as 1842, she wrote “I am in favour of political action and the organization of a third party as the most efficient way of calling forth and directing action.” The political actions of her family members during the 1840s reinforced lessons Stanton learned as a child from observing her father’s legal work. Stanton’s later contributions to the First Women’s Rights Convention highlighted her belief that political and legal reforms could be powerful and necessary tools for effecting changes in women’s status (Ginzberg 2009:60; Gordon, ed. 1997 I:29-30).

### Property Rights

Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s experience with legal reform prior to July 1848 included the activity surrounding New York’s Married Women’s Property Act. Several historians have shown how the debate over married women’s property laws contributed significantly to the development of the Women’s Rights Movement. As with many other reform efforts, New York led the way with respect to married women’s property legislation. In 1828, the state of New York passed a set of revised statutes that limited the power of trusts to such an extent that the ability of married women to inherit property legally from their husbands or fathers was unclear, prompting discussion about such rights. The following year, Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen advocated for a married woman’s property act in their New York City reform newspaper *The Free Enquirer*. In 1836, such an act was introduced unsuccessfully in the New York state legislature. Similar bills were introduced year after year and generated widespread public debate throughout the state. Other states also began to modify their statutes. In 1846, the New York state constitutional convention passed a married women’s property act, but it was reversed upon appeal. The bill came before the legislature again in the spring of 1848, and in April of that year New York finally passed the Married Women’s Property Act, which allowed women to retain control of and acquire property after marriage instead of releasing those rights upon marriage. Arguments used to support this act became direct models for arguments used for broader women’s rights, specifically those related to women’s suffrage, and foreshadowed the issues raised at Seneca Falls (Banner 1980:30; Basch 1982:79-112; Campbell 1989 I:54-55; DuBois 1981:12; Marilley:43-44; Rabkin 1980; Warbasse 1987; Wellman 1988).

While living in Boston in the early 1840s, Stanton lobbied on behalf of and circulated petitions for New York’s Married Women’s Property Act. She later noted that the issue intersected with many other aspects of social reform. Stanton described married women’s property as “the topic of general interest around many fashionable dinner-tables, and at many humble firesides. In this way all phases of the question were touched upon, involving the relation of the sexes, and gradually widening to all human interests—political, religious, civil and social.” She also wrote in her autobiography that the 1848 bill “[gave] rise to some discussion of woman’s rights.” In her September 1848 speech to the Waterloo Congregational Friends, Stanton stated that the time was right for women to demand their rights (Gordon, ed. 1997 I:94-123; Stanton 1993:150-151; Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:51-52).

The August 1846 state constitutional convention in New York involved much discussion of women’s rights, including their right to vote. Ansel Bascom, a delegate from Seneca Falls, strongly promoted the topic of woman suffrage, which had been on the minds of his constituents since at least 1843. The *Seneca Observer* noted that year, “the right of voting should be extended to females in common with males, and ... it is a violation of the great doctrine of equal rights that such is not the case.” Other New York residents were also concerned with the extension of voting rights. Six women from Depauville, New York, in Jefferson County, signed a petition presented to the 1846 constitutional convention requesting “equal, and civil and political rights with men.” The petition specifically mentioned women’s unfair “burdens of taxation... without admitting them the right of representation.” In November 1846, Samuel J. May, a Unitarian minister in Syracuse and close friend and reform associate of the M’Clintock Family, argued that “more than one-half of our population are females, to whom equal rights and equal privileges ought to be accorded.” In 1847, a pamphlet written in Ogdensburg, New York, used the Declaration of Independence to ground arguments for both women’s property and voting rights, as the women of Seneca Falls did the following year. Elisha Hurlbut, a lawyer from New York City, wrote in 1848, “Woman’s rights are as sacred to the law as man’s...her concern with government is as great and important as his own.” Hurlbut also concluded that women were entitled to the elective franchise regardless of whether one believed

that woman's nature was the same as man's or different. The authors of the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments used similar language to argue for women's suffrage. These examples demonstrate that private conversations and public appeals for women's rights were not unheard of at the time of the Seneca Falls convention. As Stanton herself wrote in her autobiography, "the demands made in the [Seneca Falls] convention were not entirely new to the reading and thinking public of New York" (Bishop and Attree 1847:646; Ginzberg 2006:7; Gordon, ed. 1997 I; Hurlbut 1848:117,123; May 1853:1-2,13; *Seneca Observer*, quoted in *Seneca Falls Democrat*:9/14/1843; Stanton 1993:150-151).

### **Social Reformers in Seneca Falls and Waterloo**

The two towns that became the birthplace of women's rights, Seneca Falls and Waterloo, were strategically located in the center of the groundswell of religious and reform movements occurring in central New York in the first half of the nineteenth century. Well-established transportation networks, in addition to functioning as the essential catalysts for both towns' active participation in the region's significant economic development during that time, also connected them to the larger reform centers of Rochester and Syracuse. The Seneca Turnpike between Albany and Buffalo and points west ran through both towns. Just beyond the Turnpike, the Seneca and Cayuga Canal linked them to the Erie Canal, fueling local industrial development throughout the 1830s. The completion of the Rochester and Auburn railroad in 1841, which later merged with the New York Central System, sustained economic growth. These geographic, economic, and demographic circumstances all placed the Waterloo/Seneca Falls area at a focal point within the larger social reform community. In the late 1840s, several key players in the burgeoning Women's Rights Movement convened in the two towns: the M'Clintocks, staunch abolitionists and progressive Quakers; the Hunts, anti-slavery advocates; and the Wesleyan Methodists, a recently organized reform-minded church community.

The large community of abolitionists in Waterloo was led by the M'Clintocks, a Quaker family from Philadelphia with many years of organizing experience in anti-slavery and other reform movements. Their active participation in Waterloo's local social reform networks directly led to the significant role that Thomas, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, and Mary Ann, Jr., played in the genesis of the Women's Rights Movement. Waterloo's anti-slavery society formed in December 1836, immediately after the M'Clintocks arrived in town. The family rented from Hunt the **M'Clintock House (LCS No. 040119, contributing building)** at 14 East Williams Street, the back street directly behind the downtown Waterloo commercial district where Thomas M'Clintock ran a drugstore and bookstore. The group of 20 Waterloo residents who organized against slavery may have met in the chamber above M'Clintock's store, which hosted many temperance and anti-slavery meetings in subsequent years. The M'Clintocks brought to their new community their knowledge of and connections with the strong Abolition Movement in Philadelphia. They had joined the anti-slavery movement there at least as early as 1827, when Thomas M'Clintock became one of the founders and first secretary of the Free Produce Society, a group that boycotted all products made by slave labor. Instead of slave-grown cotton, they used linen, wool, or cotton grown by free labor. As a member of the AASS, Thomas M'Clintock was closely associated with leaders of the national abolitionism movement, including William Lloyd Garrison, who visited the M'Clintock House in Waterloo often. Likewise, Mary Ann M'Clintock participated in the founding of the PFASS in 1833 and knew Lucretia Mott.

The M'Clintock Family continued their progressive anti-slavery activities in New York, which increasingly reflected their position on women's role in the Abolition Movement. In 1838, Thomas and Mary Ann were among a group representing Seneca County at the Anti-Slavery Society of Western New York meeting that brought up the issue of women's participation in county anti-slavery societies. Mary Ann M'Clintock was a corresponding member of the 1839 national women's anti-slavery convention, held in Philadelphia. At the 1839 AASS meeting in Philadelphia, Thomas voted to include the names of women from auxiliary societies in the conference participation rolls. Following the 1840 split in the AASS that resulted in the formation of the AFASS, the M'Clintocks supported the apolitical Garrisonian faction of abolitionists who welcomed women's participation. In November 1842, they helped to form the new Western New York Anti-Slavery Society (WNYASS), a bi-racial group whose leaders included both men and women. Thomas M'Clintock was a member of the Executive Committee, and Mary Ann and her eldest daughter, Elizabeth, served as officers. In May 1843, the M'Clintocks attended the annual anniversary meeting of the AASS in New York City. There, Thomas M'Clintock became a member of the Board of Managers, a position he held until 1848, when he became a vice-president. He was also an agent for Garrison's newspaper the *Liberator*, sold anti-slavery almanacs in his store, lectured on abolitionism, and wrote abolitionist articles.

The M'Clintock House in Waterloo has been called "one of the hubs of the American abolitionism movement" by historians. The family hosted many reformers and hid escaping slaves in the house, which is a documented Underground Railroad safe house listed on the NPS Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.<sup>15</sup> Central New York was geographically well situated to serve as a highway to Canada for escaped slaves. Consequently, the region became an important link in the Underground Railroad network that enabled fugitive slaves to travel undercover to freedom. Many households in upstate New York hosted fugitives or provided them with assistance along their route. The strong social connections among abolitionists in the area were a significant advantage in these efforts. By 1838, some central New York communities had organized Vigilance Committees to help protect fleeing African Americans from anti-abolitionist sentiment. The relatively accepting climate of many towns in upstate New York also encouraged some escaped slaves to remain on the United States side of the border. Syracuse was known as the "Canada of the United States." Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery in Maryland to become a well-known abolitionist orator and editor of the *North Star* abolitionist newspaper in Rochester. He was also an early advocate for women's rights: his paper's masthead read "Right is of no Sex—Truth is of no Color—God is the Father of us all, and we are all Brethren." Douglass was one of several major reformers who stayed with the M'Clintocks in Waterloo, along with William Lloyd Garrison, the British abolitionist George Thompson, Abby Kelley, William C. Nell (who worked in Boston on the *Liberator*), and Jermain Loguen ("the prince of the Underground Railroad" in Syracuse and a freedom seeker himself). Mary Ann M'Clintock's half-sister Margaret Pryor accompanied Abby Kelley on an 1843 speaking tour of western New York (Hawkes 2005:102; *North Star* 6/30/1848; Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.3,E.17-20).

From 1843 on, the women of the WNYASS, including Mary Ann and Elizabeth M'Clintock, organized annual women's anti-slavery fairs. They gained a wealth of experience holding large public meetings and arranging anti-slavery lectures. Elizabeth organized a fair in the Seneca Falls Temperance Hall in October 1843 with Rhoda Bement from Seneca Falls. Some of these women were responsible for inviting Frederick Douglass to Rochester in 1847. The M'Clintock women were also actively involved in the numerous anti-slavery petition campaigns of the late 1830s and early 1840s. During this period, Waterloo citizens sent more anti-slavery petitions to Congress than any other town in upstate New York except one (Paris, New York). In March 1838, Thomas M'Clintock and several other Quakers who later attended the First Women's Rights Convention signed a petition to remove the "foul blot" of slavery by the prohibition of "this inhuman traffic between the states." In February 1839, Waterloo citizens sent 12 petitions to Congress, including for the first time petitions from women. Mary Ann and Elizabeth M'Clintock initiated and circulated some of these petitions (Densmore 1998).

The M'Clintocks, like many abolitionists, were initially attracted to the anti-slavery movement by their religious beliefs that slavery was wrong. They belonged to the group of local Hicksite Quaker families affiliated with the Junius Monthly Meeting of Friends in Waterloo.<sup>16</sup> Quakers in upstate New York were some of the earliest protestors of slavery in the country; by 1781, all New York Quakers "in good standing" had freed their slaves. The Hicksite Quakers (named after Elias Hicks) were a separate reform group that split from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1827 over differences in the role of church doctrine, Quaker participation in social activism, and other factors. The Hicksites tended to attract the most outspoken Quakers and, as a result of their explicit focus on egalitarianism within both their own community as well as society at large, included abolition as one of their primary concerns. Many key organizers, lecturers, and officers of local Garrisonian anti-slavery societies in upstate New York came from the Hicksite community, as did the majority of WNYASS officers. Both Thomas and Mary Ann M'Clintock were leaders of the Hicksite Friends in Pennsylvania, and by the 1830s, Thomas had established a reputation as an influential Quaker minister, speaker, and writer. After they moved to Waterloo, the M'Clintocks remained actively involved in the reform-minded Quaker community (Braude 2001:59; Cott 2000:204; Densmore 1998).

<sup>15</sup> The abolitionism historical context for the M'Clintock House is discussed in more detail in the Draft National Register Multiple Property Nomination Form prepared by Milton Sernett and Judith Wellman in 2010 for Historic Resources Related to the Freedom Trail, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Central New York, 1820-1870. The information included in this registration form is an overview intended to place the M'Clintock's anti-slavery activism in context.

<sup>16</sup> The Junius Monthly Meetinghouse in Waterloo burned in the late nineteenth century, but the burial ground on the meetinghouse site is still extant.

From its origins, the Quaker faith had also explored as a community the “social, civil, and religious” rights of women. Quakers had long encouraged women to speak about faith and serve as ministers, although the church elders were all men. Reform-minded Quakers continued to struggle with the practical application of their egalitarian principles concerning women’s roles during the 1830s and 1840s. Men and women met separately to deliberate over the religious conduct of their members, on the basis that men should discipline men and women should discipline women. However, as Quaker historian Christopher Densmore has argued, although “Quakers were . . . used to seeing women in positions of authority and as participants in temporal (Quaker) affairs...women’s meetings could not receive or disown members without the ‘concurrence’ of the men’s meeting.” The growing numbers of Hicksite Quakers in western New York, Canada, and Michigan who established the Genesee Yearly Meeting in 1834 made some changes to the sections of the meeting rules concerning separate men’s and women’s meetings. In 1836, just after the M’Clintocks joined the Junius Monthly Meeting of Friends, they—along with Margaret and George Pryor and others whose names appear on the Declaration of Sentiments—proposed further changes to the book of discipline that would eliminate the requirement of concurrence for the women’s meetings. The Genesee Yearly Meeting of Friends approved the changes at their 1838 annual meeting in Farmington, New York, where Thomas M’Clintock was elected Clerk. In 1842, the Genesee Yearly Meeting incorporated its egalitarian policy about women’s rights formally into its *Discipline*: “In accordance with the declaration of the apostle, that male and female are one in Christ Jesus, the following rules of Discipline are to be understood as alike applicable to both sexes. . . . Agreeably to the conclusion of our Yearly meeting, men’s and women’s meetings stand on the equal footing of common interest and common right.” This was the first time in any Quaker meeting, and one of the first times in any religious body anywhere in the dominant European American culture of the United States, that women were formally recognized as equal to men in a political as well as spiritual sense (Braude 2001:59; Cott 2000:204; Densmore 1998; *Discipline of Genesee Yearly Meeting* 1842:11).

Thomas M’Clintock held the Genesee Clerk position until 1843. His withdrawal from formal leadership roles in Genesee Yearly Meeting of Friends coincided with his active commitment to elected positions in the AASS, perhaps reflecting the beginning of his dissatisfaction with the Quaker stance on abolitionism. For many like the M’Clintocks, actively engaging in the Abolition Movement was part of the long-standing Quaker tradition, but in the mid-1840s more conservative viewpoints began to dominate the Genesee Yearly Meeting. Conflicts between religion and abolition were not new. In the late 1830s and early 1840s, many abolitionists left established churches to form new congregations. Between 1836 and 1845, white Congregationalists and Presbyterians combined to form 34 separate “Union” churches. Abolitionists from other denominations also formed new egalitarian abolitionist meetings, including the Free Baptists (1841), the Anti-Slavery Baptists, and the Franckean Evangelical Lutheran Synod (1837). By the mid-1840s, over 300 such abolitionist fellowships existed. Central New York was in the thick of the debates between religious leaders and abolitionists. Historian Douglas Strong described the nature of the region’s stance as follows: “In upstate New York, political abolitionism, as organized in the Liberty party, and ecclesiastical abolitionism, as organized in independent anti-slavery congregations, were two expressions of the same religious disposition. Both were nicknamed ‘the Abolition church.’” Almost all Presbyterian churches in upstate New York left the national Presbyterian establishment (Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.27-28; Strong 1999:114).

Within the Genesee Yearly Meeting of the Hicksite Quakers, abolition was the issue that ultimately led to the split that resulted in the formation of the Congregational Friends (later called Progressive Friends and still later Friends of Human Progress). The group initially disagreed about whether or not to allow the use of Quaker meetinghouses for abolitionist meetings. When select meetings (ministers and elders) tried to prevent such activities, other Quakers confronted the entire structure of Quaker meetings as an unwarranted limitation of the right of individuals to act on the vision of the Spirit as they saw it. This issue festered for several years in the late 1840s and came to a head in June 1848 (a month before the First Women’s Rights Convention), when 200 people walked out of the yearly meeting in Farmington, New York. Thomas and Mary Ann M’Clintock were among the group of dissenters, who formed a new religious body called the Congregational Friends four months later, in October 1848. They adopted two documents, *An Address to Friends of Genesee Yearly Meeting* and the *Basis of Religious Association*, outlining their fundamental philosophy of individual liberty. The *Basis of Religious Association*, written by Thomas M’Clintock and Rhoda DeGarmo, states that “The true basis of religious fellowship is not identity of theological belief, but unity of heart and oneness of purpose in respect to the great practical duties of life” (M’Clintock and DeGarmo 1848).

The Congregational Friends were particularly active in the early Women's Rights Movement. Although, as historian Densmore states, there is no explicit connection between the origins of the Quaker split and the women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, both groups were concerned with the "common question of external authority." The Congregational Friends did away with any hierarchical structure. While they did continue the tradition of having both a male and female clerk, men and women met together instead of in separate meetings. Other Congregational Friends meetings were organized on this principle in Green Plain, Ohio; Michigan; Longwood, Pennsylvania; and Collins, New York. Lucretia Mott noted that "three yearly mgs. will be formed this autumn on radical principles,—doing away with select mgs. & ordaing. ministers, men and women on perfect equality. What a wonderful breaking up there is among sects." Many members of the group who left the Genesee Yearly Meeting—such as the M'Clintocks, the Hunts, the Pryors, and the DeGarmos—also signed the Declaration of Sentiments at the Seneca Falls convention (Densmore 1998; Garrison Collection:Mott, 9/10/1848; *National Era* 7/26/1849).

The M'Clintocks brought their strong abolitionist sentiments not only to Waterloo and the Junius Monthly Meeting of Friends but also to their landlord Richard Pell Hunt. Hunt was a wealthy local farmer and industrialist responsible for the development of large portions of the town. Following his marriage to Sarah M'Clintock, his third wife, Hunt became a supporter of both the anti-slavery and women's rights movements, and his wealth and social connections served as strong assets to both. Richard and his fourth wife, Jane Hunt, were directly associated with the 1848 meeting at the **Hunt House (LCS No. 040667, contributing building)** where the decision was made to hold a women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, as well as with the convention itself.

Documentary evidence of Richard Hunt's involvement in anti-slavery activities begins after his September 1837 marriage to Sarah M'Clintock, indicating that Sarah's strong ties to the Abolition Movement likely influenced her husband. The Hunt Family Papers include a subscription to the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, an anti-slavery newspaper published in Philadelphia from 1838 to 1854. In 1837, Richard Hunt signed the call to organize the Seneca County Anti-Slavery Society, which met for the first time on October 25 at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Seneca Falls. Hunt was elected president of the meeting, and Thomas M'Clintock served as vice-president.

