

Final 5.6.2025
Characters: 729

SIDE ONE

**Homestead of Lucy Terry Prince
First Known African American Poet**

Lucy Prince (c. 1725-1821) and her children lived in a cabin near this site from the late 1790s until 1840. She had been stolen from Africa as a child and enslaved in Deerfield, MA. Her only surviving poem, "Bars Fight," records the 1746 attack on Deerfield settlers. The singsong ballad is the earliest existing poem by an African American. She became free sometime after her marriage in 1756 to Abijah Prince (c. 1706-1794). Freed in 1751, Abijah was one of the first land proprietors in Sunderland. After his death, the family was denied ownership to the original 50-acre parcel resulting from legal maneuvering by a neighboring landowner.

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SIDE TWO

**Homestead of Lucy Terry Prince
First Known African American Poet**

(continued)

Adding to her skills as a poet and powerful storyteller, Lucy Prince was an eloquent advocate for equal treatment under the law. She valued landownership and used the law to protect her rights, taking her case to the Vermont Supreme Court. As settlement, the Town of Sunderland assisted in obtaining 18 acres of the original parcel and provided support to the family. On July 11, 1821, Lucy died here at the age of 96. Three of her children, Duruxa, Drucilla, and Caesar, lived here until their deaths. On the bicentennial of her death, July 11, 2021, to honor the perseverance and resiliency of Lucy Terry Prince, the townsfolk of Sunderland planted a magnolia tree adjacent to Town Hall.

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