

# Black History Makers in Burlington County Revolutionary War Era to the Civil War

Prepared for  
The Leas Forum  
March 25, 2023

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Timbuctoo Historical Society  
and Rutgers University



# Updates on Timbuctoo

*(since May 2019 when I  
saw you last)*

- Incorporated the Timbuctoo Historical Society in 2019
- Acquired ownership of the Timbuctoo Cemetery in 2021
- Began curriculum development in 2019; presented at NJEA convention in 2022
- Published scholarly papers in *New Jersey Studies* and *AAHGS Journal*
  - Links on [www.TimbuctooNJ.com](http://www.TimbuctooNJ.com)
- Delivered 24 presentations in 2022 reaching 1024 people

# Cemetery Preservation

## Plans for 2023

- Ground penetrating radar
- Protect and mark graves without headstones
- Signage to commemorate known interments not marked
- Esthetic enhancements i.e.: fencing and landscaping
- Volunteer based service projects

## Plans for 2023

# Additional Plans

- Annual Report to inform the community of achievements and acknowledge supporters
- Complete process for listing on New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places
- Expansion of curriculum project to more schools and adding elementary school component
- Various research projects; publication of findings
- Volunteer based service projects

# Black History Makers in Burlington County:

*Revolutionary War Era to  
the Civil War*

## Points of Discussion

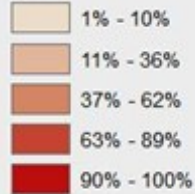
- Background: When did Emancipation happen in the Northern states?
- What history did “free” Black people make in Burlington County ?
- Why aren't these achievements widely known?
- What can we do about it?

# 1830

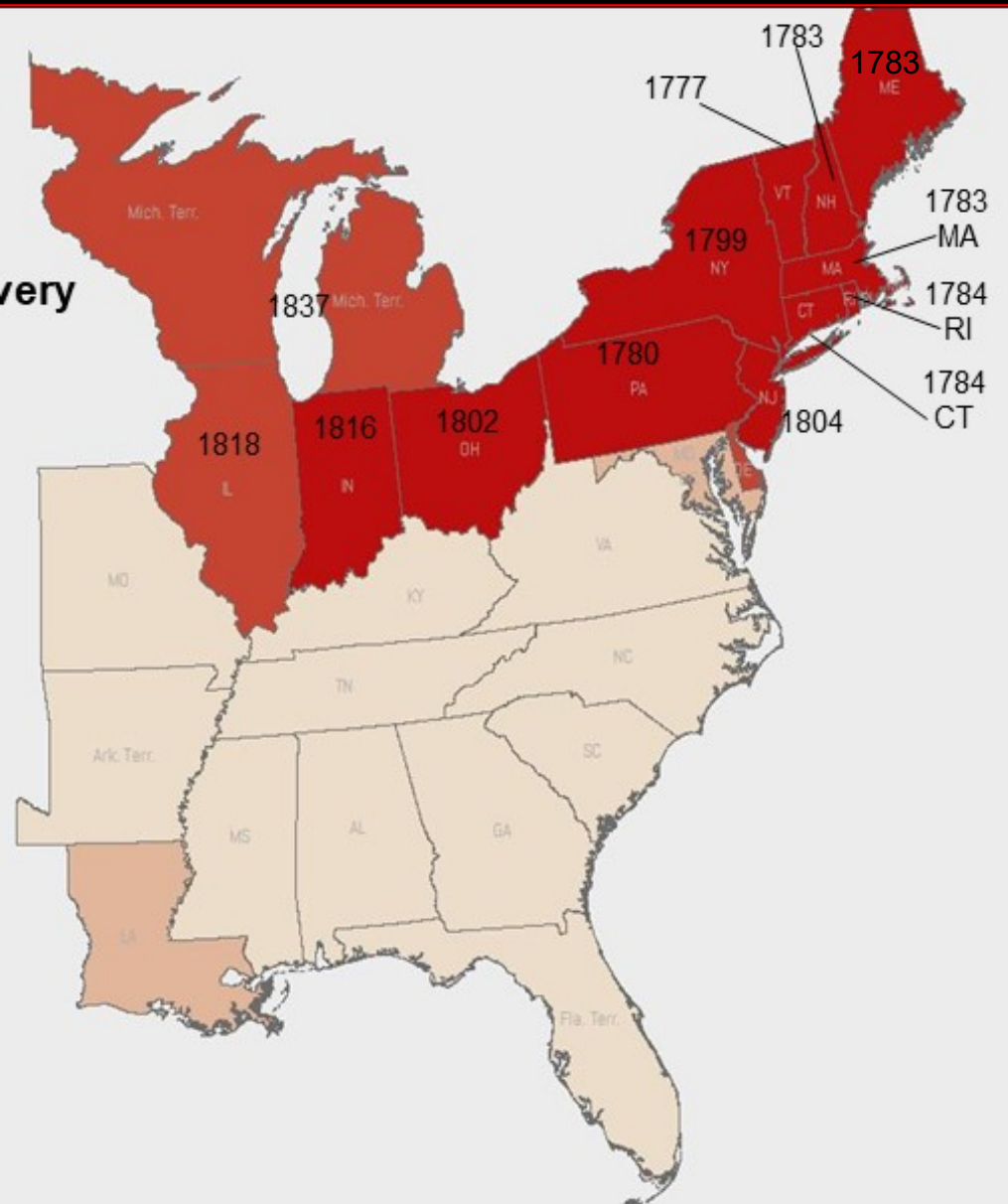
% of state's Black population classified as "free"

