

Dorchester *women's*
HISTORY TRAIL: UPHAM'S
CORNER WALK

INTRODUCTION

The Uphams Corner Walking Trail was developed by a class of young women at the Codman Academy Charter School during a 10-week course on Dorchester Women's History. Each Saturday, the students met and learned about local women's history through field trips, interviews with community members, and primary source research. The young women in the class each selected a woman to research, and this brochure is the result of their efforts.

This Dorchester Women's History project is a partnership between the Boston Women's Heritage Trail, the Codman Academy Charter School and the Dorchester Historical Society, and was made possible thanks to a grant from the History Channel's Save Our History program. We hope that this brochure is the first of many trails that document the rich and significant history of women in Dorchester. We also hope that you as community members and/or visitors enjoy this trail and use it as an opportunity to learn about some of the many significant women who made history in Dorchester.

Dorchester Women's History Trail is a project of the Codman Academy Charter School, Boston Public Schools.
Lindsay Swain, *Project Director*

THANK YOU

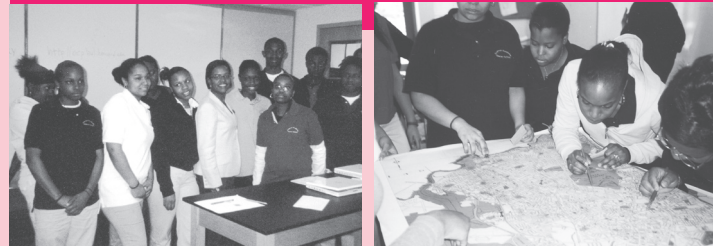
The Dorchester Women's History Project would like to thank:

Mary Smoyer • Sylvia McDowell • Barbara Burgh • Bill Walczak • Meg Campbell • Wanda • Anthony Sammarco • Earl Taylor • Gretchen O'Neill • Marie Turley • Barbara Locurto • Representative Linda Dorcea Forry • Flavia Cigliano, Rose Nichols House Museum • Mayor Thomas M. Menino • Earl Taylor, President, Dorchester Historical Society • Sylvia McDowell, President, Boston Woman's Heritage Trail • Joanne Riley, Mass Studies Program, UMASS Boston

PHOTO CREDITS: (do we have any?)

CODMAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL PARTICIPANTS

Lucy Biayemi, Sherry Jones, Naomie Lebon, Jenna Marseille, Minnetta McKenzie, Sandra Michaud, Evelis Perez



SPONSORS

This project was funded by a grant from the History Channel. Project support was provided by the Boston Women's Heritage Trail.