The Hunt's anti-slavery activism increased over the next few years. Richard and Sarah Hunt joined Thomas and Mary Ann M'Clintock as Seneca County representatives to the 1838 Anti-Slavery Society of Western New York convention. Like Mary Ann M'Clintock, Sarah participated in the 1839 national women's anti-slavery convention as a corresponding member. In February of that year, she and Richard again attended the Anti-Slavery Society of Western New York convention, held in Penn Yan. Richard Hunt joined Thomas M'Clintock at the AASS meeting in May of 1839 in voting to include women's names on the rolls, and Hunt also voted to give full rights to female members of anti-slavery societies. Like the M'Clintocks, the Hunts were staunchly Garrisonian in their abolitionist sympathies. In 1840, Hunt and M'Clintock sent William Lloyd Garrison a bolt of cloth made at Hunt's woolen mill, so that Garrison, as a delegate to the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, could wear a suit made entirely free from slave labor. The Hunts also hosted many abolitionists and hid escaping slaves in their house, which, like the M'Clintock House, is a documented Underground Railroad safe house listed on the NPS Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (Garrison Papers).<sup>17</sup>

Sarah M'Clintock Hunt died in 1842, at the age of 35; her explicit request that her body not be wrapped in slave-grown cotton but in linen demonstrated her unwavering commitment to abolition. She is buried in the Junius Monthly Meetinghouse cemetery in Waterloo, and her obituary appeared in the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*. Richard Hunt continued to participate in local and regional anti-slavery organizations. He served as vice-president of an AASS meeting in Rochester in 1842 and also became a member of the Executive Committee of the WNYASS that same year. Hunt remarried in November 1845, but he and his fourth wife, Jane, remained connected to Thomas and Mary Ann M'Clintock, as evidenced by the presence of Mary Ann at the Hunt House on July 9, 1848, when the women's rights convention was organized. Richard Hunt's considerable financial, social, and professional resources undoubtedly contributed to the favorable circumstances that existed in Waterloo and Seneca Falls for such a project (*National Anti-Slavery Standard*:10/30/1842).

<sup>17</sup> See Sernett and Wellman 2010.

In 1843, Richard Hunt donated \$100, one of the largest contributions, toward the construction of a meetinghouse at 126 Fall Street in Seneca Falls, the location of the **Wesleyan Chapel Site (LCS No. 040014, contributing site)**, for the village's newly formed Wesleyan Methodist Society. Hunt's egalitarian principles and abolitionist sentiment likely motivated him to support the local Wesleyan separatists, who officially broke with the national Methodist Episcopal Church in March of 1843 over the issue of slave's rights within the church. The denomination's first president, Reverend Luther Lee, was an ardent abolitionist, an executive in the AASS, and known to both Hunt and Thomas M'Clintock. The Wesleyan Chapel<sup>18</sup> quickly became a regional center of reform debate, known to contemporaries as "a free discussion house," the "great Light House of Seneca Falls," and the "Anti-Slavery Depot." Consequently, the chapel was an obvious choice of venue for the First Women's Rights Convention (Kelley:8/13/1843; *True Wesleyan*:2/10/1849).

The Methodist Episcopal Church in Seneca Falls, founded in October 1832, was one of the earliest M.E. congregations to join the Wesleyan separatists. The church supported local abolition efforts from the beginning, hosting the county's first anti-slavery convention in 1837, attended by both Richard Hunt and Thomas M'Clintock. The following year, the Seneca Falls delegate to the district steward's meeting in Geneva, Joseph Metcalf, presented a resolution articulating his church's clear anti-slavery position:

We the officers and Members of the M. E. Church in Seneca Falls are more than ever convinced of the great evil of slavery as it exists in the U. States. And we believe that principles without measure will never extirpate this crying soil, and we further believe that the church should take the lead in this as well as in all other moral enterprises.

Metcalf appeared again before the Geneva Presbytery with an anti-slavery resolution in 1839. Although the local church recognized the problems this issue caused for church governance and polity, it remained firm in its commitment to pursue an anti-slavery policy. In 1840, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting in Baltimore, refused to accept the testimony of "colored members of our church in all those states and territories where the evil law concludes this testimony." In response, small groups of abolitionists began to form separate churches all over New England, Michigan, and upstate New York, some of them calling themselves Wesleyan Methodists. Members of the Seneca Falls Methodist Church adopted an anti-slavery resolution on October 10, 1840. They concluded, "As members of the M. E. Church, we deem it our imperative duty to act for those in bonds as bound with them." However, the Presiding Elders refused to endorse the resolution, perhaps recognizing that to do so would amount to endorsing a split in the national Methodist Episcopal Church. Therefore, the secretary put the motion directly to the members, and it passed unanimously (Seneca Falls Methodist Episcopal Church Records:7/21/1838,10/10/1840).

In 1842, a small conference of Reformed Methodists, Wesleyans, and Protestant Methodist reformers from New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Michigan met in Utica, New York. Many groups continued to organize under the Wesleyan name at the local level during that winter. On August 10, 1842, the Seneca Falls church presented a shorter but more emphatic resolution to the Quarterly Conference, with the clear request that if slave owners could not be separated from the church, the "non-slave-holding conferences may be separated from those who encourage it." At the same time, local Methodists organized a series of anti-slavery meetings and invited a former Methodist minister to preach on the subject. On February 11, 1843, Wesleyan Methodists first met formally in Seneca Falls. Joseph Metcalf announced in a letter printed in the *True Wesleyan* on March 4, 1843, that 26 people in Seneca Falls had left the local Methodist Episcopal Church to organize themselves into a Wesleyan Church. They officially organized the "First Wesleyan Methodist Society of Seneca Falls" at a meeting in the District 1 schoolhouse on March 27, 1843. Two months later, on May 31, 1843, as many as 3000 people from 16 states and at least 10 denominations formally organized the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Utica. Wesleyan congregations organized in at least 47 towns in upstate New York (Seneca Falls Methodist Episcopal Church Records:8/10/1842; *True Wesleyan*:3/4/1843).

Wesleyan Methodists drew on reformers from many Protestant traditions. In addition to the abolition of slavery, they supported temperance, women's rights, the abolition of war and secret societies, and the rights of lay people within the church. African Americans were welcomed as equal members of the church. Wesleyans in Seneca Falls counted at least five African American members or supporters, including the fugitive slaves Thomas James, a trustee of the church from

<sup>18</sup> The building was referred to as the "Wesleyan Chapel" as early as November 1843; see Yocum and Wong 1992:8-9.

1850 to 1853, and Joshua W. Wright, a trustee and donor for many years beginning in 1848. Many members of the congregation supported Underground Railroad work. Several Wesleyan ministers as well as parishioners, most notably George Pegler (1843-45), Samuel Salisbury (1845-49), and Horace B. Knight (1858-62, 1864-65), were actively involved in assisting freedom seekers (Strong 1999:100-101).

From the beginning, the Wesleyans opened their meetinghouse freely to reform speakers. Their view of the Gospel was, as described by Reverend Luther Lee, "so radically reformatory, that to preach it fully and clearly, is to attack and condemn all wrong, and to assert and defend all righteousness." For a time in 1844, the trustees refused to allow politicians to use it for speeches on behalf of individual political parties, but they rescinded this provision in 1845. In 1844, Peter Bannister, a fugitive slave from Richmond, Virginia, hosted by the first Wesleyan minister in Seneca Falls, spoke in the Wesleyan Chapel about his experiences. In 1846, J.C. Hathaway, a European-American Quaker abolitionist and Underground Railroad activist from Farmington and president of the WNYASS, spoke there with Charles Remond, an African American abolitionist from Boston. Frederick Douglass spoke several times in the chapel, including on May 4, 1848 (ten weeks before the First Women's Rights Convention was held there), and again in April 1849 (Lee quoted in Strong 1999:100-101; *True Wesleyan* 2/10/1849).

### **The First Women's Rights Convention**

The isolated strands of thought on women's rights circulating throughout the country in the late 1840s in the context of other discussions coalesced into an organized movement for reform in the convention held in Seneca Falls in July of 1848. The convention took place there primarily because of the well-established social reform networks in place in both Seneca Falls and Waterloo, as discussed above. Mary Ann and Elizabeth M'Clintock and Jane Hunt, along with other women activists including Martha Wright and Lucretia Mott, coordinated the event together with their neighbor Elizabeth Cady Stanton as a way to publicly voice their concerns and build local support. Stanton, a fledgling activist, and the M'Clintocks, seasoned anti-slavery leaders, formulated the major themes of the debate in a document called the Declaration of Sentiments, which served as the primary agenda for the convention as well as a catalyst for further activism. The Wesleyan Chapel provided an ideal place to hold an open forum on such progressive topics. The two-day convention attracted widespread attention and was a turning point in the larger Women's Rights Movement. Before Seneca Falls, people discussed women's rights through other avenues, especially abolitionism and legal reform. After Seneca Falls, women's rights advocates created an organized movement based on conventions, with leaders, an agenda, and methods (Wellman 2008:185).

### **Planning the Convention**

In the summer of 1848, the Quaker minister Lucretia Mott and her husband James traveled throughout western New York and Canada with a social reform itinerary. They met with communities of people who had escaped from slavery, visited prisoners in Auburn Prison, and observed Seneca Indians at Cattaraugus Reservation as they debated the future of the tribe. Mott's message was consistent. She "fearlessly opposes Slavery of all kinds," reported the *New York Tribune*. "She advocates thorough Education for all, Peace and Land Reform. She . . . insisted that Practical Christianity was the only thing important—creeds and forms being of little account." As part of their travels, the Motts visited Lucretia's youngest sister, Martha Wright, who lived with her second husband David Wright, a partner in the law firm of the reform governor and anti-slavery politician William Henry Seward, in Auburn, New York, 15 miles east of Seneca Falls (*New York Tribune*:6/29/1848).

On Sunday, July 9, Mott and Wright visited Jane Hunt at the Hunt House in Waterloo.<sup>19</sup> Mary Ann M'Clintock also joined the gathering, as did Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who had recently moved to the area from Boston with her family. The M'Clintocks were friends of Stanton's sister, Tryphena, who lived with her husband Edward Bayard in Seneca Falls. Thomas M'Clintock also knew Stanton's cousin, Gerrit Smith, through his involvement with the AASS in central New York. Stanton had met Mary Ann M'Clintock's niece Elizabeth Neall, a delegate from the PFASS along with Mott, at

---

<sup>19</sup> No contemporary primary sources exist as a record of the meeting at the Hunt House or the subsequent gathering at the M'Clintock House prior to the convention. Information about these events comes primarily from Elizabeth Cady Stanton's reminiscences written over 30 years after they took place, and several of her accounts are conflicting.

the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Meeting in London. In the course of the women's conversation, Stanton recalled, she "poured out the torrent of my long-accumulating discontent, with such vehemence and indignation that I stirred myself, as well as the rest of the party, to do and dare anything." The small social gathering became a revolutionary planning session, as the women decided to take action on their concerns. They returned to an idea that Stanton and Mott had discussed in London in 1840 and in Boston in 1842 of "a public meeting for protest and discussion." As Stanton later described it:

The general discontent I felt with woman's portion as wife, mother, housekeeper, physician, and spiritual guide, the chaotic conditions into which everything fell without her constant supervision, and the wearied, anxious look of the majority of women impressed me with a strong feeling that some active measures should be taken to remedy the wrongs of society in general, and of women in particular. My experience at the World's Antislavery Convention, all I had read of the legal status of women, and the oppression I saw everywhere, together swept across my soul, intensified now by many personal experiences. It seemed as if all the elements had conspired to impel me to some onward step. My discontent, according to Emerson, must have been healthy, for it moved us all to prompt action, and we decided, then and there, to call a 'Woman's Rights Convention' (Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:67).

The group theorized that Mott's national reputation and talent as an experienced public speaker could attract crowds, so they decided to hold the meeting while the Motts were still in central New York. They chose the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, the only large local meeting place open to reformers, as the venue. The women wrote a brief notice advertising the event:

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION.—A Convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of woman, will be held in the Wesleyan Chapel, at Seneca Falls, N.Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, the 19th and 20th of July, current; commencing at 10 o'clock A.M. During the first day the meeting will be exclusively for women, who are earnestly invited to attend. The public generally are invited to be present on the second day, when Lucretia Mott, of Philadelphia, and other ladies and gentlemen, will address the convention.

The *Seneca County Courier* in Seneca Falls published the notice on July 11. Mary Ann and Elizabeth M'Clintock and Lucretia Mott also sent it to newspaper editors they knew from their anti-slavery activities. Publications such as the *Ovid Bee* in Ovid, New York, and Frederick Douglass's *North Star* in Rochester printed the notice on Friday, July 14, 1848 (*Seneca County Courier*:7/11/1848; Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:68).

### **The Declaration of Sentiments**

During the ten days between the initial decision to hold the convention and the actual event, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Elizabeth M'Clintock worked to organize the program. M'Clintock invited Frederick Douglass to speak, while Stanton asked for letters of support from well-known anti-slavery activists Lydia Maria Child, Maria Weston Chapman, and Sarah Grimké. Stanton drafted a declaration and resolutions document outlining the major items on the meeting's agenda. On Sunday, July 16, she met with Elizabeth M'Clintock at the M'Clintock House in Waterloo to refine the document into what Stanton hoped would be "as perfect a declaration as should go forth from the first woman's rights convention that has ever assembled." Several other members of the M'Clintock Family, including the elder and younger Mary Anns, joined them around the mahogany parlor table. James Truman, who married Mary Ann M'Clintock, Jr., in 1852, later wrote of this meeting, "the arrangements for holding the first convention ever held to consider the wrongs of woman, were made at his [Thomas M'Clintock's] home in Waterloo, New York, and his wife and daughters - Elizabeth and Mary, together with Elizabeth C. Stanton, drew up the declaration of principles, the effect of which has been felt in all civilized communities the world over." Thomas and daughters Sarah (age 25) and Julia (age 17) may also have participated. At least once, son Charles looked in on the group (Douglass [1848]; Gordon, ed. 1997 IV:69; Hawkes 2005; Truman 1883; Wellman 2004:190-193).

The group began with Stanton's draft and studied several reports produced by recent peace, temperance, and anti-slavery conventions. The M'Clintock library provided the reports, newspapers, and documents used in their research. Stanton later remembered that

all alike seemed too tame and pacific for the inauguration of a rebellion such as the world had never before seen. So, after much delay, one of the circle took up the Declaration of 1776, and read it aloud with much spirit and emphasis, and it was at once decided to adopt the historic document, with some slight changes such as substituting "all men" for "King George."

Stanton did not take personal credit for using the Declaration of Independence as a model, and it was not an unusual idea. Reformers from temperance advocates to abolitionists drew on the country's founding declaration for their own statements of purpose, including the AASS which had written its own "Declaration of Sentiments" in 1833. As described earlier in relation to legal reform efforts in New York, proponents of property and voting rights for women had often referenced the concepts set forth in the Declaration of Independence to substantiate their arguments. Stanton and the M'Clintock women were undoubtedly familiar with its use within these frameworks and chose to follow suit (Campbell 1989:52; Foner, ed. 1976; Gordon, ed. 1997 I:86; Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:68; Wilentz 1986).

After deciding on the overall format for the declaration, the group carried out "a protracted search ... through statute books, church usages, and the customs of society" to find 18 grievances of women to match the 18 grievances of the colonists against King George in the original Declaration. "We all knew that women must have more grievances than men, in the nature of things," Stanton recollected, "but what they were was the question. ... After hours of diligent searching, of creeds, codes, customs and constitutions," Stanton recalled, "we were rejoiced to find that we could make out as good a bill of impeachment against our sires and sons as they had against old King George" (Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:67-69).

Although some changes to the initial draft of the women's Declaration of Sentiments were suggested and adopted at the Convention itself, Stanton and the M'Clintocks established the format and much of the content at the M'Clintock House meeting. The preamble to the document was identical to that of the Declaration of Independence, with one small change. Instead of "all men are created equal," this document asserted that "all men and women are created equal":

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.<sup>20</sup>

The list of grievances followed. The first four advocated voting rights and political rights for women, summarized in the very first point that "He [man] has never permitted her [woman] to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise." This appeal for the ballot, which Stanton repeatedly claimed credit for introducing, distinguished the Seneca Falls convention from earlier arguments for women's rights in a radical way. Strongly influenced by her husband's Free Soil Party organizing and her cousin Gerrit Smith's work with the Liberty League, Stanton insisted on including electoral reform in the debate despite opposition from people who were otherwise her allies. She later recounted that her husband Henry was "thunderstruck" and "amazed at her daring," telling her "You will turn the proceedings into a farce." He did not attend the convention, instead lecturing about the Free Soil Party out of town on the day of the event. Lucretia Mott, who like many Quakers opposed political activity for anyone, was so stunned that she burst out, "Lizzie, thou wilt make

---

<sup>20</sup> This version and all quotations from the Declaration that follow are taken from the first printing of the document in *Report of the Woman's Rights Convention Held at Seneca Falls, N. Y., July 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 1848*, Mary Ann M'Clintock, Eunice Newton Foote, Amy Post, Elizabeth M'Clintock, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1848).

the convention ridiculous.” Stanton insisted, however, that “I must declare the truth as I believe it to be” (Bullard, ed. 1884:613-614; Densmore 1998; Davis 1871:57; Ginzberg 2009:60; M’Clintock et al. 1848:5,8; *New York Tribune*:7/19/1848; Wellman 2004).

Six more grievances dealt with legal discrimination against women, beginning with the civil death of married women, who could not own property or wages in their own names. Married women also had no moral responsibility in the eyes of the law, because married women could commit crimes without retribution, if done in the presence of their husbands, implying that their husbands owned their morality as well. Husbands were masters, who had “power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.” Divorce left all power over children and property in the hands of husbands. Single women could own property, but they were compelled to pay taxes when they had no representation in that government.

The next four grievances addressed discrimination against women in work, education, and religion. Man has “monopolized nearly all the profitable employments,” read the Declaration, “and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration.” Professions such as theology, medicine, and law were closed to woman, along with most colleges. In both church and state, woman was kept subordinate, since men claimed “Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry.” Finally, the document attacked the whole system of moral values that sustained this treatment of women: the “different code of morals for men and women”; the way in which men usurped the “prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and her God” ; and the personal cost, in terms of self-respect, that women endured from this system. Man “has endeavored, in every way that he could to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependant and abject life.”