US\_state\_1830

free



Dates indicate initial legislation to abolish slavery in each state



Cartography:

Eric Rhodes  
MA Candidate in  
History  
Miami University

Shapefile provided by National Historical GIS

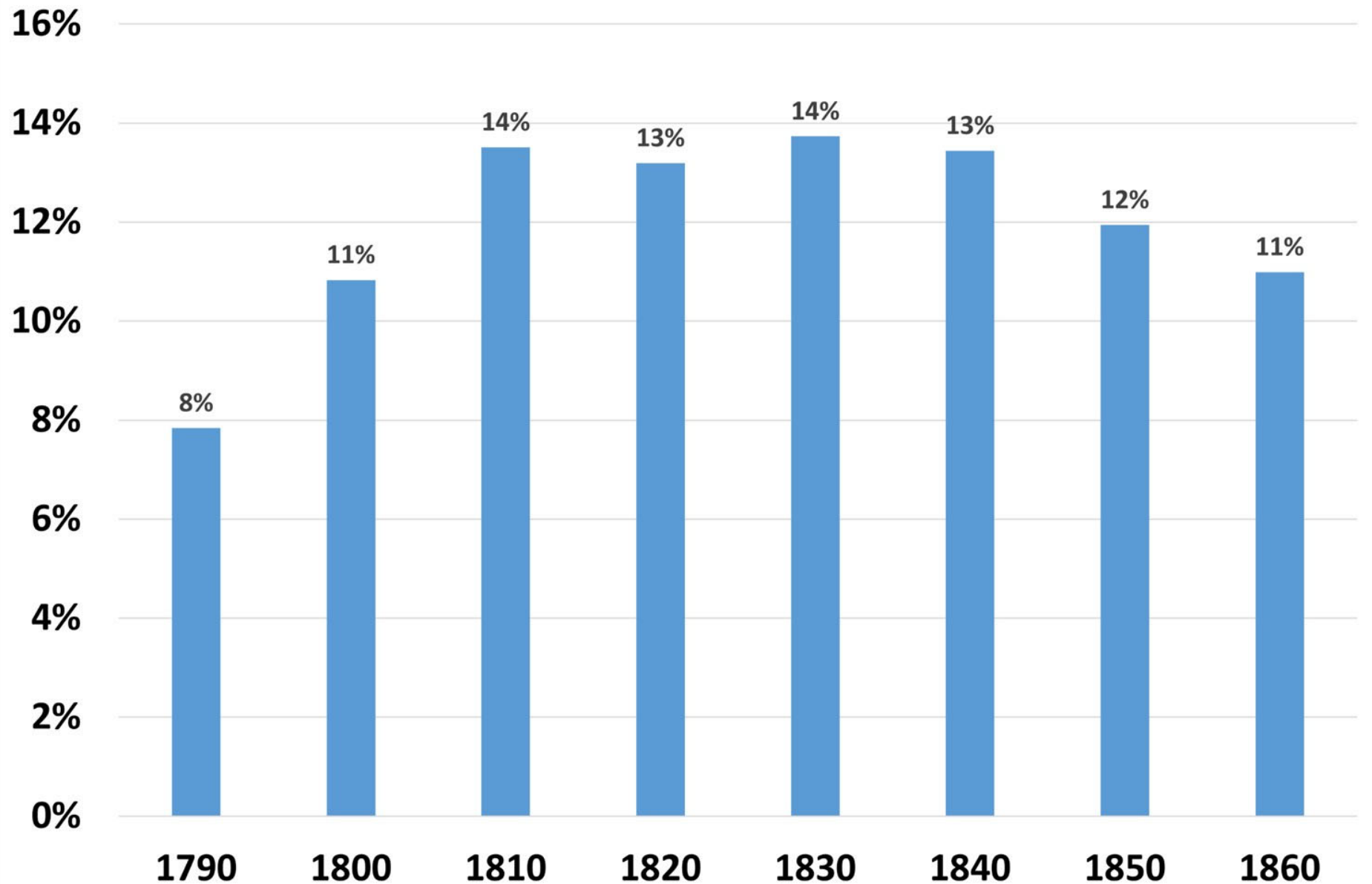
Data source: Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals By Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, For The United States, Regions, Divisions, and States," U.S. Census Bureau, September 2002 (<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html>)