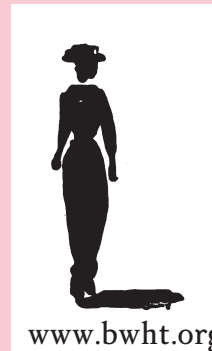


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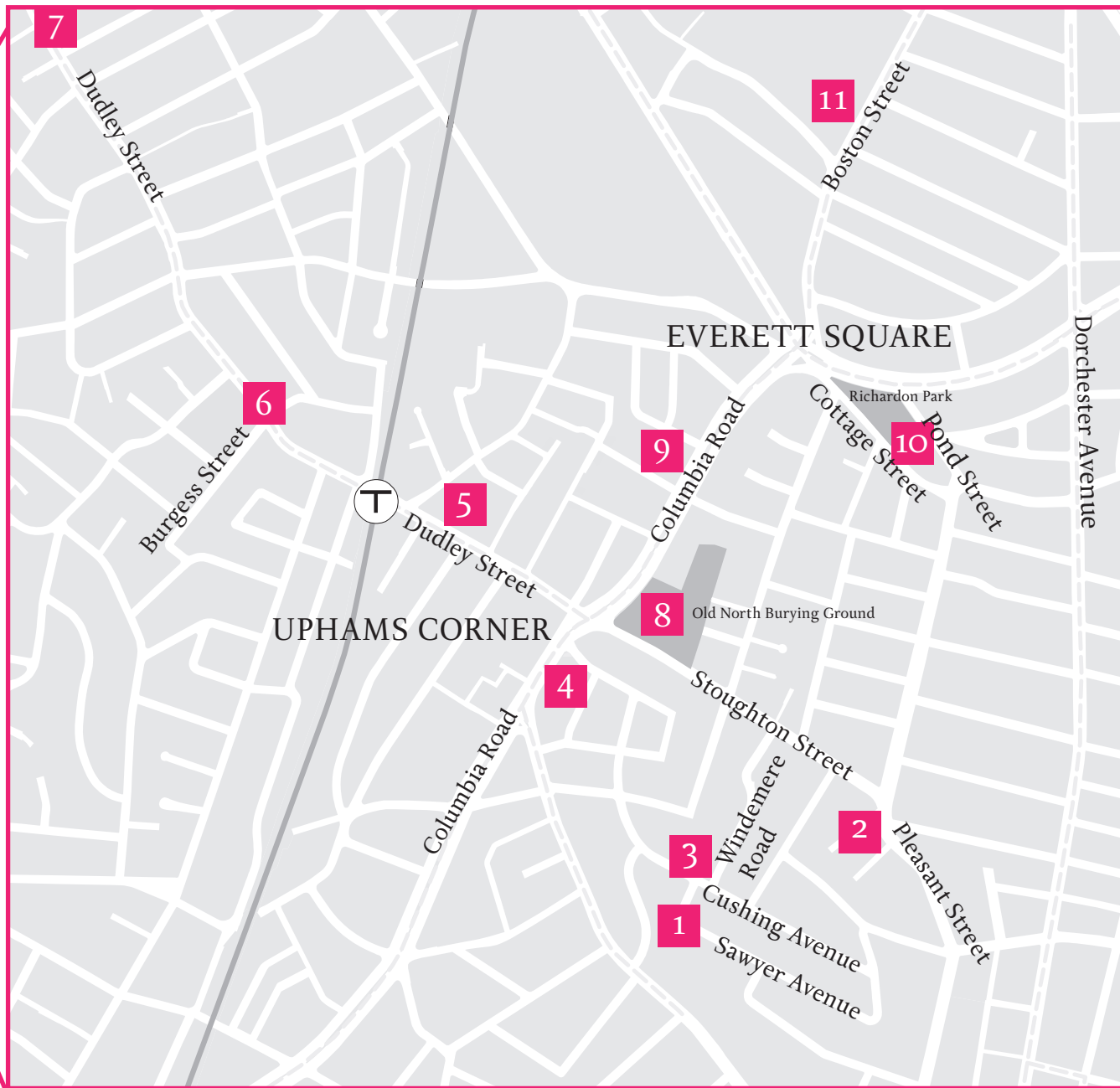
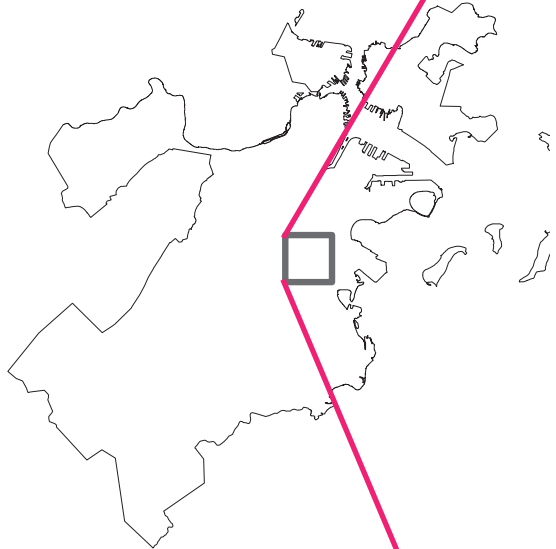
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TAKE A
walk



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Dorchester *women's* HISTORY TRAIL: UPHAM'S CORNER WALK



1 **GERALDINE PINDELL TROTTER**
(1872–1918)

97 Sawyer Avenue, Jones Hill

Geraldine Trotter served as the accountant and associate editor of *The Guardian*, the Boston civil rights newspaper founded by her husband William Monroe Trotter. Deenie was raised in the elite African-American society of Boston. Her work on behalf of racial justice included organizing anti-lynching campaigns, raising money for St. Monica's Home for elderly black women, and supporting equality for African American troops in WWI.