The Declaration ended with a statement about the future. Women should “have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of these United States.” In pursuit of this goal, and in the face of “no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule,” the document stated that supporters of the Declaration agree to “use every instrumentality within our power” to promote their agenda: employing agents, printing tracts, petitioning state legislatures and Congress, enlisting support from “the pulpit and the press,” and, finally, organizing more conventions. The specific inclusion of petitioning as a means of publicizing their goals and agitating for change reflected the M’Clintock Family’s experience with petitioning as a powerful tool in the Abolition Movement (Zaeske 2003:178).

### **The Convention in Seneca Falls**

About 300 men and women met in the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, for the country’s First Women’s Rights Convention on July 19 and 20, 1848. Most people attending came from Seneca Falls or Waterloo, or within a day’s ride of those communities. They were from both rural and urban backgrounds and worked in all sectors of the economy, including agriculture, commerce, and industry. In economic status, they ranged from relatively modest to relatively wealthy. Most lived in nuclear families and came with at least one other family member. The attendees all shared a commitment to egalitarian ideals, based on their affiliation with specific anti-slavery religious communities, organizations, and political networks, such as the Quakers, the Wesleyan Methodists, the WNYASS, and the Free Soil and Liberty parties. All five of the women who had written the call for the convention at the Hunt House 10 days earlier attended, along with many of their family members. Elizabeth Cady Stanton arrived with her sister, Harriet Cady Eaton, and Harriet’s son, Daniel Cady Eaton. Richard and Jane Hunt attended, as did two of Richard’s sisters, Lydia Mount and Hannah Plant, and a niece (Mary E. Mount Vail). Four members of the M’Clintock Family were there: Thomas, his wife Mary Ann, and his daughters Elizabeth and Mary Ann. The elder Mary Ann’s half-sister, Margaret Pryor, also came, with her son George W. Pryor. Notable attendees also included Ansel Bascom, a local lawyer and legal reformer involved with married women’s property legislation in the state and the Free Soil candidate for Congress; Amelia Bloomer, a temperance advocate from Seneca Falls, and her husband, Dexter; and several reformers from Rochester, including Frederick Douglass (Ginzberg 2009:60; Wellman 2004:207-208).

As written in the call to the convention, the organizers intended the first day as a planning session, open to women only. This program followed the model of female anti-slavery conventions where women met on the first day and men joined on the second day. It also paralleled the Quaker practice of women meeting apart from men to discuss issues concerning

their own. Contemporary letters, newspaper coverage, and the convention report indicated that “women exclusively” participated in the first day’s discussions. In a letter to Stanton, Lucretia Mott asked Stanton to keep Mott’s convention speech for the second day when Mott’s husband would attend. It is possible that some men did attend on the first day, as Charlotte Woodward remembered over 70 years after the convention that the presence of so many “uncommonly liberal men” on the first day of the convention gave her the “courage to stay over for the second day’s sessions.” Public lectures open to both men and women were held both evenings, though, after the convention adjourned, and Woodward may have been recalling the audience at those (M’Clintock et al. 1848; Dorr 1970:47).

The group assembled at the Wesleyan Chapel on July 19 and began by appointing Mary Ann M’Clintock, Jr., as secretary. Stanton and Mott together introduced the purpose of the convention and encouraged the women to speak freely as they considered the Declaration of Sentiments. In addition to making some changes to the document, the group adopted 11 resolutions, all based on the premise that “woman was man’s equal--was intended to be so by the Creator, and the highest good of the race demands that she should be recognized as such.”<sup>21</sup> The first resolution stated that “Such laws as conflict, in any way, with the true and substantial happiness of woman, are contrary to the great precept of nature, and of no validity.” Others encouraged women to take advantage of any opportunity to speak in public, to enlighten themselves concerning their individual rights, to move beyond “the circumscribed limits” of their accepted role in society to “the enlarged sphere,” and to accept responsibility for civic participation. Two resolutions were directed at men, with respect to their double standards concerning women in public and the need for men to exercise “the same amount of virtue, delicacy, and refinement of behavior” as was expected of women. The ninth resolution emphasized Stanton’s assertion of the right of women to vote: “It is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.”

When the women reconvened after lunch, they began to sign the Declaration of Sentiments. There was some disagreement over whether men as well as women should sign the document. Stanton felt strongly that the movement should be led by women alone. However, the attendees agreed to encourage men to sign the document, deferring the final resolution of the question until the next day, when men could enter the debate. Ultimately, 68 women and 32 men signed the Declaration on separate sheets of paper. About one fourth of the signers were Quakers, specifically those who had walked out of the Genesee Yearly Meeting in June and formed the Congregational Friends in October. About one third were affiliated with the emerging Free Soil Party. Elizabeth M’Clintock capped off the afternoon with a speech, and the convention was adjourned to the next day. In the evening, Lucretia Mott addressed a large audience in a public lecture held in the chapel, outlining the progress of reforms, including temperance, antislavery, peace, and the new movement for the rights of women. Eliab W. Capron, editor of the *National Reformer* and a signer of the Declaration of Sentiments, described Mott’s speech as “one of the most eloquent, logical and philosophical discourses we ever listened to” (quoted in Gordon, ed. 1997 I:84; Wellman 2004:207-208).

When the convention opened the next morning, Stanton stood up in front of the group to read the Declaration of Sentiments, so frightened, she remembered, that she felt like “suddenly abandoning all her principles and running away.” Conference participants discussed the document in both morning and afternoon sessions. Lucretia Mott gave the first speech, followed by Ansel Bascom; S. E. Woodworth, a local dry goods merchant attending the convention with his fiancée; and Thomas and Mary Ann M’Clintock, among others. Frederick Douglass and Elizabeth Cady Stanton also spoke. In the afternoon, the convention considered each of the 11 resolutions composed the previous day. The official convention report noted that certain resolutions, “from their self-evident truth, elicited but little remark; others, after some criticism, much debate, and some slight alterations, were finally passed by a large majority.” The ninth resolution, in particular, encountered some resistance from those participants who were opposed in principle to voting by anyone, let alone women. Stanton later recalled that she wanted nevertheless “to demand the right of suffrage, then and there, because I saw that was the fundamental right out of which all others should necessarily flow.” She enlisted Frederick Douglass to speak in defense of the resolution. Addressing the Woman Suffrage Association 40 years later, in April of 1888, Douglass explained that he recognized the logic of Stanton’s position that “the power to choose rulers and make laws, was the right by which all others could be secured.” Stanton recalled, however, that “he [Douglass] did not speak quite fast enough for me, nor say all I wanted said, and the first thing I knew I was on my feet defending the resolution,

<sup>21</sup> The resolutions quoted in this document are taken from the 1848 *Report of the Woman’s Rights Convention Held at Seneca Falls, N. Y., July 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 1848*.

and in due time Douglass and I carried the whole convention" (Bullard, ed. 1884:613; Foner, ed. 1992:109-115; M'Clintock et al. 1848; Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:73).

Thomas M'Clintock presided over a final meeting held in the chapel that evening. The organizers read the minutes and asked for objections from the audience. None were made. Stanton gave a speech, and Thomas M'Clintock contributed several extracts about women's legal disabilities from Blackstone's code of laws. Lucretia Mott offered one final resolution: "That the speedy success of our cause depends upon the zealous and untiring efforts of both men and women, for the overthrow of the monopoly of the pulpit, and for the securing to woman an equal participation with men in the various trades, professions and commerce." Significantly, Mott emphasized the efforts of "both men and women," and she mentioned only religion and work, not politics, as areas of concern. Mary Ann M'Clintock, Jr., gave a brief speech. Then Douglass and Mott, the two major orators of the convention, spoke once more. As its last act, the convention appointed five women—Mary Ann M'Clintock, Eunice Newton Foote, Amy Post, Elizabeth M'Clintock, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton—to prepare the proceedings for publication, which they arranged to have printed in Douglass's *North Star*. The resulting convention report became the first of the tracts put in circulation to publicize both the event and its manifesto, as recommended at the end of the Declaration of Sentiments (M'Clintock et al. 1848).

### The Women's Rights Movement after Seneca Falls

The Seneca Falls convention had an immediate impact in both the upstate New York region and across the country. The large network of reform activists present at the event took advantage of the interest it created in women's rights and worked to sustain the momentum it generated. They used the agenda presented in the Declaration of Sentiments to guide their subsequent activities. The towns of Seneca Falls and Waterloo remained at the center of the Women's Rights Movement in the years immediately following the 1848 convention, as did many of the primary organizers and participants in the event. The Women's Rights National Historical Park Historic District's associations with the movement continued through 1862, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton moved away from Seneca Falls, shifting the focus away from the region. However, the 1848 event and the Declaration of Sentiments continued to influence early women's rights reformers through the Civil War and later.

Three journalists who attended the convention reported on the proceedings immediately after it occurred, and major national newspapers soon publicized it as well. Nathan Milliken, editor of the Free Soil *Seneca County Courier* in Seneca Falls, reported on the meeting on July 21, describing it as "novel in its character." On July 28, Frederick Douglass wrote in the *North Star* that it was an "extraordinary meeting" and called the Declaration of Sentiments "the basis of a grand movement for attaining all the civil, social, political, and religious rights of woman." On August 3, Eliab W. Capron, editor of the Auburn, New York, *National Reformer*, stated that "This convention...forms an era in the progress of the age; it beng the first convention of the kind ever held" (*National Reformer*:8/3/1848; *North Star*:7/28/1848; *Seneca County Courier*:7/21/1848).

Editors across the country picked up the story, adding their support or expressing opposition to the event. The *New York Herald* called it a second "flag of independence...a solemn league and covenant." Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* expressed support for the women's stance, stating "When a sincere republican is asked to say in sober earnest what adequate reason he can give, for refusing the demand of women to an equal participation with men in political rights, he must answer, None at all." The *Oneida Whig* called the convention "a dreadful revolt...the most shocking and unnatural ever recorded in the history of womanity." One historian's review of 79 newspapers concluded that, out of 58 articles about Seneca Falls, 29% were positive, 42% were negative, and 28% were neutral. Stanton later claimed that some signers of the Declaration of Sentiments withdrew their support after the event as a consequence of the negative publicity, although there is no other documentary evidence to support this assertion (Ginzberg 2006:7-8; Greeley, editorial, *New York Tribune*, quoted in Lutz 1940:52; Gurko 1976:103-104; *Oneida Whig* 8/1/1848; Stanton 1993:149; Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:72; Terpstra 1975).

The strong press reaction transformed the Seneca Falls convention into a national event and helped to create a larger constituency conducive to the growth of a social movement. The *New York Herald* printed the entire Declaration of Sentiments, disseminating the ideas codified in Seneca Falls across the country. The Declaration of Sentiments captured the nation's attention by linking women's rights directly to the founding ideals of the United States. It also set the agenda

(demands for women's equality in politics, the law, work, education, religion, family life, and moral authority) and outlined the methods (hiring lecturers, circulating tracts, signing petitions, enlisting help from churches and newspapers, and holding conventions) that dominated the women's movement for generations. Convention participants began carrying out the agenda laid out in the Declaration of Sentiments immediately (Campbell 1989:67-68; Hoffert 1995:4; McMillen 2008:3).

The meeting in Seneca Falls set the model for conventions as the major organizing force for the Women's Rights Movement. Antebellum women's rights reformers continued to rely on the strong Garrisonian social network, as well as the newly formed network of Congregational Friends, to spread support for their movement. After Seneca Falls, communities with family, Progressive Friends, anti-slavery activism, and women's rights reform connections hosted numerous regional conventions. Elizabeth and Mary Ann M'Clintock helped to organize the first, held in Rochester two weeks later, in August of 1848, which Elizabeth attended along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and many other signers of the Declaration of Sentiments. The movement subsequently spread to other states. In April 1850, in Salem, Ohio, the first statewide convention was held. The first national convention gathered in Worcester, Massachusetts, in October of that year, initiating a pattern of regular national, state, and regional conventions that continued through the early twentieth century. Historian Stephen Buechler summarized the connection between Seneca Falls and succeeding conventions by stating "its greatest significance may well be that it was the first in that series of conventions." From 1850 through 1861, national women's rights conventions were held every year except 1857. In New York, women held two statewide conventions beginning in 1854. At many of these conventions, the organizers explicitly highlighted the importance of Seneca Falls and considered themes related to the Declaration of Sentiments. A survey of the resolutions adopted at women's rights conventions prior to the Civil War revealed that the 1848 document encompassed the major concerns of the 1850s movement, including divorce reform, property law reform, and suffrage (Campbell 1989:58; Marilley 1996:12; NPS 2002).

In addition to meeting regularly to debate issues related to women's rights, women continued to engage in activities such as petitioning that they had successfully employed previously in relation to other areas of social reform. During the 1840s and 1850s, women organized several petition campaigns aimed at state legislatures. The women in attendance at the first national women's rights convention in Worcester in 1850 implemented a systematic petition campaign in eight states. In 1855, Susan B. Anthony headed a petition campaign in New York directed toward women's right to control their own wages, maintain custody of their children after divorce, and vote. The campaign gathered over 10,000 signatures in only a few months (Zaeske 2003:179).

Antebellum women's rights reformers also used other promotional tools mentioned in the Declaration of Sentiments to spread news of their movement beyond local and regional circles, specifically printing tracts and enlisting support from the press. Beginning with the publication of the *Report of the Woman's Rights Convention Held in Seneca Falls, N.Y., July 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 1848*, women published small tracts of the minutes of their conventions. The West Chester, Pennsylvania, convention in 1852 published its Declaration of Sentiments in tract form. In 1853, women's rights activists from Syracuse published a series of 16 women's rights talks, including a contribution from Stanton. Newspaper articles also continued to draw attention to the women's activities. Women began to publish their own reform newspapers immediately following the Seneca Falls convention. The first was Amelia Bloomer's *Lily* (1849-1859), which began as a temperance newspaper but became what some historians have called the "only [medium] in the whole country for spreading among women accurate news of the women's rights movement." Its masthead read "Devoted to the Interest of Women." In the 1850s, Garrison's AASS put leading women's rights speakers on the payroll as long as they allotted a certain portion of their lectures to abolitionism, allowing women to more visibly advocate for themselves (Garrison Papers; Hoffert 1995; Lathrop 1853; Lutz 1940:46, quoted in DuBois 1981:15; Masters 1852; Merrihew and Thompson 1852).

Congregational Friends in Waterloo played an increasingly larger role in the dissemination of women's rights reform ideas. Core women's rights supporters including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Amy Post, Charles Lenox Remond, Gerrit Smith, Lucy Stone, and Frederick Douglass met annually at the Congregational Friends meetings held at the Junius Friends meetinghouse in Waterloo into the 1870s. Historian Christopher Densmore called these meetings "the great centre and rallying point for all those interested in reforms of the day in both church and state." Women's rights remained one of their continuing concerns. In 1850, the Congregational Friends adopted "An Address to the Women of

New York State," prepared by Stanton and others. In 1857, Stanton prepared a paper on marriage, and in 1858, these Friends adopted a resolution affirming that "it is a sin against God, for any woman to consent to be the wife of an habitual drunkard." In 1867, they sent a petition on behalf of women's suffrage to the New York State constitutional convention (Densmore 1995; Stanton et al. 1881-1886 II:282).

The local Wesleyan church in Seneca Falls stayed active in social reform as well, reflecting the support of the Wesleyan Methodist Church as a whole for progressive beliefs and practices. In January 1849, freedom seeker Henry Bibb lectured to a packed Wesleyan Chapel, with the support of the Wesleyan ministers Rev. Salisbury and Rev. Samuel Phillips. In 1849, Lucretia Mott spoke again in Seneca Falls on women's rights, possibly at the Wesleyan Chapel, which continued to serve as a venue for reform debate. In 1851, Wesleyan Methodists including Trustees Joseph Metcalf and Joshua Martin, former Trustee Thomas James, and minister Reverend B.F. Bradford organized the Seneca County Democratic League, designed to nominate abolitionist candidates for local offices. They explicitly invited women as well as men to attend their meeting:

all those who sympathize with the enslaved and down-trodden of our country; all those who are opposed to the fugitive slave law, and other slave laws, all those who are in favor of free men and free women, free land and free trade, all those who are in favor of putting down the traffic of intoxicating drinks by the force of law; in short, all those who are in favor of having the government of our country administered strictly on the principle of right, are cordially invited to meet and deliberate with us in Convention. Come one, come all, male and female (*Frederick Douglass Paper*:10/16/1851; *New York Tribune* 6/18/1849, noted in *North Star* 6/29/1849).

In 1852, the Wesleyan Chapel hosted numerous major reform conventions. On April 27, abolitionist J.R. Johnson spoke to the Rochester Wesleyan Conference meeting in Seneca Falls. In June, Frederick Douglass again held the floor. In August, the Seneca County Liberty Party met in the chapel. Reverend Bradford, Wesleyan minister, was elected secretary, and Joseph Metcalf was one of five people sent to represent Seneca County at the state party convention. The New York State Women's Temperance Association met at the chapel in October, a convention noteworthy for its intersection of temperance, abolitionism, and women's rights. Stanton was absent, about to deliver her fifth child, but Susan B. Anthony was one of the secretaries. Amelia Bloomer and Lucy Stone served on the Business Committee. Delegates, including William Allen, African American professor at New York Central College, and E.W. Capron and George W. Pryor, signers of the Declaration of Sentiments, debated issues of divorce and women's suffrage in addition to temperance. Finally, on October 19, the Free Democracy of Seneca County, with Reverend Bradford as Chair, met in the chapel to nominate county officers, among whom was Joseph Metcalf for sheriff (*Frederick Douglass Paper*:5/6/1852,6/10/1852,8/27/1852,10/29/1852,11/5/1852; Gordon, ed. 1997 I:207-211).

The organizers of the First Women's Rights Convention also continued to be involved in the growing Women's Rights Movement. Shortly after the convention, Stanton and Elizabeth M'Clintock sent to the *Seneca County Courier* a statement refuting attacks on women's rights made by Rev. Horace P. Bogue in the Seneca Falls Presbyterian Church, the first of numerous letters the two women wrote to the editors of various newspapers. Elizabeth M'Clintock also spread word of the convention to her friends and relatives. On August 23, she wrote to her cousin, Elizabeth Neall Gay, who was married to the editor of the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, encouraging her to "Do something for the good cause, if at no other time, while thy baby sleeps," such as "scatter" pamphlets containing the "Declaration of Sentiments and the Resolutions passed at the Seneca Falls meeting." Elizabeth M'Clintock was Stanton's first close ally in the women's rights effort, and the two remained "intimate friends" for several years. Some scholars have suggested that "Lizzie and Stanton's political friendship was the model for Stanton and Susan B. Anthony's legendary friendship; ... Stanton originally developed and exercised her intellectual leadership role in the women's rights movement with Lizzie's support and encouragement" (Gay Papers; Hawkes 2005:6).