# Antebellum Free communities aren't as unique as we might think

- Nearly 500,000 free African Americans were enumerated in the 1860 census. Free African Americans comprised between 11% and 14% of the African American population in each census since 1800.<sup>1</sup>
- Several “free” African American communities existed during that period, such as those that founded Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church in Philadelphia in 1794, Jacobs Chapel AME Church in Mount Laurel~1821, and Mount Moriah AME Church in 1826.
- Church leaders were actively involved in political advocacy efforts on behalf of African American communities. For example, Richard Allen was the first chairman of the Colored Convention Movement, organized in 1830 in Philadelphia.

1. Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, “Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals By Race, 1790 to 1990, and By Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, For The United States, Regions, Divisions, and States,” U.S. Census Bureau, September 2002 (<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html>)

## Percent "Free Colored Persons" in Each Census



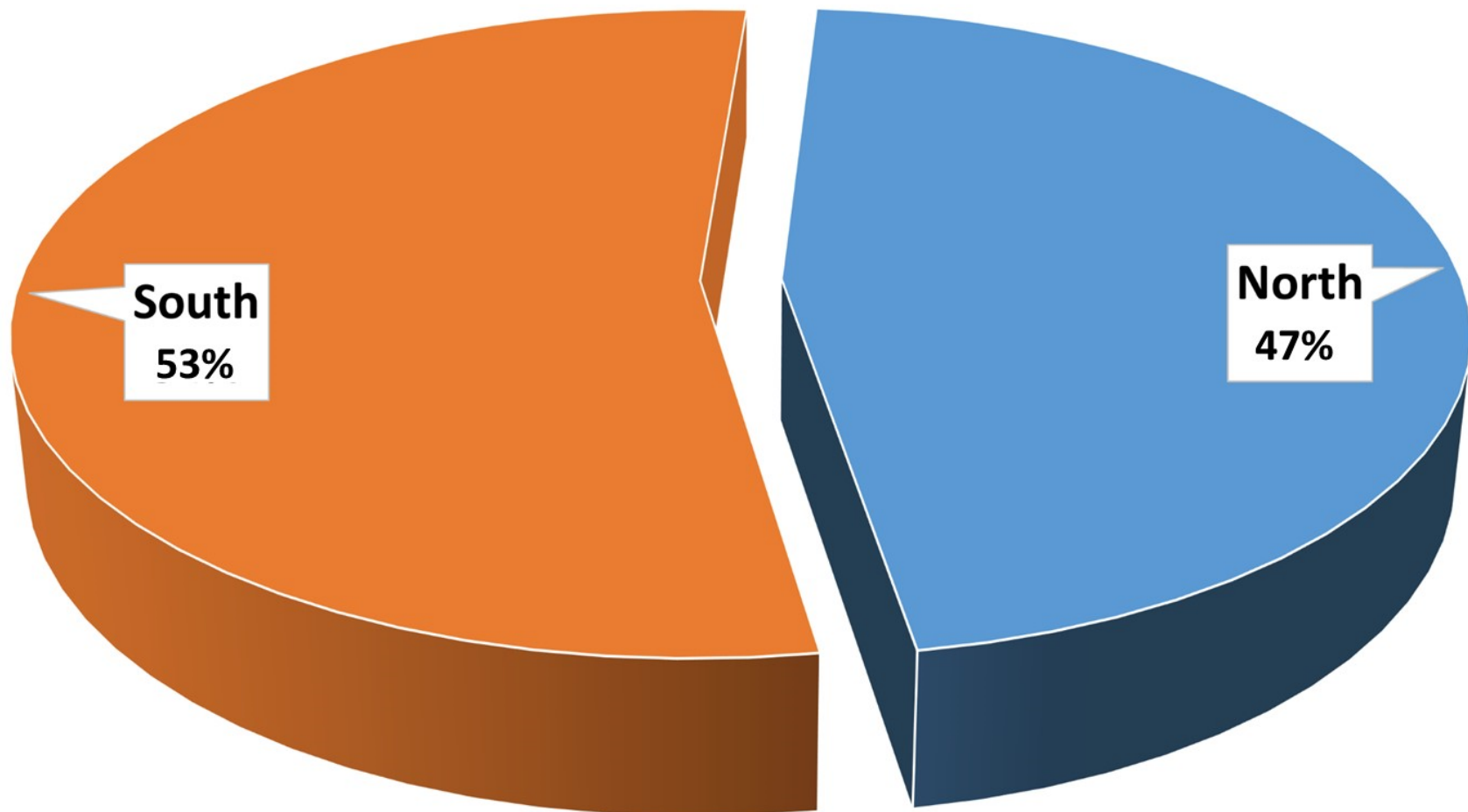
Derived from:

