



We can't know for sure, but Issac Reid may have been one of about 30,000 former slaves who escaped the American south via the "Underground Railroad" before the Civil War. Many of them settled in southern Ontario.

According to researcher Lisa Reilly, Reid appeared in Canadian census records as early as 1851, when he was living in Hamilton and working as a shoemaker. In the 1871 census he was living in Downsview with his wife Margaret. By the 1881 census, Margaret and her children are still listed as Downsview residents, but there is no mention of Issac Reid.

Reilly was able to find records for the following twenty years that show Margaret and Issac's two daughters working as servants in Toronto, and Thomas, one of the twins, living in Parkdale with his four children. The trail goes cold at this point, so we don't know if any of Issac's ancestors still live in Downsview or the Toronto area.

What we do know is that Issac Reid was a pioneer in Downsview.

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