The M'Clintocks actively participated in many of the subsequent women's rights conventions. Mary Ann M'Clintock, Jr., attended the first statewide woman's rights convention in Pennsylvania, organized by Congregational Friends and held in West Chester in 1852. Elizabeth M'Clintock served on the Business Committee of the third national women's rights convention held in Syracuse in September of that year, which her parents also attended. Martha C. Wright and Lucretia Mott spoke at or presided over many antebellum national conventions. Elizabeth Cady Stanton sent letters to

many of the meetings; her physical presence at them began in 1858 and continued after she moved away from Seneca Falls. Stanton began collecting petitions for women's rights in the fall of 1848 and submitted numerous articles on women's rights to newspapers all over the country, including the local temperance paper *Lily*, from the **Elizabeth Cady Stanton House (LCS No. 022582, contributing building)** in Seneca Falls.

The Civil War interrupted the momentum of women's rights conventions, as none were held again until the 11<sup>th</sup> and last in 1866. Women continued to agitate as a group for social reform, although the focus shifted from their own rights to abolition. In 1863, Stanton, Anthony, and others organized the Women's Loyal National League to send a petition to Congress signed by one million women on behalf of abolition. After the Civil War, the movement transformed to specifically emphasize woman suffrage. Lucretia Mott spoke at the 1866 convention on the main resolution, introduced by Susan B. Anthony, for universal suffrage. She referred to Seneca Falls, saying "It is now more than 20 years since this Woman's Rights movement began in this country." The following year, in introducing an amendment to the New York state constitutional convention aimed at providing equal suffrage rights for men and women, George William Curtis spoke of "the formal opening of the general discussion of the question in this country, by the Convention at Seneca Falls, in 1848." In 1869, the women's suffrage movement split into two factions with the formation of the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) by Stanton, Anthony, and other New Yorkers and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) by Boston-based suffragists including Lucy Stone. Although subsequent narratives about the women's history movement (including Stanton and Anthony's own *History of Woman Suffrage*, published beginning in 1881) introduced debate over precisely when it began, Seneca Falls has remained the critical defining moment for many suffragists. Beginning in 1873, the NWSA began celebrating anniversaries of the Seneca Falls convention as the birth of the suffrage movement. The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment providing American women with voting rights finally passed in August of 1920, 72 years after Seneca Falls (Gordon, ed. 1997 I:498).

## CRITERION B – SOCIAL HISTORY

The Women's Rights National Historical Park Historic District contains several resources significant nationally in the area of social history for their associations with persons related to the early Women's Rights Movement and the First Women's Rights Convention.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was one of the primary organizing forces behind the convention; an author and signer of the Declaration of Sentiments; and a nationally prominent figure in the Women's Rights Movement for her entire adult life. From her home base in Seneca Falls between 1848 and 1862, she advocated for women's rights in upstate New York and beyond through her writings and speeches and developed a wide network of women's rights activists that included Susan B. Anthony. By the time she moved away in 1862, she was one of the most influential and best-known women's rights leaders in the United States. In later years, Stanton founded the National Woman Suffrage Association and wrote and edited three germinal works in the study of women's rights: the *History of Woman Suffrage*, her autobiography *Eighty Years and More*, and *The Woman's Bible*. The Stanton House is significant as the only extant residential building associated with Elizabeth Cady Stanton's early career in women's rights activism. Other buildings associated with Stanton include her childhood home in Johnstown, New York (demolished); the home she owned in the Chelsea section of Boston in the 1840s, prior to her public commitment to women's rights (unknown whether this is still standing); her home after the Civil War in Tenafly, New Jersey (now a private residence at 135 Highland Avenue); and the apartment in New York City where she lived during the last years of her life and where she died (unknown whether this is still standing).

Thomas, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, and Mary Ann, Jr., M'Clintock were Quaker abolitionists and Underground Railroad activists as well as major organizers of the First Women's Rights Convention. First in Philadelphia and then in upstate New York, the M'Clintocks were a noted reform family, active in women's rights, abolitionism, the Underground Railroad, and religious reform. Thomas was a nationally known leader in the American Anti-Slavery Society and a nationally significant Quaker leader and scholar. The M'Clintock women were leaders in the Western New York Anti-Slavery Society. All four signed the Declaration of Sentiments. The M'Clintock House is significant as the family's residence during the period in which they established the strong network of social reformers who supported women's rights that enabled the organization of the Seneca Falls convention and succeeding efforts.

Richard Pell Hunt, Sarah M'Clintock Hunt, and Jane Clothier Master Hunt were abolitionists and Underground Railroad supporters as well as early supporters of women's rights. Richard and Jane both attended the First Women's Rights Convention and signed the Declaration of Sentiments. The Hunt House is the only known extant residence associated with the Hunts, although several of Richard's commercial properties are still standing in Waterloo and Seneca Falls. It also possesses local significance as a result of Richard's contributions to the town of Waterloo as a major local industrialist and landholder.

The homes of Stanton, the M'Clintock Family, and the Hunts are particularly important because they are among the few known surviving homes of nationally important early women's rights leaders. Only two other known extant homes of antebellum women's rights leaders relate to the period in which these leaders were active: Abby Kelley Foster's house in Worcester, Massachusetts, and Matilda Joslyn Gage's house in Fayetteville, New York. All other homes of antebellum women's rights leaders have been demolished, relate to their childhoods, or date after the Civil War. Both of Susan B. Anthony's childhood homes survive: her birthplace in Adams, Massachusetts, is in private hands, and her girlhood home in Battenkill, New York, is owned by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. Anthony's Rochester residence dates from the period after the Civil War. Lucretia Mott's childhood home on Nantucket survives, but her home outside Philadelphia has been demolished. The homes of other signers of the Declaration of Sentiments have been identified outside the Women's Rights National Historical Park boundary (see Wellman 2008:339-340) but have not been evaluated for National Register purposes.

### **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was born on November 12, 1815, in Johnstown, New York, a small village in the Mohawk Valley approximately 120 miles east of Seneca Falls. She was one of eleven children born to a wealthy, socially prominent, and politically active family. Her father, Daniel Cady (1773-1859), was a well-respected lawyer and newly elected judge of the New York State Supreme Court. His career spanned the formative years of constitutional and legal development. Her mother, Margaret Livingston Cady (1785-1871), was descended from Revolutionary War soldiers. Elizabeth was the third of five daughters, the only children who survived into adulthood, and strongly felt the burden of her father's lack of a male heir. She later asserted that the genesis of her feminism stemmed from her parent's disappointment in this respect. She absorbed her father's respect for the law and learned early on about legal constraints against women's rights. Although her immediate family followed a strict form of Calvinist Presbyterianism and raised her in a patrician household, she was exposed to more liberal and progressive viewpoints through visits to extended family, including her maternal cousin, Gerrit Smith, and his daughter Elizabeth Smith Miller (1822-1911).

### ***Early Reform Associations***

Elizabeth had various connections to the world of social reform. From 1830 to 1833, she attended the relatively progressive Troy Female Seminary. While a student there, she also participated in several of the religious revivals overtaking the area, which had a strong impact on her religious and spiritual viewpoints. Following her graduation, she spent several summers with her cousin Gerrit Smith's family in Peterboro, New York. Smith owned thousands of acres of land in the central and northern parts of the state (inherited from his father) as well as lucrative port facilities in Oswego. He and his wife, Ann Carroll Fitzhugh, a descendant of one of Maryland's most prominent slaveholding families, lived on a large estate in Peterboro. The couple did not belong to any particular organized church but was staunchly committed to basic Christian values and organized many "free" Christian Union churches in the Peterboro area. Smith stepped in to host the organizing meeting for the New York chapter of the AASS after it was broken up by protestors. He publicly called upon abolitionists to assist fugitive slaves as early as 1839 and was himself involved in numerous efforts to that effect, hosting many escaped slaves and contributing large amounts of money to the movement. In 1841, he purchased the freedom of a family of slaves who at one time were owned by his wife's relatives and brought them to Peterboro (Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.12-13).

Elizabeth met Henry Brewster Stanton at her cousin's mansion house in 1839, and the two were engaged a month later and married in May 1840. As a result of her marriage, she was thrown immediately into the circle of those at the forefront of the national anti-slavery movement, as well as early women's rights advocates. Stanton, a native of Preston

(now Griswold), Connecticut, first led abolitionist debates with his friend Theodore Dwight Weld while students at Lane Seminary in Ohio in 1834. The strident speeches of Weld and Stanton spurred the organization of hundreds of anti-slavery societies throughout the northeastern United States. In 1837, Stanton spoke before a committee of the Massachusetts House of Representatives urging them to accept anti-slavery petitions. He was a delegate from the AASS to the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where he and Elizabeth spent their honeymoon and Elizabeth first met Lucretia Mott. Before sailing, the couple visited first the Smith home and then the home of Theodore and Angelina Grimké Weld and her sister Sarah (American Council of Learned Societies 1990; Sernett and Wellman 2010:E.11-12; Sorin 1970:63-67; Stanton 1837).

When the Stantons returned to the United States after six months, they lived first with Elizabeth's parents in Johnstown, while Henry studied law with her father. They then moved to Boston, where Henry established a law practice in 1842. Elizabeth spent about half her time in Boston and half in Albany, where her parents kept a house. She gave birth to three sons—Daniel Cady (1842-1891), Henry Brewster, Jr. (1844-1903), and Gerrit Smith (1845-1927)—and fully engaged herself in motherhood and other domestic duties. However, she continued to follow social issues avidly and formulate her own strong opinions on social issues like slavery and women's rights. New England in the 1830s and 1840s was home to a large concentration of women committed to intellectual pursuits. In Boston, Stanton encountered the full force of contemporary intellectual reform movements. Margaret Fuller, who later became the first woman journalist for the *New York Tribune*, joined the circle of thinkers in Boston associated with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Parker, and edited her own newspaper there. Her book *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, published in 1844, emerged from the "conversations" she held for women on various intellectual topics, which Stanton later emulated. Stanton attended temperance, peace, prison, and anti-slavery reform conventions and socialized with leading figures in the Transcendentalist movement like Emerson and Hawthorne as well as outspoken abolitionists like Frederick Douglass and Lucretia Mott. She also participated in the campaign for a Married Women's Property Act in New York, as discussed earlier.

### ***Seneca Falls, 1847-1862***

The Stantons moved to Seneca Falls in the spring of 1847, when Elizabeth was 32 years old. Henry's chronic lung congestion prompted them to leave the damp climate of Boston. They chose Seneca Falls as their new home primarily because of its relative proximity to the Cady family as well as the availability of a house and land there owned by Elizabeth's father. Daniel Cady, who was an avid investor in western lands, had purchased a large frame house on approximately two acres of land at the eastern edge of town in 1845. On June 22, 1847, Cady deeded the entire house and lot to "Elizabeth Stanton, the wife of Henry B. Stanton of the City of Boston, ... in consideration of the love and affection which I have for my daughter" (Seneca County Deed Records:Book 52, Pages 479-480).

The Elizabeth Cady Stanton House stood just south of the Seneca Turnpike, one of the busiest thoroughfares in the northeastern United States. For visitors coming from the east, the Stanton corner was their first introduction to the village of Seneca Falls. Drivers of big red Concord stages tooted their horns at the Stanton corner to announce their arrival. Canal boat captains on the red and blue lines directed their bands to play as they rounded the Stanton hill. The eastern edge of the village was relatively undeveloped in the 1840s and 1850s, though, and the Stantons had only a few neighbors. Jacob P. Chamberlain, Catharine Kuney Chamberlain, and their family of nine children and assorted dependents lived diagonally across from them (in the non-contributing Chamberlain House). Several Irish families lived just east of the Stanton house, along the Seneca Turnpike.

The Stanton House occupies land that was originally part of Cayuga Indian homelands. In 1795, the Cayugas sold the land to New York State. In 1798, the Bayard Company, named after investor Stephen Bayard of New Jersey, purchased the property and, in 1807, built the Lower Red Mill on the river below it. In March 1833, brothers William and Samuel Bayard bought 73 acres near the mill that included the property on which the Stanton House is located as well as the Chamberlain House where they lived. The brothers succeeded in turning the Lower Red Mill into the largest mill in Seneca Falls for a time, producing 250 barrels of flour a day. About 1835 to 1836, they married sisters Jane and Romaine Dashiell. Samuel and Jane Bayard moved to a farm on Cayuga Street, while William and Romaine Bayard constructed the house that later became the Stanton House out of smaller older buildings. Caught in the panic of 1837, the Bayards entered bankruptcy in 1842 and lost all their assets. William and Romaine Bayard were forced to sell their

home at a sheriff's sale and move to Fairfield, Iowa. Elisha Foote, a friend and former law student of Daniel Cady's, purchased the property and sold it on March 26, 1845, to Cady (Seneca County Deed Records:Book Z, Page 150; Book C, Page 339; Book P2, Page 225; Book 58, Page 129).

The Stanton House in 1847 was a commodious frame building composed of a central gabled section with three wings, in many ways similar to the typical frame gable-and-wing houses of the region, although somewhat larger than most. "The rural frame house appears to have just happened as the two buildings were put together. Thus, it is reflective of a frugal local and/or rural builder who used what they had on hand to come up with a house" (Bartlett 2006, quoted in Wellman et al. 2008:8.19). The south wing incorporated an older building that may have been part of the Lower Red Mill. The two-story main block was built about 1830 and moved to the site. The Bayards likely built the east wing, which the Stantons used as a kitchen, in 1837 and added the north wing about 1839. The house had at least one front porch, which the family called a piazza, suggesting that it opened directly onto the lawn, without a railing, and one back porch.

Stanton's son Gerrit remembered the house as "a mansion, surrounded by lawns, trees and several acres of grounds," where guests sat "under the shady trees ... waiting for the dinner bell to ring." Beginning in 1849, Stanton often called her house "Grassmere," perhaps after the home of English poet William Wordsworth. People also called the Stanton house "Locust Hill," because so many locust trees grew nearby. A circular drive around a center mound with flagpole, hand pump, and front gates at either end led to the front door. By 1856, a hedge in front and a board fence on the east and south bordered the property. Henry Stanton kept a large vegetable garden in the backyard. A clothesline, smokehouse, two large cherry trees, and a grape arbor also stood in the yard. Neighborhood children were invited to help themselves to grapes and pure water for refreshment (Stanton [c.1930]).

When she first moved to Seneca Falls, Elizabeth did not immediately join the vibrant reformist community in the area. Her life primarily revolved around caring for her three sons and maintaining her household. Henry spent long periods of time away from home, canvassing the state to organize the new Free Soil Party. Frustrated by the demands of housework and childcare, and isolated from the cultural and intellectual milieu of Boston, she returned with new commitment to the issue of women's rights and soon found a supportive network of like-minded reformers in her new home. In July 1848, Stanton actively participated in the organization of the nation's First Women's Rights Convention, held in Seneca Falls, and helped to write the ground-breaking Declaration of Sentiments for the event. The Seneca Falls convention was a pivotal point, not only in the emerging Women's Rights Movement but also in Stanton's own life. It gave her a public voice and an opportunity to use her talents fully for the issues closest to her heart. She spent the rest of her life promoting the ideas she first publicly presented at Seneca Falls.

The Stanton House in Seneca Falls is associated not only with the year 1848, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton worked on the convention, but also with Stanton's continued efforts to publicize and organize the Women's Rights Movement throughout the 15 years she lived in the house. Stanton herself considered the First Women's Rights Convention a "grand success," writing later that "The deepest interest was manifested to its close... The house was crowded at every session, the speaking good, and a religious earnestness dignified all the proceedings." Inspired by this success, she immediately began to devote more of her attention to organizing a full-fledged Women's Rights Movement, which she referred to decades later as "the greatest movement for human liberty recorded on the pages of history—a demand for freedom to one-half the entire race." Between 1848 and 1862, Stanton herself developed from a fledgling activist to an experienced and nationally known leader in women's rights reform. Her experience of daily life throughout that period directly informed the nature of her viewpoints and the ways in which she disseminated them throughout the region and the country (Stanton 1993:94; Stanton et al. 1881-1886:68,73).

Following the 1848 convention, Stanton had four more children in Seneca Falls: two sons, Theodore Weld (1851-1925) and Robert Livingston (1859-1920), and two daughters, Margaret Livingston (1852-1938?) and Harriot Eaton (1856-1940). Although Stanton's children kept her close to home in the 1850s, she remained connected to the growing national Women's Rights Movement, as well as other social reform efforts, through her writing. She wrote letters, speeches, and newspaper articles from her house in Seneca Falls. Her children, Theodore and Harriot, recalled that their earliest memory was of their mother writing at her desk. She wrote a regular column for the first women's temperance paper, *The Lily*, edited in Seneca Falls by Amelia Bloomer, when it began in 1848. She contributed to other newspapers, including the *New York Tribune*, beginning in 1854. Stanton also wrote letters to each of the national women's rights conventions

in the 1850s. In 1854, she wrote a major address for the New York State legislature that she delivered to the New York State Women's Rights Convention in Albany on February 14. Women's rights advocates laid a copy of the speech on the desk of each State legislator.

Stanton used her house as a base for community events and political organizing and as a model for a new world order based on equality and mutual respect. The physical structure of the Stanton House reflected its function, not as a haven from the world, but as a center of interaction with both the local community and the larger world of reform. It reflected Stanton's refusal to accept the distinction between private and public spheres that dominated popular culture, separating the roles of women and men. In the parlors, Stanton created "conversationals" for local community members, patterned after the groups organized in Boston by Margaret Fuller and intended to promote public education and social equality across lines of class and sex. Local people from a variety of backgrounds met each Saturday night in the Stanton House to discuss different topics. "Everyone was expected to contribute something," recalled Stanton. "All the ladies, as well as the gentlemen, presided in turn, and so became familiar with parliamentary rules. . . . In this way we read and thought over a wide range of subjects and brought together the best minds in the community. Many young men and women who did not belong to what was considered the first circle,--for in every little country village there is always a small clique that constitutes the aristocracy,--had the advantages of a social life otherwise denied them" (Stanton 1993:152-153; Wellman 2004:220).

During the 1850s, such nationally important reformers as William Lloyd Garrison, Gerrit Smith, British abolitionist George Thompson, Abby Kelley Foster, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony all visited the Stanton House. Stanton and Anthony were introduced by Amelia Bloomer in May 1852, and the two women forged a life-long friendship around their common ideals. "Night after night," Stanton remembered, "by an old-fashioned fireplace, we plotted and planned the coming agitation." Stanton formulated ideas and wrote speeches, while Anthony, who was single and childless, supplied the facts, delivered Stanton's speeches, and recruited new supporters. As Stanton later described their collaborative efforts, "I forged the thunderbolts and she fired them" (Stanton 1993:163,165-166; Wellman 2004:169).

Almost every room in the Stanton House was both a public and a private space. Even childbirth for Stanton was a very public, political affair, experienced in her upstairs bedroom but broadcast widely through her letters to friends and family. A strong advocate for health reform, Stanton used her childbearing to illustrate the benefits of exercise and fresh air. She also applied her belief in the importance of fresh air directly to the Stanton House, adding windows and doors frequently. By the late 1850s, the house had ten exterior doors to lock every night, according to her nephew Robert B. Stanton (Wellman 2004:219-220).