US Census Bureau. Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970

[https://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/overview/](https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/overview/)

# Proportion of 1860 Free Black Population in Each Region

n=488,370

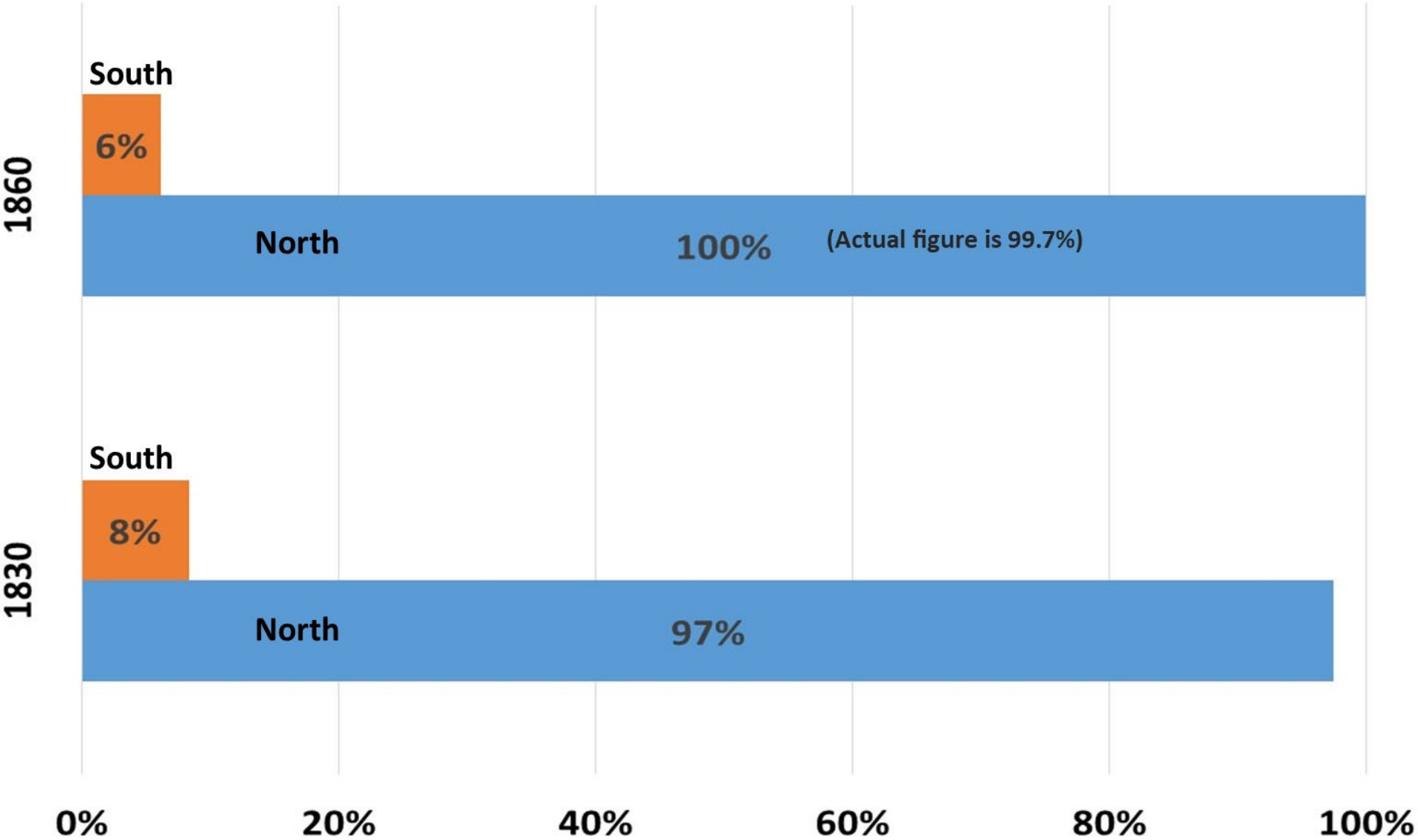


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US Census Bureau. Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970

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# Gradual Manumission in New Jersey

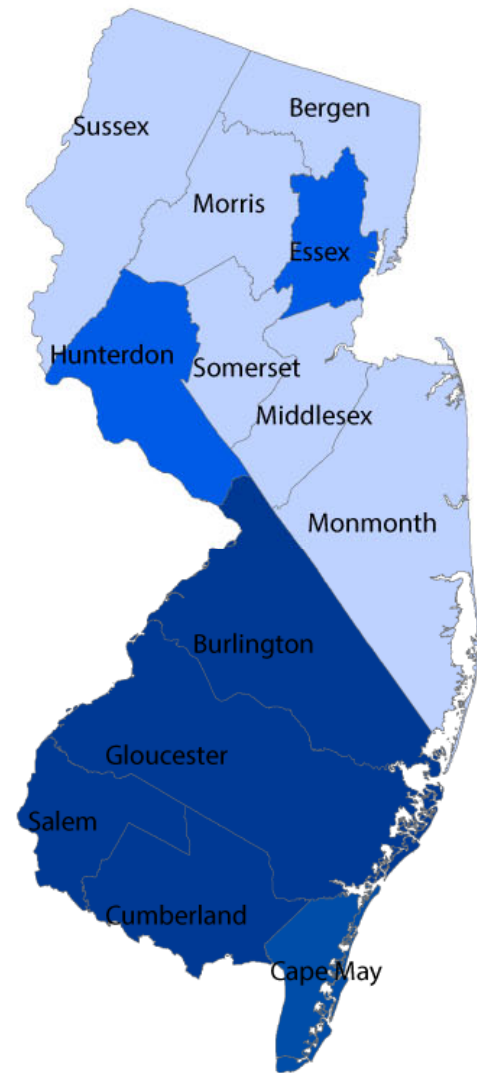
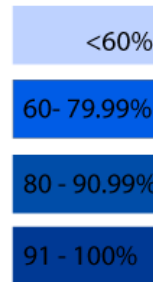
- In 1804, the State Legislature passed "An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery" (P.L. 1804, chap. 103, p. 251).
- This monumental law required the registration of births of the children of enslaved people born after 4 July 1804 and declared such children to be "free," but bound as servants to the owners of their mothers for a period of twenty-five years for males and twenty-one years for females.
- It wasn't all cozy and comfortable! Gigantino<sup>1</sup> recounts cases of New Jersey Blacks being sold as slaves after their indentures should have been completed, including the case of a woman who was listed as a free in the 1850 census but was sold as a slave in 1856.