1 Geraldine Pindell Trotter

2 **ANNA CLAPP HARRIS SMITH**
(1843–1937)

69 Pleasant Street, Jones Hill

Anna Clapp Harris Smith lived in the colonial house build by her grandfather Samuel Clapp. In 1899, Mrs. Smith was infuriated when she learned of the growing number of cases of animal cruelty in Boston. As a result, she founded the Animal Rescue League. The League supported animal shelters and provided care for aging work horses. *(written by Lucy Biayemi)*

3 **ST. MARY'S INFANT ASYLUM**

Cushing Avenue at Windemere, Jones Hill

This Catholic orphanage opened on Bowdoin Street in 1872. It was run by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. The asylum moved to the old Greene estate on Jones Hill, where it served poor families regardless of their religion. The maternity ward at St. Mary's was the forerunner of St. Margaret's Hospital, which became a major gynecological hospital serving women in greater Boston.

4 **SARAH BAKER**
(1806–1866)

565 Columbia Road and Cushing Avenue,
Upham's Corner

Sarah Baker was an entrepreneur who started her own box band business, which she carried on for 40 years at Lower Mills. Miss Baker made so much money that when she died in 1866, she left enough money to build a church. The Baker Memorial Church was built on Columbia Road (the site is now a parking lot next to the Strand Theater). *(written by Sherry Jones)*

5 **ALICE STONE BLACKWELL**
(1857–1950)

Mount Monadnock Apartments,
714-721 Dudley Street, Upham's Corner

Alice and her parents moved to Pope's Hill when it was first developed into a residential neighborhood. Her mother was Lucy Stone, who was not only the first woman editor of a nation-wide newspaper, but was the first woman to retain her name after marriage. Alice Blackwell also became a leader of the women's rights movement. She edited *The Woman's Journal* after her mother's death and fostered cooperation between the two major suffrage organizations. *(written by Minnetta McKenzie)*



5 Alice Stone Blackwell

6 **SARAH WENTWORTH
APTHROP MORTON** (1759-1846)

Dudley and Burgess Streets

Sarah Wentworth Apthrop Morton was a writer and poetess. One of her epic poems was called *The Virtues of Nature; An Indian Tale*. It was published in 1790. This was one of the first books to raise awareness about the poor treatment of Native Americans. Her neighbor wrote *The Power of Sympathy*, considered the first American novel, about Sarah's unhappy marriage. The couple lived in an elegant Federal mansion on this site until moving to an estate on Jones Hill. *(written by Sandra Michaud)*

7 **HEPZIBAH CLARK SWAN**
(1776-1825)

Dudley and Howard Streets

The Swans moved to a Federal mansion on this site in 1796, where they raised five children. Patriot James Swan had amassed a fortune in France following the American Revolution. Hepzibah proved as capable in business as her husband. When James was unfairly imprisoned, she managed his business affairs, particularly investing in real estate on fashionable Beacon Hill.



Anna Clapp Harris Smith



Lucy Stone

(✓ seen it)

8 ANN & BETTY (1740S)

Old North Burying Ground, Upham's Corner

The Massachusetts slave census of 1754 listed 13 female slaves living in Dorchester. Anne, who died as a child, and Betty, who died at the age of 25, were the "servants" of Captain Robert Oliver, a plantation owner who came from Antigua about 1837. The small headstones marking the graves of these women survive in Dorchester's oldest cemetery.

9 ELIDA RUMSEY FOWLE (1843-1919)

654 Columbia Road, Upham's Corner

Seventeen-year-old Elida Rumsey went to Washington during the Civil War to become a nurse. When told she was too young, Elida sang to soldiers in the wards. With the help of Mrs. Walter Baker, Elida organized a soldiers' library. She eventually became the youngest member of the Massachusetts Army Nurses. After the war, Elida and her husband John Fowle moved to Upham's Corner, where she raised two emancipated slave children and did local civic work.