The Stanton House is also associated with Elizabeth Cady Stanton's efforts in the area of dress reform for women. From about 1852 to 1854, Stanton wore the "Bloomer costume," an outfit invented by her cousin Elizabeth Smith Miller. Stanton recalled in her autobiography that when Miller visited her in Seneca Falls in the winter of 1852 wearing a short jacket over baggy ankle-length pantaloons, Stanton recognized quite vividly the impact that women's clothing could have on their daily life: "To see my cousin, with a lamp in one hand, and a baby in the other, walk upstairs with ease and grace, while, with flowing robes, I pulled myself up with difficulty, lamp and baby out of the question, readily convinced me that there was sore need of reform in woman's dress, and I promptly donned a similar attire." Amelia Bloomer published Miller's patterns in her newspaper, leading to the name by which the outfit soon became known. Several early women's rights activists, including Stanton and Lucy Stone, lauded the physical mobility and freedom it allowed women and linked the issue of dress reform with the larger issue of women's rights. Many onlookers viewed it with scorn and ridicule, however, and Stanton's own children were mortified by her wearing it. By 1854, Stanton reverted to wearing long dresses and refrained from encouraging other women to wear bloomers (Ginzberg 2009:81-84; Gordon, ed. 1997 I:200; Stanton 1993).

Stanton's views on women's rights developed within the structure of and with the support of the Congregational Friends in the Seneca Falls region. In September 1848, she gave her first major speech on women's rights at the Junius Monthly Meeting of Friends, repeated in October at the founding meeting of the Congregational Friends in Farmington. Stanton continued to meet with Congregational Friends (who had no membership requirements) in Junius for several years, including in 1850-52, 1855, 1857, and 1858. By 1852, she was regularly attending their annual meetings and calling herself a Friend. When Martha Wright heard a rumor that Stanton had joined the Episcopal Church, Stanton replied that

"I am a member of Junius meeting and not of the Episcopal Church. I have heard that infamous report and feel about it very much as if I had been accused of petty larceny" (Garrison Papers).

While living in Seneca Falls, Stanton occasionally spoke in public on a variety of reform subjects related to women's rights. In 1852, she addressed the New York State Woman's Temperance Association in Rochester, urging that drunkenness be made grounds for divorce. That year Stanton was president of the organization, which had formed after men refused to let women speak in the original statewide organization. The Park collection includes an 1855 New York State temperance coin recovered from the Stanton House lot that commemorates the passing of New York's short-lived Prohibition Act that year. In the spring of 1855, Stanton gave a speech on common schools at the Wesleyan Chapel in her hometown. In 1858, she attended the eighth National Women's Rights Convention (her first women's rights convention since Seneca Falls), where she gave a paper on the history of the Women's Rights Movement, highlighting the first convention in Seneca Falls. She missed the 1859 convention as she was pregnant, but from 1860 on, she regularly attended conventions, helped organize them, and gave frequent speeches. In March 1860, Stanton spoke before a joint session of the Judiciary Committee of the New York State Senate and Assembly. Later that year, she addressed 1500 people at the AASS meeting at Cooper Union in New York City on May 8. At the tenth annual women's suffrage meeting at the same location on May 11, Stanton introduced ten resolutions for more liberal divorce laws.

At the same time that Elizabeth was becoming more engaged with the Women's Rights Movement and establishing her reputation as an activist beyond the region, her husband was equally absorbed in attempts to develop his own political career. Henry Brewster Stanton was elected to the New York State Senate as a Democrat in 1847 and held elective office in the state through 1862. His wife's radical ideas proved at times an obstacle to his political aspirations, such as during his 1851 re-election campaign when "Some good Democrats said they would not vote for a man whose wife wore the Bloomers." However, he did not interfere with Elizabeth's activities in general, passively supporting her if not actively encouraging her. He introduced at least two woman's rights petitions to the state legislature. In 1856, Henry joined the new Republican Party and supported his Auburn neighbor William Henry Seward for the presidential nomination in 1860 before campaigning enthusiastically for Lincoln. In contrast to her husband, in 1860, Elizabeth publicly expressed her doubts about Lincoln's anti-slavery views. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Elizabeth Cady Stanton presented a banner on September 24, 1860, to the local Wide Awakes, a marching club of young Republicans, and also gave a speech. In thanks, the group marched to the Stanton house, where the Stantons illuminated all the windows and then met the group "on the circle mound, between the two front gates" (Ginzberg 2009:82,87-91; Gordon, ed. 1997 1:441-444).

### ***Later Reform Career, 1862-1902***

The Stanton Family left Seneca Falls for New York City in 1862. As a Republican stalwart, Henry received a plum political appointment as Deputy Collector of the Custom House. Elizabeth expanded her women's rights work in her new home. With Susan B. Anthony, Stanton organized the National Woman's Loyal League in 1863, which collected 400,000 signatures on behalf of the Thirteenth Amendment to abolish slavery in the U.S. In 1869, she and Anthony, with the help of Matilda Joslyn Gage, Paulina Wright Davis, and others, organized the National Woman Suffrage Association, of which she became President. From 1868 to 1870, Stanton and Anthony published *The Revolution*. Stanton lectured across the country for women's rights in the late 1860s and 1870s. In 1890, she became President of the merged National American Woman Suffrage Association.

As she grew older, Stanton focused her attention more completely on her writing. Her famous speech *Solitude of Self*, delivered in front of Congress in 1882, is considered one of her finest. When she published *The Woman's Bible* in 1895, she alienated many conservative women in the suffrage movement. Her autobiography, *Eighty Years and More*, appeared in 1898. She considered these "her twins," relating to the two major concerns of her life: religion and women's rights. Elizabeth Cady Stanton died on October 26, 1902, age 87. Two weeks before her death, she wrote a letter to President Theodore Roosevelt, asking for women's suffrage. She dictated a second letter to Mrs. Roosevelt the day before she died.

Stanton's daughter, Harriot Stanton Blatch, continued her mother's legacy of women's rights activism. When the Stantons' second daughter and sixth child was born on January 20, 1856, Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote jubilantly to Susan B. Anthony, "I have got out the sixth edition of my admirable work, another female child is born into the world." Stanton rejoiced in her daughters, who she felt gave her "fresh strength to work for women." Harriot Stanton herself

recalled that she was born “in the very cradle of the feminist movement” and absorbed the ideas of the early women’s rights advocates. She graduated from Vassar College in 1878 and moved to England for 20 years, where she married and raised her own daughter. After her mother’s death, she returned to the United States and began working for women’s suffrage. In 1907, she formed the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women, a cross-class alliance of suffragists that later became the Women’s Political Union and merged with the Congressional Union. The Women’s Political Union helped to pass a woman suffrage referendum in New York State in 1917. Blatch helped to lead many suffrage parades in New York City. She also worked with her brother, Theodore, to edit her mother’s papers and with Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s biographer Alma Lutz. In 1908, Blatch organized a 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Seneca Falls women’s rights convention in an attempt to bring national publicity to the suffrage movement. As part of that celebration, a bronze plaque commemorating the events of 1848 was attached to the Wesleyan Chapel. The tablet reads:

On this spot stood the Wesleyan Chapel where the first women’s Rights Convention in the world’s history was held July 19 and 20, 1848. Elizabeth Cady Stanton moved this resolution, which was seconded by Frederick Douglass: “that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.” Some of the signers of the Declaration of Rights: Lucretia Mott, Jacob P. Chamberlain, Martha C. Wright, Elisha Foote, Amy Post, Charles L. Hoskins, Mary Ann McClintock, Richard P. Hunt, Lavina Latham, Jonathan Metcalf, Mary H. Hallowell, Henry W. Seymour.

The plaque was first removed when the building was remodeled in 1922. In 1928, 100 women from the League of Women Voters gathered to reinstall the plaque. It remained on the wall until the NPS acquired the site and is currently archived as part of the Park’s collection (DuBois 1997:8).

### **Thomas, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, and Mary Ann M’Clintock**

Thomas M’Clintock was born into a Presbyterian family on March 28, 1792, in Brandywine Hundred, Delaware. Beginning about 1814, when he was 22 years old, he worked as a druggist in Philadelphia. On January 13, 1820, M’Clintock married Mary Ann Wilson in a traditional Quaker ceremony in Burlington, New Jersey, and Thomas was received as a Quaker on request. The M’Clintocks lived first in Philadelphia, where their five children were born: Elizabeth Wilson; Mary Ann, Jr.; Sarah G. (1824-1910); Charles W. (1829-1920); and Julia (1831-1905). The family’s belief system and lifestyle reflected their commitment to traditional Quaker values. They wore simple dark clothes and used “thee” and “thou” in their speech. The M’Clintocks also kept the older spelling of their name even when contemporaries began to use “McClintock.”

The M’Clintocks were strongly committed to the egalitarian ethic of their faith, which respected the rights of all individuals regardless of race or gender. As early as 1823, Thomas expressed his idea that one’s actions rather than one’s belief should be the essential basis of real religion: “I pity indeed all whose eyes are so blinded by traditions and prejudice, as to place more importance in opinions than in a life of humble conformity to the Divine will.” By the 1830s, he had established a reputation as a prominent Quaker scholar and minister. At his death in 1876, his son-in-law James Truman (Mary Ann Jr.’s husband) recalled him as “one of the most earnest and efficient workers in the reorganization of the so-called Hicksite branch,” referring to the 1827 split in the Philadelphia Quaker meeting. M’Clintock edited most of the eight volumes of the writings of George Fox, founder of Quakerism. Although his name did not appear officially in print, he also helped edit *A Series of Extemporaneous Discourses* by Elias Hicks (1825). In 1835, Lucretia Mott noted that few were “more competent [than M’Clintock] to meet the logicians of the period on all points of biblical literature” (Post Family Papers; Truman 1883).

The M’Clintock Family followed Thomas’ niece and ward, Sarah M’Clintock, to New York upon her marriage to Richard P. Hunt. On December 15, 1836, an ad appeared in the *Seneca Observer* [sic], noting that Thomas M’Clintock had purchased a drugstore and bookstore from Samuel Lundy and Son. By early 1839, Thomas M’Clintock had moved his store from Lundy’s Block to his new location at No. 1 Exchange Buildings, “the new block erected by R. P. Hunt,” where he sold “in addition to his usual assortment of *Books, Stationery, Paper Hangings, Drugs and Medicines,*” an extensive collection of books, including Bibles, history books, the works of George Fox, and many school books. His business suffered because of his abolitionist sympathies, but M’Clintock’s view was “I must speak the truth, and abide the consequences” (*Seneca Observer*:12/15/1836,5/6/1840; *Seneca County Reveille*:7/7/1856).

By April 1837, the M'Clintock Family was living in the brick house on Williams Street that they rented from Richard P. Hunt. Hunt had purchased the lot in February 1832 and had the house built by 1836. The **M'Clintock Well/Cistern Cover (LCS No. 040665, historic associated feature)** on the property likely dates to the construction of the house. The M'Clintocks lived in the house for over 20 years. During that time, they made some minor alterations to the building, including the addition of two doors to the south end of the parlor. Sometime before 1856, they replaced the original small south wing with a larger frame one with a shingled roof (destroyed by fire in 1955 and reconstructed in 2004). Receipts in the Hunt Family Papers from 1836 and 1837 refer to the construction of a kitchen and woodhouse at the M'Clintock House, but it is unclear whether these receipts refer to the smaller or larger south wing.

The M'Clintock House in Waterloo contributes to the significance of the Women's Rights National Historical Park district because of the family's extensive social reform activities during their residency in the house that established the local framework for the First Women's Rights Convention and the subsequent development of the Women's Rights Movement. Their anti-slavery affiliations and efforts as well as their leadership in the progressive Quaker community are discussed earlier in this document under Criterion A. As a fellow Quaker and friend of Jane Hunt's, Mary Ann M'Clintock was among the group of women gathered at the Hunt House in Waterloo in July 1848 who determined to hold a women's rights convention. The elder two M'Clintock daughters, Elizabeth and Mary Ann, Jr., joined their mother and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, in drafting the Declaration of Sentiments for the convention at the M'Clintock House. It is this association for which the house is primarily noted, and the fact that Thomas, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, and Mary Ann, Jr., all attended the First Women's Rights Convention and signed the Declaration of Sentiments. However, the family supported women's rights throughout their tenure in Waterloo, as described earlier under Criterion A.

In January 1852, Mary Ann M'Clintock, Jr., married James Truman (1826-1914), who was Jane and Richard P. Hunt's nephew, a Progressive Friend, and a dentist from Philadelphia who helped open dentistry as a profession for women. In Philadelphia, Mary Ann boarded several foreign female dentistry students. In 1849, Elizabeth M'Clintock tried unsuccessfully to enter the firm of E.M. Davis, Lucretia Mott's son-in-law and a silk merchant in Philadelphia. She wrote a satirical play and created a set of cartoons lampooning those who refused her request for work. She valiantly listed her name in the 1850 census as "clerk," when no other women were listed as working outside their homes. She remained "intimate friends" with Elizabeth Cady Stanton for several years, until she married and moved to Syracuse in July 1852. Elizabeth M'Clintock's wedding to Burroughs Phillips (1824-1854), a local lawyer who was boarding with her Aunt Margaret and Uncle George Pryor, took place in a ceremony attended by both European Americans and African Americans in the parlor of the M'Clintock House. Burroughs Phillips was killed in a tragic carriage accident only two years later, in April 1854 (Densmore and Wellman 1999; Hawkes 2005:189-218,229-234,245,314; Stanton 1896).

The M'Clintock Family left Waterloo in 1856 and moved to Easton, Pennsylvania. Elizabeth M'Clintock Phillips fulfilled her earlier professional aspirations when she opened a trimmings store in Philadelphia late in 1856. The majority of the family returned to Philadelphia in 1860, where Thomas operated a drugstore until 1864. The M'Clintock's public reform activities largely ceased after they returned to Pennsylvania, although Elizabeth served as an agent for the AWSA magazine, the *Woman's Journal*, founded in 1870. A letter from Mary Ann M'Clintock Truman to Elizabeth Neall Gay in August of 1857 notes that after their departure, there was no one left to help with raising funds for or organizing an anti-slavery fair in Waterloo, intimating at the family's importance to the area's reform commitment.

Thomas M'Clintock died on March 19, 1876. Thomas Mumford, former editor of the *Seneca County Courier* and a friend of the M'Clintock Family, described the impact of the family in a eulogy for Thomas printed in *The Christian Register*:

once admitted to the privileges of such a refined and cordial home, there was no possibility of giving them up. Nowhere else could we find such fresh literature, or such intelligent interest in vital questions of the day. . . . That house was our gateway into the widest realms of thought and the richest fields of duty. The family were the teachers to whom we owe the best part of our education. . . . Such hospitality is seldom witnessed. There was seldom an empty bed, or a vacant seat at the table. Famous and friendless guests often sat together there, and colors and creeds were alike forgotten.

His son-in-law James Truman summarized his life "as exemplifying the broadest liberality, gentle kindness, and most loving faith" (Mumford 1876; Truman 1883).

After Thomas' death, Mary Ann Wilson M'Clintock attended the National American Woman Suffrage celebration on July 4, 1876, where suffragists adopted a Declaration and Protest of the Women of the United States. Mary Ann M'Clintock Truman died in 1880, and her mother died on May 21, 1884. Following their mother's death, Julia, Sarah, and Elizabeth moved to Vineland, New Jersey, near their relatives the Pryors.<sup>22</sup> There Elizabeth died on November 7, 1896; Julia died in 1905; and Sarah died in 1910. The entire M'Clintock Family is buried in Fair Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, which is also the burial place of many other abolitionists and women's rights advocates including Lucretia Mott and African American Harriet Forten Purvis. The cemetery is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the NPS Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (Hawkes 2005:312-313).

### **Richard Pell, Sarah M'Clintock, and Jane Clothier Master Hunt**

Richard Pell Hunt was born September 2, 1797, the fifth child of Richard Hunt and Mary Pell Hunt, Quakers from Pelham, Westchester County, New York. Richard Pell moved to Waterloo in 1821, at the age of 24, and opened with a partner a dry goods store called Hoyt & Hunt in the Eagle Tavern.

Hunt played a leading role in the development of Waterloo throughout the following decades, and his rise to wealth took place in the context of the town's own growth. In the early nineteenth century, land speculators attracted wealthy investors from eastern New York to the area, and Waterloo became a boomtown. It grew from nine houses in 1815 to more than 200 buildings and 500 people when Hunt arrived in 1821, with two flour mills, two saw mills, two fulling mills, a distillery, a scythe factory, six taverns, and seven stores, six lawyers, and about eighty houses. Waterloo's largest landowner was Elisha Williams, a lawyer from Hudson, New York. In 1807, Williams purchased 640 acres of land on the north bank of the Seneca River, all of it part of the Cayuga Reservation at Scauyes, in what would become the village of Waterloo. Williams himself continued to live and work in Hudson, so he employed a local man, Martin Kendig, to administer his Waterloo lands. About 1815, Williams sold a half-interest in his property to Reuben Swift, one of his Hudson neighbors, who moved to Waterloo as a full-time administrator (*History of Seneca County* 1876:84).

Williams and Swift showed their civic-mindedness and promoted village growth by donating the village park, the county courthouse, and the cemetery. They also began to develop the industrial potential of the village. Before 1812, Williams constructed a power canal along the Seneca River, and the following year, he incorporated this canal into the Seneca Lock Navigation Company's transportation canal. In 1816, Williams and Swift built a gristmill along this canal. These Waterloo Mills were reputed to be the largest gristmills in western New York. In 1820, Martin Kendig also used waterpower from the Seneca River to operate a carding and fulling mill. In 1828, the Seneca and Cayuga Canal connected Seneca Falls and Waterloo to the Erie Canal itself, enabling industrial development to continue in the area (*History of Seneca County* 1876:85-86).

In 1823, Hunt married Matilda Kendig, the daughter of Martin Kendig, allying himself with one of the major families in Waterloo. He also purchased property in downtown Waterloo, where he built a frame store facing Main Street, with living quarters attached to it. Following that initial purchase, Hunt continued to invest in real estate throughout the area, including several farms. As a land speculator, he made 43 land purchases in Waterloo and Seneca Falls between 1823 and his death in 1856. He also owned 960 acres in LaSalle County, Illinois. By mid-century, Hunt was one of the richest men in Waterloo. According to the 1850 census, he owned \$40,000 worth of real estate. At his death six years later, the Dun and Bradstreet credit ratings reported that he was worth \$100,000.