<sup>1</sup>James J. Gigantino, *The Ragged Road to Abolition Slavery and Freedom in New Jersey, 1775-1865* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)

# 1820

Percent of Black population recorded as "free," by New Jersey county

1820	
	Free %
Bergen	38.6%
Essex	67.8%
Hunterdon	70.1%
Middlesex	50.5%
Monmouth	44.0%
Morris	41.0%
Somerset	57.0%
Sussex	55.6%
<b>TOTAL NORTHERN</b>	<b>53.0%</b>
Burlington	93.9%
Cape May	88.0%
Cumberland	97.1%
Gloucester	96.5%
Salem	98.5%
<b>TOTAL SOUTHERN</b>	<b>95.8%</b>



**Cartography:**  
**Eric Rhodes**

# BURLINGTON

# COUNTY

MOSTLY

FROM ORIGINAL SURVEYS

J. W. OTLEY & R. WHITEFORD

Published by SMITH & WISTAR, No. 13, Minor St. PHILADELPHIA.

1849

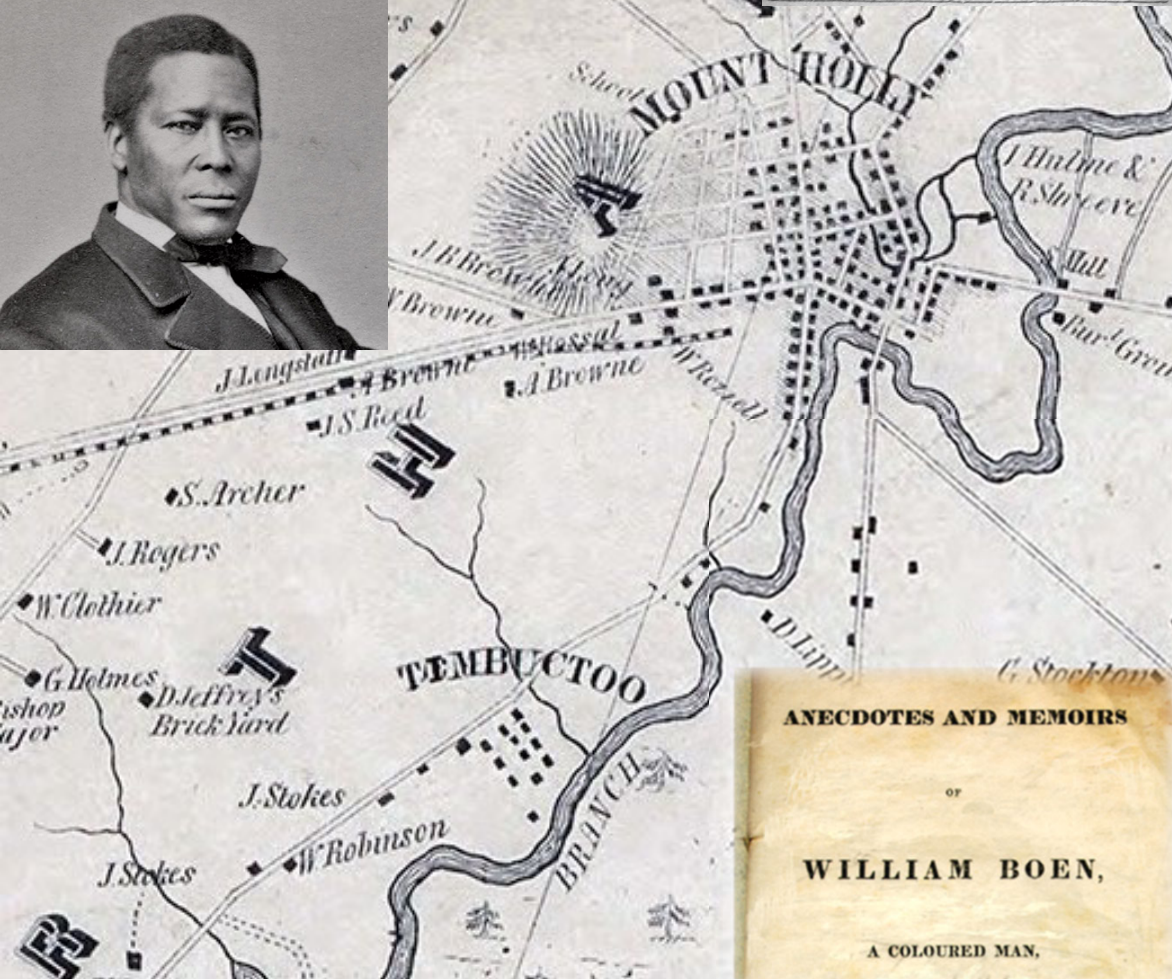
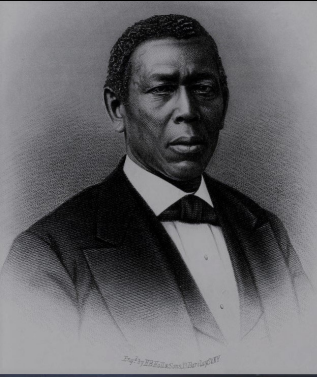
3y x 6y