10 DORCHESTER FEMALE ANTI-SLAVERY (1830S-1850S)

Cottage and Pond Streets, Richardson Park, Everett Square
Dorchester was a center of abolition activities. Several families were associated with William Lloyd Garrison's radical American Anti-Slavery Society, which encouraged women to be involved in anti-slavery work. Local women's abolition groups met at the Lyceum on Meeting House Hill and at the Dorchester Athenaeum, which was located here at Everett Square.

11 CLAPP FARM (1806-1956)

195 Boston Street, Dorchester Little Neck

The Federal farm house was built for tanner William Clapp and his wife Elizabeth Humphreys in 1806. The family farm evolved into a commercial orchard and dairy beginning in 1830s. New England dairy products, especially butter, were highly prized. Wives, daughters and hired dairy maids milked the cows, churned the butter and helped make cheese.

ADDITIONAL SITES AROUND & ABOUT DORCHESTER

MARY JANE SAFFORD (1831-1891)

5 Percival Street, Meeting House Hill

Mary Jane Safford was a nurse in the Civil War. She became a doctor. She was the first woman gynecologist in this country. Dr. Safford specialized in the care of the poor women that lived in the inner city. She took care of immigrants and impoverished people. She lived on Meeting House Hill with her husband James Blake. *(written by Naomi Lebon)*

ELEANOR JAMESON WILLIAMS BAKER (1806-1891)

Washington and Park Streets (now 22 Regina Rd), Codman Square

Eleanor Baker was the widow of chocolate manufacturer Walter Baker. She supported many charitable causes. Mrs. Baker was part of the fight for giving black people education by providing them with scholarships to go to the Hampton Institute. During the Civil War, Eleanor also held lint-picking classes for making gauze bandages at her Dorchester mansion, one such was a home for elderly African-American women in Lynchburg, VA. (pictured above). *(written by Jenna Marseille)*

FRANCES CIFINO KISSEL (1923-2003)

Dorchester District Court, Codman Square

Frances Kissel served as a sergeant in the Marine Corps in WWII. She was one of the first women to attend Boston College Law School, graduating first in her class. She was also the first woman ever to be appointed to the U.S. Attorney's office. Francis later worked for the Small Business Administration. She lived in Dorchester with her husband. *(written by Inestina Valcimon)*

LUCY STONE (1818-1893)

45 Boutwell Street, Pope's Hill

Lucy Stone and her husband Henry Blackwell were leaders of the women's suffrage movement Lucy called for the first national woman's rights convention, held at Worcester in 1850. She was also the founder of the suffrage newspaper The Women's Journal. In 1874, Lucy helped form the Dorchester Women Suffrage Club. Their first project was to work for the election of women to the Boston School Board. (see Lucy Stone's picture on reverse side)

BAKER MILL WORKERS (1834-1965)

(location here)

The first women were hired by the Walter Baker chocolate company in 1834. Back then the women were not considered very important to the factory. They did such a good job at wrapping the chocolate that by the 1860s, women did most of the wrapping. Many of the early workers lived near the factory at Lower Mills. By 1965, when the company closed its Dorchester factory, 90% of the workers were women. *(written by Evelis Perez)*

GRACE LONERGAN LORCH (-1974)

CHARLES TAYLOR SCHOOL (marker)

1060 Morton Street, Mattapan

Grace Lonergan taught at the Charles Taylor School. But she was fired when she got married. Grace was a union leader and she fought the ban on married teachers. In 1944, the School Committee allowed Grace to return to teaching, but only as a substitute at less pay. It took Grace until 1953 to change the law. She remained a lifelong activist for education and civil rights.

LADIES HELPING HANDS / HEBREW CHILDREN'S HOME

Lena Park, 150 American Legion Hwy

This settlement house originally served Jewish immigrants in the North End. In 1936, the agency moved to Dorchester, serving the large Jewish population around the Mattapan and North Dorchester area. Women from the community saved pennies to fund the children's home and the educational activities at the community center.

IRISH DOMESTICS (1860S-1900S)

O'Brien house, 24 Carruth Street

In the late 19th century, many families in Dorchester had at least one live in maid. Many of whom were Irish immigrants. A lucky few rose in the world, like the maid who worked at the Jacques House on fashionable Ashmont Hill. She married Mr. Jacques' clerk, George O'Brien.