Hunt was also a major industrialist. He was a prime investor in the Waterloo Woolen Manufacturing Company and served as secretary of the organization for 20 years beginning in 1836. Based on a capital investment of \$150,000, these mills used the latest technology, incorporating carding, spinning, and weaving machines under the same roof. They were

<sup>22</sup> Margaret Pryor organized a group of women Friends of Human Progress who voted in Vineland on November 3, 1868, even though they knew their votes would not count. A list of the voters compiled by Susan Ditmire in 2000 and available at <http://www.usgennet.org/usa/nj/county/cumberland/VineVote/voteList.htm> does not indicate that any of the M'Clintocks participated.

so productive that they sustained Waterloo's economy after the Depression of 1837 and by the 1850s became the second-largest producer of woolen shawls in the United States. With the new Hunt Block, built by 1839, the first of three business blocks that he constructed in downtown Waterloo, Hunt also expanded into commercial development. From 1833 to 1844, he was a director of the Seneca County Bank in Waterloo. He also owned stock in the Waterloo Ontario Wayne Plank Road, the Waterloo and Fayette Plank Road, the Seneca Falls and Waterloo Gas Light Company, and the Michigan Central Railroad. Like his predecessors Williams and Swift, Hunt became involved in the civic affairs of his town. He was Waterloo's first supervisor from 1829 to 1830 and served as a Trustee of the Waterloo Academy (*History of Seneca County* 1876:48).

Hunt came from a Quaker family, and although there is no record of his membership in the Junius Monthly Meeting in Waterloo, there is evidence of his attendance at the meeting both before and after it split into the Congregational Friends in 1848. Hunt's son, William, recalled him as a Quaker "who believed that 'faith without works is dead' and who practiced his spirituality in the world rather than in the meeting house." Elizabeth Cady Stanton remembered him as one of a "trio of good men" (including Thomas M'Clintock and Henry Bonnell) who "were the life" of the annual meetings of the Congregational Friends. A memorial written 20 years after his death noted that his religious views were "in sympathy with those of the Society of Friends, and his character rendered him a worthy representative of that society." The same writer recalled that Hunt "had no sympathy with the sentiment that the negro was less a man because he was black and . . . if, as a fugitive from bondage, he made application to him for sympathy and aid they were not withheld" (Stanton 1895; *Waterloo Observer*:6/21/1876; Woodward 1968:409-410,413).

In 1828 the Hunt family moved to a new brick house at the east edge of the village. Significantly, Hunt located his new home directly on the Seneca Turnpike leading from Seneca Falls west through Waterloo. Stage, carriage, and wagon traffic going from the east coast to the Great Lakes would travel right past his front door. His property originally extended south of the highway all the way to the Seneca and Cayuga Canal. By the 1840s, the railroad paralleled these routes north of the Hunt House. The relatively plain, five-bay, brick, Federal-style house Hunt had built reflected the owner's simple and traditional tastes. The original pedimented roof and columns at the main entrance (no longer extant) echoed in simplified form the doorway of Elisha Williams' home in Waterloo (*History of Seneca County* 1876:opp. 81).

After Matilda Kendig's death on August 17, 1832, Hunt married Ann Underhill in February 1834. Ann died only five months later, on July 4, 1834. Sarah M'Clintock, Thomas M'Clintock's niece and ward, became Hunt's third wife in September 1837. The Hunts had three children over the next few years, Richard (1838), Mary M. (1839), and Sarah M. (1841). These additions to the family probably motivated the substantial remodeling of the Hunt House that occurred about 1841, based on receipts in the Hunt family papers dated May 1841 and the surviving physical evidence. The changes are believed to include the raising of the roof, the addition of a one-story brick wing to the west side of the house, and the enlargement of the wing on the north side, as well as interior alterations.

Richard Hunt's involvement in reform movements increased after his marriage to Sarah M'Clintock, which brought him into contact with other active reformers. Richard and Sarah Hunt's anti-slavery affiliations and efforts are discussed earlier in this document under Criterion A. Sarah M'Clintock Hunt died in 1842, and in November 1845, Richard Hunt married Jane Clothier Master (1812-1889), the daughter of William and Mary Master, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They had four more children: William Master (born October 6, 1846), Jane M. (born June 23, 1848), George Truman (born April 18, 1852), and Anna T., who died as an infant in the early 1850s. Jane Hunt, an Orthodox Quaker disowned for marrying out of meeting, did not join the Junius Monthly Meeting of Friends in Waterloo but occasionally attended meetings and maintained an active interest in the local Quaker community.

The Hunt House in Waterloo contributes to the significance of the Women's Rights National Historical Park district because of the gathering of women in the house that resulted in the revolutionary call for a convention devoted to women's rights. Jane Hunt hosted the gathering at her house only a few weeks after giving birth to her second child. Richard Hunt's associations with local and national social reform organizations, his considerable financial resources, and his extensive network of family and friends provided strong support for the women that enabled them to organize such an event. Richard and Jane both attended the First Women's Rights Convention and signed the Declaration of Sentiments, as did two of Richard's sisters and a niece.

Hunt called himself a farmer in the 1850 census, reflecting his rural values. In the 1840s and 1850s, his large estate was a working farm, as evidenced by an inventory of his property at the time of his death. Outbuildings in 1856 included four barns, four sheds, a carriage house (possibly connected to the house via the second story), a hen house, a corn house, and a stable (none of these are extant). A garden, fruit-yard, orchard, and pastureland were also mentioned, and an 1859 deed noted specific crops including hay, wheat, corn, potatoes, and lumber. An 1890 article describing the estate noted that it also included a brickyard. Hunt was a founding organizer of the Seneca County Agricultural Society, and both he and Jane earned prizes for their farm produce.

Richard Pell Hunt died at the Hunt House after a long illness on November 7, 1856, at the age of 60. He was first buried in the Quaker cemetery in Waterloo but later moved to Maple Grove Cemetery. His obituary appeared in numerous progressive newspapers, including the *Seneca Observer*, the *Liberator*, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, and the *Friends Intelligencer*, reflecting the various social networks to which he belonged. In the obituary, Hunt's brother-in-law George Truman remembered Hunt in the following way:

He was a lover of freedom. His heart beat kindly for the wanderer from the land of sorrow and slavery, and when they passed his threshold, and sought his advice and aid, he turned not to consult the law of oppression, but that beautiful and perfect law of liberty which he found engraven upon his inner and higher being, and which he perceived entitled him, and all his fellow-men to the 'right of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness' (*National Anti-Slavery Standard*:12/6/1856; *Liberator* 11/28/1856).

Hunt's probate records from 1856 indicate that the house contained 14 rooms by the time of his death. Interior furnishings in 1856 reflected the family's concern for intellectual liveliness and physical comfort. In the hall, there was an oilcloth on the floor, a stair carpet secured by rods, a hall table, and along one wall, a large map of the United States. The parlor had a carpet (about nine by ten feet), a square center table with a marble top, a red velvet sofa, two rocking chairs, and six parlor chairs. The windows had no curtains but instead were fitted with window shades, possibly painted in the fashion of the day. A work stand, tray, umbrella, two candlesticks, and a mirror completed the parlor furnishings. Curtains covered windows in the sitting room and bedrooms. The dining room included a full complement of dinnerware, including silver teaspoons, glasses, and candle sticks. The Hunts kept a horse, four carriages, and a sleigh in the barn.

After Richard's death, Jane was left a widow with six children under the age of 18. By the terms of his will, Hunt divided his property among his children, in the care of two trustees until they reached legal age. Jane Hunt and her children continued to reside in the Hunt House, at least part-time, until Jane's death on November 28, 1889, at the age of 77. Jane's involvement in social reform continued at least through the 1860s, as she was listed as a member of the Seneca County League of the State League Devoted to the Interests of Temperance and Freedom in 1862 and 1863. She was buried next to her husband in Maple Grove Cemetery in Waterloo. The inventory after Jane Hunt's death noted some changes in room configuration and use. Jane Hunt also installed plumbing, gas lighting, and stoves. In 1890, Hunt's estate was divided among his six children, and the Hunt House went to his youngest child, George Hunt, and his wife, Jennie (*The State League* Vol. IV No. 34 (June 21, 1862), Vol. IV No. 42 (August 16, 1862), Vol. VI No. 3 (November 11, 1863)).

Richard and Sarah M'Clintock's daughters, Mary and Sarah, became involved in both the anti-slavery and women's rights movements in the late nineteenth century. The *National Anti-Slavery Standard* account book records their subscriptions to the newspaper and donations to the AASS. Mary Hunt lived with her stepmother on East Main Street until 1889. She contributed to many Seneca County charities and was elected a vice-president of the New York state women's rights association in July 1869. Soon after Jane Hunt's death, Mary moved to the house at 12 East Williams Street in Waterloo, next to the M'Clintock House (although the M'Clintocks had moved years earlier), where she is listed in city directories through 1907. The house actually belonged to her sister Sarah Hunt Gardner, who had moved to Massachusetts in 1859 but returned to Waterloo two years later. Mary inherited her father's commercial block on East Main Street. Sarah later wrote several novels about independent women and reform-minded Quakers, based in part on her M'Clintock relatives. Neither the dates of death nor places of burial for Mary and Sarah Hunt are known (Stanton et al. 1881-1886 I:396).

## CRITERION D – ARCHEOLOGY

Archeological work conducted to date at the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home Site (ASMIS# WOR100001.000, contributing site) and the M'Clintock House Site (ASMIS# WOR100003.000, contributing site) has yielded substantive archeological evidence regarding the form and function of those houses when they were occupied by the Stanton and M'Clintock families, both of which were instrumental in the development of the Women's Rights Movement from which the district derives its first period of significance. The identification at both properties of razed kitchen wings dating to the M'Clintock and Stanton tenures, respectively, has led NPS archeologists Steven Pendery and William Griswold to argue that

The Stantons (and) the M'Clintocks had a shared interest in social reform in general and in promoting women's rights in particular... It is...probable that they discussed and shared Stanton's feelings about how this could be particularly accomplished by constructing well-lit and well-ventilated kitchens and laundries. The M'Clintock House south wing may be an expression of group solidarity around this idea that the working conditions of women should be improved (Pendery and Griswold 2000:90).

While the Stanton addition is securely dated to 1842, the expansion date of the M'Clintock wing is more broadly ascribed to their years of residency on the property from 1836–1855. This lack of a specific construction date at the M'Clintock House is problematic in that the impetus behind the expansion of the kitchen wings cannot be unequivocally attributed to the reform mentality shared by the M'Clintocks and Stantons during the time both families were residing in the area, c. 1842–1855. The idea, however, is a compelling one and serves as a reference point for additional archeological and documentary research that might more firmly pinpoint the date of construction for the M'Clintock wing. Despite its questionable construction date, the archeological identification of the south wing at the M'Clintock House is significant in that it has provided unambiguous measurements for the structure, a point on which historical cartographic sources conflict.

Absent their kitchen wings, the Stanton and M'Clintock houses do not accurately reflect the physical configurations of the structures during the first period of significance for the district, c. 1836–1862. The archeological identification of numerous buried architectural features, particularly those related to the former kitchen additions, provides both a physical and philosophical basis to guide future efforts to return the houses to an appearance that would be familiar to the Stanton and M'Clintock families, and to better convey the feel of the homes as they would have experienced it.

In addition to the substantive architectural information uncovered at the Stanton and M'Clintock houses, buried landscape features have the potential to provide data with which to reconstruct the surrounding yard areas to their mid-nineteenth-century appearances. The interpretation of a landscape as a large-scale cultural feature is largely dependent on the integrity of that landscape relative to a specific time period. Lacking that level of integrity, a landscape may still maintain interpretive substance through the survival of temporally distinct features that, when considered as a whole, have the ability to contribute to a meaningful diachronic interpretation of historic land use.

Physical descriptions of the Stanton property from 1847–1862 are cursory, including only brief references to large vegetable gardens, lawns, and trees (Yocum 1998:22), while virtually nothing is known about the M'Clintock House grounds during their tenure at the property (Yocum 1993:43, 90–92). Archeological work conducted at both sites, however, has revealed that they maintain an unexpected degree of subsurface integrity despite over 150 years of major and minor disturbances. The identification of stratigraphic sequences containing intact topsoil and subsoil strata as well as a range of buried landscape features (e.g. wells, cisterns, privy structures, former driveway alignments) indicates that the sites maintain a realized and potential ability to provide “snapshots” of the Stanton and M'Clintock properties during the district's period of significance. The identification of resources pre- and post-dating that period also has the potential to provide information concerning the structural evolution of those landscapes over time, and how that evolution might reflect specific changes in property ownership or more general changes in the economic, political, and social cultures of Seneca Falls and Waterloo.

The Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home Site and M'Clintock House Site also contribute to the significance of the properties under Criteria A and B. Under Criterion A, the sites are significant as the locations at which the Stanton and M'Clintock families debated and synthesized the various philosophical streams of the Women's Rights Movement that eventually culminated in the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments and Seneca Falls convention. Under Criterion B, the two sites are significant as the personal residences of the Stanton and M'Clintock families, both of which were seminal in the development of the nineteenth-century Women's Rights Movement in the United States.

### **Contributing Archeological Sites**

The history of archeological research within the district comprises 22 projects conducted from 1980–2010. The work was undertaken primarily to meet compliance obligations under Section 106 and Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and has included identification surveys, site evaluations, construction monitoring, geophysical surveys, and an archeological overview and assessment (Markell and Williams 2006).

In the interests of conciseness and relevance, only those archeological projects conducted within the district that resulted in the identification of contributing archeological sites will be addressed. The following four criteria were used to define a “contributing” archeological site: 1) the site must have been subject to some level of subsurface archeological investigation and reporting or, in the absence of archeological survey, the site must be physically identifiable through a patterning of artifacts, features, or structural remains on the ground surface; 2) the archeological data must be defensibly linked to the site in question; 3) the site must have a demonstrated and/or potential ability to address substantive research issues within the identified areas of significance for the district and/or ancillary research issues important to regional pre- and postcontact period history; and 4) the site must lie within the district boundaries as delineated in this nomination.

A total of seven (7) archeological sites are inventoried in the Archeological Sites Management and Information System (ASMIS) for Women's Rights National Historical Park. ASMIS is the NPS's database for the basic registration and management of pre- and postcontact period archeological resources contained within individual parks, and includes basic information on site locations, types, known or inferred integrity, and current National Register status. The seven ASMIS-listed sites for the park include the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home (ASMIS# WOR100001.000); Wesleyan Chapel (ASMIS# WOR100002.000); M'Clintock House (ASMIS# WOR100003.00); Jacob Chamberlain House (ASMIS# WOR100004.000); Young House Lot (ASMIS# WOR100005.00); Hunt House (ASMIS# WOR100006.000); and Village Hall (ASMIS# WOR100007.000). Of these sites, only the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home and the M'Clintock House currently meet all the criteria necessary to be considered contributing archeological sites to the Women's Rights National Historical Park Historic District.

### ***Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home Site***

Several excavations have been conducted at the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home Site, the first dating as early as 1980 and the latest conducted in 2005. The work was conducted for both research and Section 106 compliance purposes and has provided substantive information about the architectural evolution of the structure.

Dr. Paul Grebinger conducted the first excavations at the house in 1980, at which time he identified elements of a buried foundation east of the main house (Yocum 1989). Grebinger concluded that the bricks identified at the east end of the excavation were from a large brick-end chimney. Other members of the regional cultural resource staff, however, felt that the bricks were more likely flooring elements of an attached wood shed associated with the earlier, c. 1837 kitchen (Crisson 2011).

In 1983, additional excavations were conducted by NPS archeologists Dick Ping Hsu and Linda Towle to address three major questions including 1) what were the dimensions, functions, and date of construction of a former wing on the east side of the Stanton House; 2) was there a former north wing on the house and if so what were its dimensions, function, and date of construction; and 3) was there a porch on the east wall of the extant main house during Stanton's tenure there from 1846–1862 (Hsu and Towle 1983).

The east wing of the house, documented through the earliest extant photograph of the house dating to ca. 1900 and provisionally identified by Grebinger (see above), was further exposed during the Hsu and Towle excavations. The north, south, and east walls were uncovered at approximately 8 inches (in) below ground surface, as were the remains of a former hearth and chimney base along the east wall. A second linear configuration of stone slabs also was encountered parallel to the east wall of the razed east wing. The authors suggest that the stones may be the remains of an earlier, shorter east wing addition that was removed by the Stantons when they expanded that portion of the house in 1846 to accommodate new kitchen space. A brick-lined cistern, likely built when yet another east wing addition was constructed in 1903 to replace the Stanton-era addition, also was uncovered but left unexcavated.

No evidence of the former porch along the east wall of the extant main house was identified, although a buried, previously undocumented bulkhead entrance was found. The remains of the foundation, comprising undressed slab stone similar to the house foundation, extended 8 ft east from the house and lined up with a seam in the cellar wall where the original basement door had been blocked off. Roughly 16 ft from the back of the house and in line with the buried bulkhead entrance, Hsu and Towle also identified a buried well that they tentatively ascribed to the Stanton occupation of the house.

Hsu and Towle's investigations also positively identified three of the four walls of the former north wing of the structure. Comprising undressed slab stones set not more than 3 ft below grade with a dug cellar, this portion of the building is believed to have been razed by 1866 and, as of 1983, its existence had been extrapolated solely through architectural evidence found in the main house. The similarity in the placement and size of the former north wing to its extant counterpart on the south side of the house confirmed that during Stanton's tenure the house would have presented a symmetrical facade.

Grebinger returned to the site in 1983 to conduct limited excavation in the basement of the house in advance of proposed renovation work (Grebinger 1983). The work focused on two features including a brick support base for the north interior chimney in the main two-story section of the house, and a massive filled stone base of unknown function along the south wall of the one-and-one-half-story south wing. The stratigraphy around the brick support base indicated that the floor of the basement was originally lower than its elevation as of 1983, but resulted in no other significant finding. The work around the untyped stone feature was similarly inconclusive, with no clear evidence regarding its use or date of construction or infilling.

A geophysical survey was conducted at the Stanton House in 1986 with the goal of identifying landscape features dating to the Stanton occupation of the property (Bevan 1986). The survey was largely unsuccessful in identifying any new or substantive features unknown through previous research at the site. The backfilled brick-lined cistern identified by Hsu and Towle in 1983 was relocated as a strong echo, as were rubble and debris profiles in the former location of the north wing, and several untyped backfilled excavation trenches. Large buried masses of iron also were identified east of the house but could not be ascribed as to origin, type, or function.

Dick Hsu conducted excavations at the house in 1988, but there is no record of that work. Hsu did comment, however, that the Stanton-period driveway may exist off the northwest corner of the building (Griswold and Dimmick 1999:4).

NPS archeologists William Griswold and Frederica Dimmick conducted a survey at the Stanton House in the fall of 1998 in advance of the proposed installation of a perimeter drain (1999). The survey was designed to supplement and expand upon the findings of the earlier excavations, specifically Hsu and Towle's 1983 work. The 1998 work identified several important pieces of information concerning the construction and subsequent modifications to the house.