# History Makers



## EARLY RECOLLECTIONS AND LIFE OF DR. JAMES STILL



ORIGINAL HOME OF REVOLUTIONARY WAR SOLDIER  
**PRIVATE OLIVER CROMWELL**  
 BORN: 24 MAY 1753  
 MANSFIELD TWP., BURLINGTON CO., NJ  
 DIED: 27 JAN 1853  
 BURLINGTON TWP., BURLINGTON CO., NJ

2<sup>ND</sup> NJ REGIMENT, CONTINENTAL LINE  
 UNDER CAPTS. JAMES LAWRIE, BOWMAN, DAYTON  
 & COL. ISREAL SHREVE

PARTICIPATED IN THE BATTLES OF TRENTON, SHORT HILL, PRINCETON, BRANDYWINE, MONMOUTH AND YORKTOWN

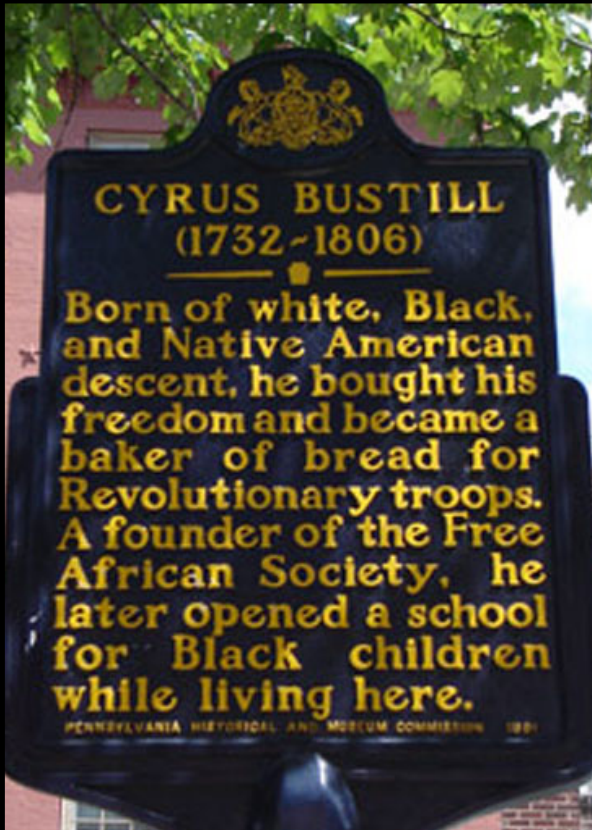
RECEIVED BADGE OF MERIT FOR SIX YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

DISCHARGE SIGNED BY GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON 5 JUNE 1783

MARKER PLACED BY NEW JERSEY STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