First, the buried topsoil stratum identified in five of the seven excavated units were nearly devoid of cultural material, a condition that suggests that the property was likely unoccupied before the construction of the house, c. 1838. Second, units excavated adjacent to the foundation revealed that the exterior walls were tightly packed with clay spoil resulting from the excavation of the main cellar hole. The authors speculate that the original builders may have employed this technique as a sort of waterproofing measure designed to mitigate drainage problems. Third, evidence of driveway deposits, at least one of which that might be contemporaneous with the Stanton occupation, were identified northeast of the house; it is unclear how this location ties in with Hsu's reported driveway find in 1988.

Griswold returned to the Stanton House in July 1999 to monitor the installation of the perimeter drainage system (Griswold 2001). For the most part, his observations corroborated the locations of previously identified cultural features around the house. He did identify, however, several new architectural features including a second buried bulkhead entrance; a stone support for a porch that extended off the west side of the former north wing of the house; and a possible stone support for the former porch extending off the east side of the main house, a feature that had eluded all previous identification attempts. Griswold also collected mortar samples from the bulkhead entrance previously identified by Hsu and Towle and, through compositional analysis, was able to link it to the original construction of the house, after which it was filled by the Stantons to allow for the construction of the porch.

A survey of the property also was conducted in 2005 in partial fulfillment of Section 106 requirements for installation of interpretive waysides at the Stanton House property and three others within the Women's Rights National Historical Park. The three test units excavated at the Stanton House contained an unstratified mixture of materials that included a lithic biface pre-form, a projectile point, and nineteenth- and twentieth-century domestic debris, but no significant deposits or features (Grills 2005).

A second geophysical survey of the property was conducted by New South Associates in 2010 and included electromagnetic conductivity (EM), ground-penetrating radar (GPR), and magnetometry (MAG). The survey was conducted across the entire property and revealed a range of probable historic landscape features dating to the Stanton tenure as well as the period post-dating their occupation. Stanton-era features including evidence of the former north and east wing house foundations; and a circular drive, well, and pathway at the front of the house. Landscape and structural features dating the post-Stanton period include multiple buried driveway and sidewalk alignments; a cistern previously identified during the 2001 survey of the property, and the buried foundations of at least three buildings including the McKeivitt, Nies, and Hawker houses.

### *M'Clintock House Site*

The M'Clintock House Site has been the subject of a total of five archeological investigations. The purpose of the majority of the projects, in addition to meeting compliance obligations, was to collect archeological data that could inform plans to rehabilitate the property to its appearance during the M'Clintock tenure from 1836 to 1856.

Thomas Schley conducted limited testing on the north side of the M'Clintock House in advance of proposed restoration work, the results of which provided little in the way of substantive information about the property (Schley 1990). Later excavations conducted by NPS archeologists Steven Pendery and William Griswold, as detailed in both technical reports (1996, 1997) and a scholarly article (2000), provided substantive evidence concerning the size and location of two southern wings on the house and a range of yard features. The original south wing, measuring 8-x-12-ft and covering a pargeted water cistern, was likely built at the same time as the main house, c. 1833–1836. The later south wing, however, was substantially larger at 14-x-24 ft and was built by the M'Clintocks sometime between 1836 and 1856. While the enlarged south wing is depicted on historic maps of the period, the significance of the archeological data lies in the fact that it provides firm measurements for the structure, a point on which the cartographic sources conflict.

The stratigraphy exposed during excavations in the area of the south wing revealed the original ground surface, a stratum immediately post-dating the construction of the foundation, and a burn horizon associated with the fire that destroyed the enlarged south wing in 1955. Seventeen features were identified in the south wing excavations. The ability to follow the stratigraphic sequence throughout the cistern and south wing areas permitted relative dating of the identified features. In addition to the foundation for the enlarged south wing, a number of other features dating to the M'Clintock occupation were identified including a fireplace foundation. Cistern excavations revealed three primary strata including a layer of late nineteenth-century bottles and jars reflecting a fill date of c. 1895. Excavation of two backyard units identified seven stratigraphic layers, the upper five of which appeared to post-date the M'Clintock occupation of the site. A buried A-horizon containing creamware, pearlware, and whiteware, however, is consistent with the M'Clintock occupation of the site and may be the yard surface that was exposed during that period. A privy feature also was identified but not excavated.

Two additional archeological surveys were conducted at the house in 2003 and 2005 to meet Section 106 compliance obligations. The 2003 investigation was conducted in advance of the installation of a drainage pipe in the area of the former south wing of the house, and included the excavation of a total of 9 sq m (Rosentel 2003, 2005). The work succeeded in exposing a slate walkway in the vicinity of the capped well at the site, and the identification of a brick and stone feature believed to be associated with an earlier foundation or outbuilding at the site. The archeology also confirmed the stratigraphic sequence in the yard that was first described by Pendery and Griswold (1996, 1997), and underscored the actual and potential archeological sensitivity of the property.

The 2005 investigations at the house were carried out as part of a project that involved the installation of waysides at four historic properties at the park including the Stanton, Chamberlain, Hunt, and M'Clintock houses. The work at the M'Clintock House comprised the hand excavation of a 0.5-x-2-m trench at the northeast corner of the property in what was formerly the front yard of the Waterloo Baptist Church (Grills 2005). The trench revealed four layers of fill soils overlying intact subsoil, with the fill soils attributed to the construction (1875–1876) and subsequent demolition (1988) of the church. Neither the fill soils nor the recovered artifact assemblage, which included 173 pieces of later nineteenth- to twentieth-century architectural and domestic debris, could be meaningfully linked to either the M'Clintock occupation or church operations.

### **Archeological Potential of the District**

In addition to its realized significance as manifested at the Stanton and M'Clintock sites, the district also has the potential to yield information about the pre- and postcontact period histories of the Seneca Falls/Waterloo region. The properties that appear to possess the highest sensitivity for intact precontact period sites are the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home Site (ASMIS# WOR100001.000), the Jacob Chamberlain House (ASMIS# WOR1 00004.000), and the Hunt House (ASMIS# WOR100006.000), all of which are sited in proximity to the Seneca River and retain some level of subsurface landscape integrity. The recovery of lithics from the Stanton House property underscores this sensitivity. Given the larger precontact period profile of the region, identified sites likely would date from the Late Archaic–Middle Woodland periods given the riverine focus of the settlement patterns during these periods (Markell and Williams 2006:89–90).

Postcontact period archeological potential exists at several of the currently non-contributing archeological sites within the district. Despite extensive structural and landscape modifications, Wesleyan Chapel (ASMIS# WOR100002.000) may retain some potential for data recovery in areas associated with the original chapel and with later occupational sequences. Archeological monitoring of trench excavations in 2010, for example, revealed evidence of the c. 1872 storefront expansion of the building and exposed portions of the 1917 concrete basement wall (Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. 2010). The Young House Lot (ASMIS# WOR100005.00) dates to the same period as the neighboring M'Clintock House and may contain similarly intact stratigraphy and landscape features that could provide valuable comparative data to the M'Clintock House.

Finally, excavations conducted in 1998 at the Jacob Chamberlain House (ASMIS# WOR1 00004.000) identified several features related to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century occupation of the property. The most substantial result of the survey included the identification a 22-foot-long foundation and associated chimney base appended to the east elevation of the existing building. This finding clarified the status of the extant structure as a portion of the original, larger building constructed on the property, ca. 1810–1815. Excavations in the yard also identified evidence of kitchen debris deposits, possibly related to the first half of the nineteenth century, and several uncharacterized landscape features including a charcoal-filled pit and several trenches excavated into the subsoil.

While the archeological findings at the Chamberlain House are important, they are not sufficient, in and of themselves, to elevate the site to contributing status for several reasons. First, the identification of the buried foundation remains provides information that is largely corroborative to the historic map data and architectural assessment of the extant structure rather than providing new information about the building. Second, the temporal and functional characteristics of the identified landscape features remain ambiguous and make it difficult to establish what substantive research questions the property might have the potential to address.

## CRITERION A – COMMERCE

The **Visitor Center (LCS No. 040666, contributing building)** is locally significant for its associations with early twentieth-century automobile-related development in Seneca Falls. Built in 1915 as an automobile sales room and service center, it remained in use as the Boyce Garage through 1927. Seneca Falls' key location along the major east-west thoroughfare in New York State during the automobile's rise as American's primary mode of transportation resulted in its growth as a regional center of automobile-related commerce. The Visitor Center, located along a stretch of road with similar automobile showrooms in the early twentieth century, is one of a few remaining buildings in the village that represents the early stages of this development pattern.

The physical fabric of Seneca Falls, including the Visitor Center, reflects its role at the cutting edge of national revolutions in transportation, industrialization, and urbanization throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The building is located within the Seneca Falls Village Historic District, listed on the National Register in 1991, which includes much of the village's historic fabric on the north side of the Seneca River and incorporates the Fall Street-Trinity Lane Historic District listed in 1974. The discussion of the Visitor Center in this registration form adds to the historical context for the building using primarily information from the 1988 *Historic Structure Report*. It also clarifies its significance as a contributing resource within both the Seneca Falls Village Historic District as well as the Women's Rights National Historical Park Historic District.

The Seneca Falls Village Historic District extends roughly along State and Cayuga streets south of Butler Avenue, includes the River, Canal, and Van Cleef Lake, and ends on the south bank of the River along Canal Street. The Fall Street business district, where the Visitor Center is located, is largely the product of rebuilding after fires that occurred in 1859 and 1890. Development in the early twentieth century primarily occurred as infill construction within well-established street patterns and zones of activity. The 1991 National Register nomination describes the district as a "large and exceptionally intact village commercial and residential center that retains streetscapes and buildings illustrating the growth and development of a thriving manufacturing center between 1800 and 1930." The Visitor Center, built in 1915, dates to the end of this period and represents the most recent transportation innovation that influenced the built landscape of the village, namely the automobile (King 1990:8.1).

Early nineteenth-century development of the village related chiefly to the proximity of water power and the network of canals that transported goods and people through central New York. The advent of the locomotive in the 1840s and 1850s encouraged further growth, as several local entrepreneurs established large manufacturing complexes. The village continued to prosper as a regional manufacturing center into the 1890s, with particular success in the pump and fire engine industries. In the first decades of the twentieth century, New York State focused its attention on updating its canal system to accommodate larger vessels. In 1915, the same year that the Garage was built, the Seneca River's rapids, as well as the mills and the canal in the center of Seneca Falls, were flooded to form Van Cleef Lake and create an enlarged barge canal in the village. The new waterway dramatically altered a large portion of the industrial landscape and changed the types of industry that drove the village's economy. At the same time, the area began to feel the effects of increased automobile use throughout the country.

In the early twentieth century, the highway that is now known as Route 20 ran through Seneca Falls along Fall Street, buoying its continued development as a vibrant commercial stretch. Before the New York State Thruway was built in the 1950s, Route 20 was the main highway through New York State west from New York City and New England. Created from Native American trails and New York's earliest turnpikes, the route dates to 1799. By the end of the nineteenth century, state and federal programs began providing funding for management of the roadway. In 1926, it was designated as U.S. Route 20, which the Preservation League of New York State explains, "developed with the automobile. The road represents the architecture of travel: early gas stations, tourist cabins and burger chains that pre-date McDonald's—so much is virtually unchanged." As an early example of the "architecture of travel" that the highway encouraged, the Visitor Center, originally known as the Boyce Garage, contributed to the establishment of Seneca Falls as a regional center for automobile sales and service (Preservation League of New York State 1999; Rozhon 2006).

Adrian H. Boyce of Seneca Falls constructed the building in 1915 as an automobile sales room and garage. Boyce was born in Ovid Center, near Interlaken, New York, and started his career in business as the proprietor of a general store. In

1909, he opened a Ford "agency" in Sheldrake. He and his family moved to Seneca Falls in 1913. The addition shortly thereafter of Dodge, Hudson, Buick, and Reo to his line of car makes indicates that the business was doing well. Undated obituaries describe Boyce as a member of numerous local business and fraternal organizations. Further evidence of his success is his decision two years later to build a large showroom in the center of the downtown, right on the busy thoroughfare of Fall Street/Route 20. He hired an architecture firm from the neighboring town of Waterloo to design the building and the Syracuse Engineering Company as the general contractor. Local contractors supplied the heating (Story & Strong); electrical work (S.G. McGraw); interior decorating (F.G. Wilson); exterior decorating (Meekes & Silber); plastering (Michael Ferguson); plumbing (Doran Brothers); and telephone wiring (John Brady). The front incorporated two accessory stores, while a repair shop was located in the rear. The second story was the main showroom. The garage had a capacity of 150 automobiles. Apparently not all this space was needed in the early years, for Boyce briefly operated a roller skating rink on the third story.

The garage was partially completed by September 1915, when the Seneca Falls *Reveille* invited "patrons of the past" to "a special showing of Cars in our New Garage in Fall Street. While the building is still in process of construction, we expect to have the street floor arranged so that we can show a representative group of FORD-OVERLAND-DODGE BROTHERS-BUICK-REO-PAIGE automobiles." In January, Boyce held a grand opening celebration to welcome customers to the finished building. "Thousands at Opening of New Boyce Garage. Crowd Royally Entertained," read the headline of the *Reveille* article. The description of the opening as "an event of considerable importance in the Industrial history of Seneca Falls" reflects the hallowed place the automobile already held in American society. For the opening, Boyce displayed twenty-five different cars from eight factories, including Ford, Dodge, Chalmers, Reo, Buick, Chevrolet, Overland, and Regal. One Ford had a special body manufactured locally by the Waterloo Wagon Company (*Reveille*:9/3/1915,1/24/1916, quoted in Matson et al. 1988:7-8).

Over the next ten years, people came to Seneca Falls from throughout the surrounding region to purchase their new cars, from either Boyce or one of his neighbors down the street, who converted the former Wesleyan Chapel and Johnson Opera House into a Ford salesroom and garage, operated by a succession of owners from 1922 to 1958. In 1917, Boyce expanded his enterprise by opening an office as a Chevrolet distributor in Rochester that eventually became the largest Chevrolet agency in the country. He continued to reside in Seneca Falls, near his garage. The 1921-22 Village Directory lists his address as 178 Fall Street. The 1927 Directory lists the garage as Boyce Chevrolet Sales Co. Inc., perhaps indicating that Boyce decided to consolidate his business under one supplier. He may have been experiencing some financial difficulties, as he foreclosed on his mortgage that year and moved his business to the Sullivan Building on the corner of Fall and Walnut streets.

Through a conversion from commercial use to institutional use, the building continued to serve as a prominent landmark in the downtown area, anchoring the village's main street for the next 60 years. In the summer of 1927, the village trustees purchased the building as the new location of the Seneca Falls municipal offices. A Geneva, New York, architect produced the plans for its renovation, and the new Village Hall opened in 1928. The building housed the police department, the village court, the jail, a fire station number one, and various other administrative offices. It served as the center of Seneca Falls governmental life until 1987, when the village moved its offices to a restored railroad station at 60 State Street and donated the building to the Women's Rights National Historical Park.

### **CRITERION C – ARCHITECTURE**

The Visitor Center is also locally significant as one of the first large automobile-related commercial blocks constructed in the region. The former Boyce Garage combined cutting-edge building technology and early twentieth-century modern architectural style in a building designed to accommodate the newest innovation in transportation. Its fireproof curtain-wall construction, modern building materials, and streamlined ornamentation are characteristic features of one of the era's defining architectural philosophies: form follows function.

At its opening in 1915, newspapers heralded the Boyce Garage as the "most modern building of its kind in this part of the state." It represented the application of a relatively new building technology, steel-frame curtain-wall construction, to the unique requirements of a brand-new building type, the automobile garage. The remarkable glass curtain wall that fills the

full three stories of the facade served several important purposes. It provided Boyce with large expanses of display space to advertise his automobiles to passing pedestrians and motorists. Wide garage bays in the first story easily accommodated emerging automobile traffic from the showroom and the repair shop. The plate-glass windows also allowed the building's occupants to take full advantage of natural interior lighting. Perhaps most importantly, the curtain-wall technique enabled the architect to employ an almost completely fireproof construction system, in keeping with the most up-to-date building recommendations. The residents of Seneca Falls were well aware of the dangers of fire, since a large conflagration had destroyed most of Fall Street only 25 years earlier. The presence of combustible materials made fireproof construction a particular concern for automobile garages. The Visitor Center has a fireproof steel frame, brick walls, and concrete floors. An 18-inch firewall separated the garage from the huge gasoline tanks buried under the sidewalk in front of it. Inside, the building boasted larger-than-normal LaFrance fire extinguishers, in addition to modern steam heating and electric light fixtures. The steel framing also provided an open floor plan, with the capacity for 150 cars. A large Warsaw elevator carried automobiles between the three stories.

The blueprints for the Boyce Garage are signed by M. L. Van Kirk & Son, Architects, Waterloo, New York. Martin Van Kirk (1862-1921) was a Waterloo contractor and builder, who also practiced as an architect by the 1890s. He served for several years as the Waterloo Village Engineer and a member of the Assessors Board. Van Kirk also designed the Baptist and Methodist Episcopal churches in Waterloo and the State Street Bank in Seneca Falls. His design for the Boyce Garage was one of the first large automobile showroom blocks built in the region. Two similar buildings in nearby towns, one on East Bridge Street in Oswego and one on West Genesee Street in Syracuse, both date to the 1920s. The Garage is also unique among the other significant commercial buildings within the Seneca Falls Village Historic District, which are primarily of late nineteenth-century construction and reflect the Italianate, Romanesque Revival, or Queen Anne architectural styles. Although it matches the surrounding architecture in material (brick) and scale (at most three stories high), the overtly modern appearance clearly expresses its modern function.

In 1927, the Village of Seneca Falls purchased the Boyce Garage and transformed it into village offices using plans from architect Lloyd Philo Adams of Geneva, New York. Adams (c. 1873-?) had an office with Ephraim M. Pickin in the Old Masonic Temple in Geneva in 1901. His office was later listed at 73 Seneca Street in the same town. Adams and his wife appear in Geneva directories from 1904 through at least 1931. The remodeling of the Boyce Garage did not substantially change the size or shape of the building. It did include some modest but significant structural changes to the facade. Primarily to address "objections that the building did not have the imposing appearance that a Village hall should present", Adams extended the two brick piers flanking the main entrance all the way up to the roofline and replaced the balustrade by a solid brick parapet. Van Kirk's original design intent remained intact despite the heightening of the front facade's central piers. The slight modifications this change required to the gridded rows of large plate-glass windows did not destroy the curtain-wall effect of large expanses of glass hung between structural brick piers.

### **Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

#### **Antebellum Climate of Social Reform**

The intellectual and social beginnings of the American Women's Rights Movement emerged from a climate of numerous social reform movements underway in the first half of the nineteenth century. Widespread industrialization, urbanization, and immigration in the United States created unprecedented social problems, but a spirit of progress and reform prevailed. The "doctrine of Reform," as Ralph Waldo Emerson called it, took hold among many Americans, inspiring them to address inequities in the world around them and attempt to create a more enlightened and democratic society. Antebellum reform movements were closely related to the simultaneous groundswell of religious enthusiasm in the country, referred to as the Second Great Awakening. Communities that focused their attention on the correlations between faith and charitable works laid the groundwork for numerous moral crusades aimed at improving society.

The following discussions provide additional context for the people and events associated with the Women's Rights National Historical Park Historic District. The Second Great Awakening was particularly influential in upstate New York, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton was exposed as a young adult to the religious revivals that occurred there. The more radical Communitarian experiments in the region directly addressed progressive ideas of women, and the M'Clintock

Family was linked to these through their relatives, the Pryors. The prevalent benevolent reform efforts of the early nineteenth century marked the first significant involvement of women in social reform, providing a starting point for women to consider and debate their own rights. Finally, women were especially active in the temperance movement, and many women's rights advocates began their public activism by speaking about and organizing around the issue.

### **The Second Great Awakening**

Religious revivals intensified in the United States around the turn of the nineteenth century, introducing various new sects to the overwhelmingly Protestant country. In the eighteenth century, the largest Protestant denominations were Presbyterians, centered in Pennsylvania and farther south, and Congregationalists, centered in New England. Both groups espoused a Calvinist theology, believing that humans were inherently sinful and that God had determined the fate of every individual at the beginning of time. Baptists and Methodists, who emphasized individual conscience and personal salvation, had begun to make inroads in Virginia, Rhode Island, and elsewhere. Beginning in 1801 in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, a series of religious revivals swept through the country, and Americans experienced a resurgence of religious commitment. Known as the Second Great Awakening, thousands of people converted to Protestant Christianity. They were particularly drawn to the Baptist and Methodist denominations that emphasized free will. These groups emphasized the importance of social engagement as a demonstration of faith and encouraged individuals to perform charitable works aimed at the betterment of society. A fierce loyalty to the principle of individualism sensitized members of such congregations to an array of injustices, which at times included the appropriation of Indian lands, capital punishment, the abuse of alcohol, and legal enforcement of the Christian sabbath. In particular, many evangelicals, especially Finneyites and Quakers, were deeply opposed to slavery (Braude 1989:60; Cott 2000:201-204).

The most famous religious revivals in the Northeast began in the 1820s, when they swept through the small towns of upstate New York with such speed and intensity that the region was nicknamed the "Burned-over District". This area of the country felt the effects of industrialization and urbanization keenly. Its location between the eastern seaports and the Great Lakes placed the region at the cutting edge of the nationwide shift from a subsistence agricultural economy to industrial production. Rich farmlands and rapidly flowing streams for waterpower in places like Utica and Seneca Falls attracted both agricultural and industrial entrepreneurs. The region experienced an economic boom in the 1820s and 1830s, fueled by the completion of the Erie Canal in October 1825, which carried freight and passengers west to Buffalo and the upper Great Lakes or east to Albany and New York City.

Evangelical preachers found an especially receptive audience in a population so directly affected by the sea changes in the material conditions of life. Two of the world's fastest-growing religion groups in the twentieth century, Mormons and Seventh-Day Adventists, originated in antebellum upstate New York. Charles G. Finney, a lawyer practicing in Utica, greatly contributed to the revitalization of Christian ideals in the region through his leadership of revivalist meetings. Finney, who later expanded his purview to the Northeast, the Midwest, and even abroad, broke with the traditional Calvinist doctrine of original sin and emphasized free will, or the individual's ability to choose good over evil. By underscoring the power of moral agency, the charismatic minister fanned the growing interest in social reform (Cott 2000:201; McMillen 2008:39).

### **Progressive Communitarians**

Although women undoubtedly played prominent leadership roles within individual congregations, few organized religious groups allowed women to be ordained. Most religious authorities continued to promote male authority in family, church, and community. In addition to the Quakers discussed above in the context of Seneca Falls/Waterloo, other religious groups addressed the issue of egalitarianism in visible ways. In the 1830s, various so-called "perfectionist" denominations dedicated themselves to creating the kingdom of God on earth, through intentional utopian communities in which they experimented with alternatives to traditional religious, economic, and family patterns. Some of the most well-known of these communities, such as the Shakers, formed in upstate New York. John Humphrey Noyes organized the Oneida Community, based on a system called complex marriage, near Utica. The Society for Universal Inquiry and Reform established a community near Skaneateles, New York, based on the principles of the French socialist Charles Fourier. Mary Ann M'Clintock's half-sister Margaret and her husband George Pryor belonged to this

community. Most communitarians supported race and gender equality well before either abolition or women's rights became more mainstream social reform movements (*Liberator*:9/29/1843; McMillen 2008:40-41).

### **Benevolent Reform**

The religious revivals of the early nineteenth century created a forum for public activism among women. By the 1820s, women had established missionary societies throughout the North and were even responsible for preaching in some areas and churches. Particularly in the "Burned-over District," evangelical women focused on the plight of poor women and fought to "shape the social mores and spiritual needs of the expanding middle class." Women organized numerous benevolent reform societies intended to create a unified Protestant Christian culture including the American Bible Society, the American Missionary Society, and the American Sunday School Union. In upstate New York, the Western Sunday School Union and the Western Female Missionary Society developed cooperative alliances among several Protestant denominations, including Presbyterian and Congregational. In the process of their work, these women created powerful social networks and learned how to organize, speak, write, present programs, and raise money. Some historians have suggested that female benevolent reform movements formed the basis for the early Women's Rights Movement by challenging the dominant ideologies related to women's roles. They did push the envelope of traditional female behavior, but primarily in ways that reinforced the existing social order.

### **Temperance Movement**

Christian ideals and a desire to improve society inspired many early nineteenth-century reformers to focus their attention on limiting the abuse of alcohol. The temperance movement bridged the gap between "conservative" reform activities that worked within dominant social structures, such as the establishment of settlement houses or schools for the poor, and more radical challenges to existing societal institutions like abolition and women's rights. Excessive drinking was an accepted part of male society in the early Republic. The population consumed an average of five to seven gallons of alcohol a year, twice the average consumption at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The dire economic, medical, and social consequences of such excess ranged from individual cases of poverty caused by the head of household's inability to remain employed to widespread increases in crime and violence. Those groups of citizens most negatively affected, including women and business owners, as well as ministers intent on saving their congregations from vice, began to address the issue through grassroots organizing. Boston clergymen formed the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance in 1826. A group of reformed alcoholics in Baltimore founded the Washington Temperance Society in 1840 (McMillen 2008:52-53).

Temperance organizations initially focused their campaigns on persuading Americans to reduce their alcohol consumption. Before long, though, they aimed to effect more institutionalized change, encouraging total abstinence and a ban on the manufacture and sale of alcohol. Groups petitioned, lectured, and pressured state and local governments to pass laws preventing the distribution and sale of alcohol. By mid-century, when many reformers across the country had begun to shift their attention to abolitionism, the temperance movement's efforts had contributed most noticeably to a decline in consumption. In 1851, Maine finally passed a law outlawing the production and sale of alcohol, and by the mid-1850s, twelve more states passed similar laws (McMillen 2008:53).

Hundreds of thousands of women joined the antebellum temperance movement in the United States. Women were particularly affected by the negative consequences of excessive drinking as they had limited ability to assert control over their own personal situations if the men around them drank. For example, only a handful of states allowed a wife to sue for divorce on the grounds of alcoholism. At the same time, the alleviation of moral vices like alcohol abuse was generally considered an appropriate cause to which women could direct their social reform efforts. Nonetheless, even though women were often encouraged to advocate for the temperance movement, they often still faced numerous obstacles to their participation. Many clergymen thought temperance was too political for women. Some New York legislators refused to accept temperance petitions signed by women. Men's temperance societies did not allow women to join until 1854, when the Sons of Temperance admitted females on a limited basis. Women thus founded their own temperance groups, including Martha Washingtonian Societies and the Daughters of Temperance (McMillen 2008:55-56).

The temperance movement hit central New York in the early 1840s and formed an important basis for women's activism there. Elizabeth Cady Stanton gave her first speech at a temperance meeting in 1841 or 1842, while visiting her sister Tryphena in Seneca Falls, where over 37% of the town's population had joined the temperance movement by the spring of 1842. Stanton later recalled that she included "a homeopathic dose of woman's rights" in the content of her temperance speech. Amelia Jenks Bloomer was one of the most visible temperance advocates in the region. Bloomer worked for a short time as a governess in Waterloo, New York, for Oren Chamberlain (Jacob P. Chamberlain's brother). She married her employer's nephew, Dexter Bloomer, a lawyer and newspaper editor, in 1840 and moved to Seneca Falls. She wrote for many temperance newspapers, including her own, called the *Lily*, which also publicized the Women's Rights Movement. Bloomer attended the First Women's Rights Convention and signed the Declaration of Sentiments. Susan B. Anthony's family lived in the Rochester area after 1845, and her Quaker father hosted many reformers and abolitionists. She was drawn to reform through the temperance movement and delivered her first speech on the issue in 1849. Anthony went on to become one of the most well-known crusaders for women's equality, in partnership with Stanton (Bloomer 1975:12; McMillen 2008:53-55; Wellman 2004:158).

## Development of District Resources Subsequent to Periods of Significance

### Wesleyan Chapel Site

The Wesleyan Methodist church in Seneca Falls continued to use the Wesleyan Chapel as their meetinghouse until 1869, when debates over church structure and church doctrine split the Wesleyan Society. The disagreements reflected the religious backgrounds of Wesleyan members. At its founding, a majority of Wesleyans had seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church. A few, however, had come from a core of Congregationalists within the Presbyterian Church. Accordingly, some members wanted a hierarchical church structure, similar to that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, while others espoused a more congregational church structure, with local congregations having full authority over their own decisions. In addition, Wesleyans were officially opposed to secret societies, such as the Masons or Odd Fellows, a doctrine that caused tension among some congregations, including Seneca Falls. Arguments over church finances led to the final breakup. Dissidents expressed their displeasure by refusing to pay for needed repairs to the Wesleyan Chapel, and the Wesleyan Society split into two groups, Wesleyans and Congregationalists. Both groups built substantial new brick churches. On October 31, 1871, the Wesleyans sold the 1843 chapel to church member Charles G. Corwin. The following year, they erected their new church, which still stands a block to the west, at the corner of Fall and Clinton streets.

Corwin sold the 1843 chapel to William Johnson on July 1, 1872, who enlarged and converted the building into two stores in the first story and a public hall (Johnson's Hall) in the second story. After 1890, the chapel became an opera house. As early as 1902, Charles Powers operated a furniture store in the building, and in 1915, he purchased it from the Doyle family and continued its conversion to a movie theater. From 1917 to 1919, Asa Hilkert leased the building to Fred Teller, who operated it as the Regent Theater. Tenants also included an optometrist and the New York Telephone Company. In the 1920s, it changed hands again and was remodeled as the Seneca Falls Garage. Several businesses occupied the building in the early 1920s, including Fred L. Huntington's Ford and Fordson sales room, established in 1922.

From 1928 to 1944, Cornelius T. Lynch owned the building. It housed various tenants, including a doctor, the New York Telephone Company, the Seneca Falls Sales Company (which sold Ford automobiles here until 1958), and a school bus and taxi service. In 1944, Lynch sold the building to Henderson and Lathrop of Auburn, New York. Four years later, the owners thoroughly rebuilt it to create an up-to-date salesroom and garage, using the designs of Wallace Beardsley, Auburn architect, with M.S. Matterson, general contractor. In 1961, the Seneca Falls Laundromat, operated by Jim Munger and Frank J. Ludovico, opened in the first story. In 1971, Frank J. Ludovico purchased the building from Henderson and Lathrop and built ten apartments in the second story, retaining the garage and laundromat in the first story. The NPS acquired the building from Ludovico on April 2, 1985. The Park's original treatment program involved the removal of all post-1848 building fabric and the preservation of the remaining architectural features. In 2010, the Park undertook a rehabilitation of the site for preservation and interpretation purposes.

### **Visitor Center**

The Village of Seneca Falls owned the former Boyce Garage building until 1987 and used it as the Village Hall during that entire time. After the initial renovations completed in 1927, the village made several other changes to the building and site. Two buildings north of the Village Hall (one built before 1911, the other built between 1911 and 1916) were demolished in 1953 to make room for additional parking. In the late 1960s, Don Ritter remodeled the interior, adding paneling and hung ceilings, and made some changes to the fenestration on the first and second stories. In April 1972, a fire destroyed the Strand Theater (also constructed in 1915 and initially known as the Fisher Theater) that abutted the east wall of the Village Hall. The fire caused "minor damage" to the Village Hall, and the theater was replaced with a concrete block building.

By February 1986, the village offices and police department had moved out of the building. The village donated it to the NPS in April 1987. The Women's Rights National Historical Park is only the third major occupant of the building since its construction. The Park initially used the former fire station area as a maintenance shop while the rest of the building remained vacant. In July 1993, the NPS opened an orientation center, bookstore, exhibit area, and administrative center in the building.

### **Stanton House**

In April 1862, the Stanton Family moved to Brooklyn, New York, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton sold the Stanton House and their two-acre corner lot in Seneca Falls to John S. Edwards for \$1,650. A year later, in April 1863, John and Martha Edwards sold the property to William A. Duncan, a bookkeeper at the Seneca Knitting Mills, for \$1,975. Duncan divided the land into six lots and sold them individually from 1864 through 1870. In 1866, Peter Taylor acquired the Stanton House and its much-reduced 0.48-acre lot and then sold it to Burnett B. Boardman, who used it as a rental property until 1890.<sup>23</sup> In May 1900, Burnett Boardman's son, George P. Boardman, a "bachelor" living in Hartford, Connecticut, sold the Stanton House to Hugh and Mary Gilmore of Seneca Falls for \$500. A c. 1902-03 remodeling included the removal of the east wing, the raising of the south wing's roof, and extensive renovations to the interior. In 1943, after Hugh and Mary Gilmore died, their daughter Mary C. Gilmore sold the property to Gerald and Mary Ann Pagano for \$2500. The Paganos sold it to Stanley and Helen Burroughs in October 1945. The Burroughs family lived here from 1945 until 1978, when they sold the house to Ralph Peters, of Seattle, Washington. Lucille M. Povero, president of the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Foundation, lived in the house as a caretaker while the Foundation raised money to purchase it. Peters turned the Stanton House over to the Stanton Foundation on January 6, 1982, and the NPS acquired the building on June 29 of that year, in time for the official dedication of the Women's Rights National Historical Park in July 1982.

Houses were built during the late 1860s on most of the other subdivided lots that originally belonged to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and have now been acquired by the NPS. The house constructed on the lot to the south of the Stanton House survived until a c. 1974 fire, and the existing modular home that now serves as the NPS Ranger Station replaced it in 1977. The NPS demolished the house built on the first sub-lot north of the Stanton House in 1988. The house immediately north of that existed until c. 1895. A house built on the sub-lot east of the Stanton House c. 1890 was demolished recently.

### **M'Clintock House**

In 1859, Richard P. Hunt's executors divided the lot on which the M'Clintock House stood by conveying the Hunt Block on East Main Street (covering the south half of the M'Clintock House lot) to several of Hunt's children. The Hunt estate retained the north half of the M'Clintock House lot, valued at \$2500, until 1875, when Hunt's executors sold the M'Clintock House portion to the Waterloo Baptist Church. The deed described the property as 99 feet wide by 160 feet deep, about one-third of an acre. Presumably, the Hunt estate rented the M'Clintock house from 1859 until they sold it in 1875. However, the name of only one tenant, Samuel Birdsall, is known. The 1875 deed noted that the "two story brick dwelling house ... is the same premises occupied by Hon. Samuel Birdsall at the time of his death" (quoted in Yocum

<sup>23</sup> The house as it appeared during the Stanton's residency would have extended past the limits of the subdivided lot, so it is probable that the north wing was removed prior to the 1866 sale.

1993:48). According to the 1870 census, Birdsall, a lawyer born in New York State, was 80 years old. He lived with his wife Serene (aged 68) and daughter, also named Serene (aged 24). He owned personal property worth \$1000 but had no real estate listed. An obituary for Birdsall, formerly a postmaster, says that he died at the age of 81 on February 8, 1872.

The Waterloo Baptist Church purchased the M'Clintock property on May 25, 1875, after a fire in February destroyed their earlier church. The deed, given to James C. Hallsted (a member and deacon of the Baptist Church) and Margaret A. Hallsted, noted that "a two story brick dwelling house and a wooden barn" stood on the property. On April 20, 1882, the Hallsteds transferred the property directly to the Baptist Church, which constructed a new brick chapel, seating 200 people, on the lot to the east of the M'Clintock House. The church was dedicated on June 23, 1876. A March 1906 fire almost destroyed the building, but the congregation rebuilt the sanctuary and rededicated it on November 9, 1906. The Baptist Church used the M'Clintock House as a parsonage and, after 1955, as a nursery. A 1955 fire destroyed the enlarged south wing, which was subsequently removed. In 1985, the NPS acquired the property.

### **Hunt House**

By the twentieth century, most of Hunt's original property of 145 acres had been subdivided. Between 1900 and 1928, Hunt's grandson, George T. Hunt, Jr., sold all the eastern part of the estate, including the Hunt House, to various people. On February 7, 1919, Clifford L. Beare purchased the 2.74 acres that included the Hunt House as well as additional property to the north, northwest, and east to make approximately five acres surrounding the House. Alterations during the 1920s included the removal of the west and north wings and the construction of the existing two-story portico. On July 23, 1930, Beare sold the House and grounds to Charles and Mary Smith, who sold it on August 22, 1930, to Roy Brewster. Irving and Marie Greenwood purchased the house on August 23, 1944, and lived in it until 1976, when they sold it to their daughter, Joan Olmstead, and her husband, Thomas. The existing addition on the north side of the house was constructed in the 1960s. The National Trust for Historic Preservation acquired the Hunt House from the Olmsteads on January 18, 2000, for \$231,000. On March 8, 2000, President Bill Clinton signed into law S. 1910, allowing the NPS to acquire the Hunt House in fee simple.

### **Collections Statement**

The Women's Rights National Historical Park collects and houses items that support the preservation and interpretation of sites in Seneca Falls and Waterloo, New York, associated with the First Women's Rights Convention. The primary focus of the collection is documentation of the lives and activities of the Convention's planners and the people who signed the Declaration of Sentiments issued from that Convention. The bulk of the collection is made up of three kinds of artifacts: 1) artifacts recovered during archaeological investigations of park sites, including an 1855 New York state temperance coin unearthed at the Stanton House; 2) things created or used by families that planned the 1848 Convention (purchased, donated, or on loan from family members or other institutions), including the Hunt and M'Clintock Family papers; and 3) architectural samples selected from historic resources while researching their historical appearance. The Park also maintains a substantial research library on women's history that includes Martha Wright's bound copy of the convention reports.