2022

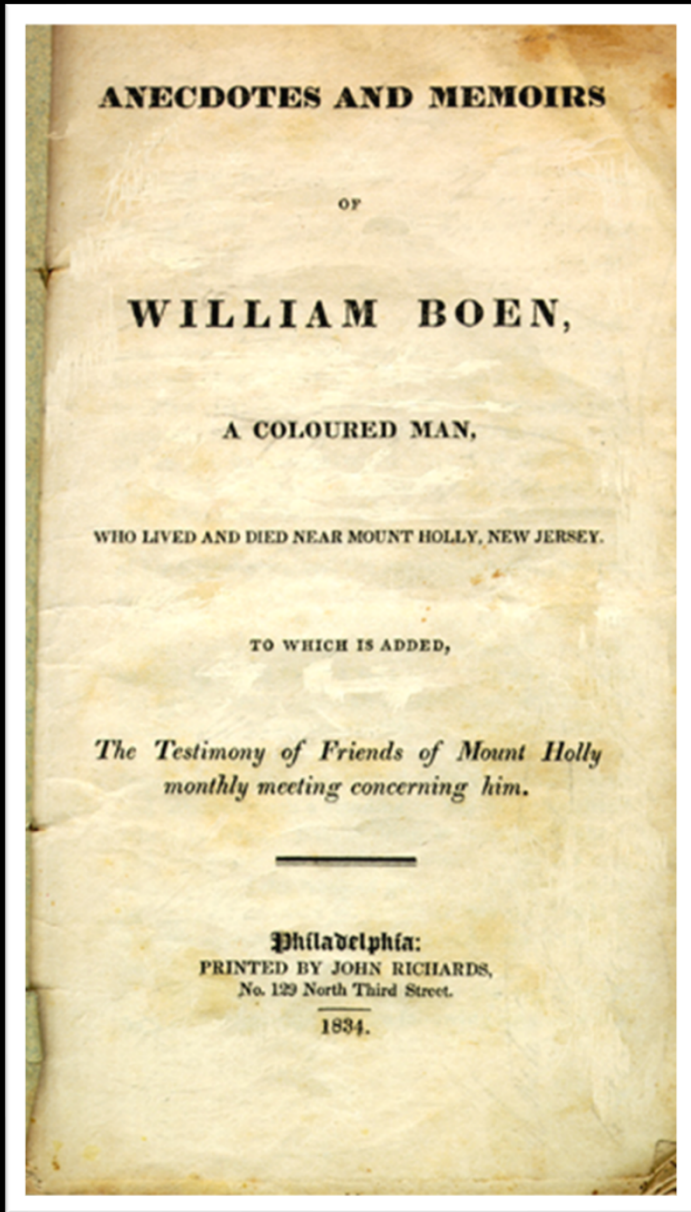




**Son of Quaker lawyer Samuel Bustill and Parthenia After Samuel 's 1742 death, sold to Thomas Prior who taught him baking; earned enough to purchase his freedom in 1774**

- Brewer and baker; known for supporting the Revolutionary War as a “contractor” who supplied bread to George Washington’s Troops
- Abolitionist and community leader; one of the Founders of the Free African Society
- Once he had enough money to retire from business, he built a house at Third and Green Streets in Philadelphia, then opened a free school where he taught.
- By 1791, owned twelve acres in the black settlement of Guineatown between the Abington and Cheltenham in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.
- His descendants include Paul Robeson.

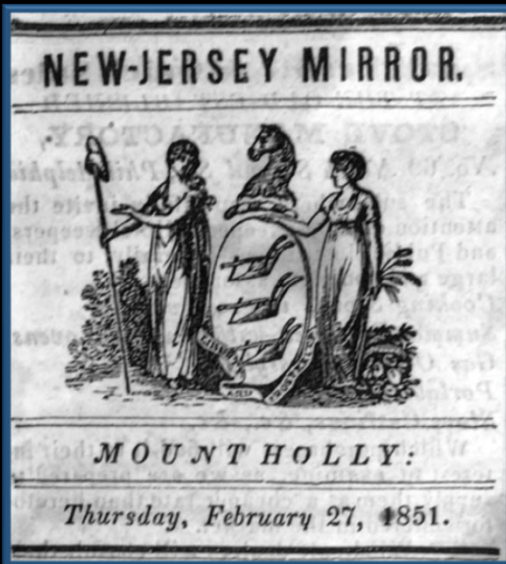
# William Boen (1735-1824)



- Born enslaved by a Quaker who frequently took him to Meeting for Worship.
- On his wedding day when he was 28, he petitioned the Mount Holly Monthly Meeting for membership, and was refused.
- John Woolman, the most influential Quaker abolitionist of the era spoke on his behalf.
- Repeatedly petitioned throughout his life. He was refused repeatedly until he was 79 in 1814.
- Owned several acres of land near the corner of the current Mount Holly bypass and Marne Highway

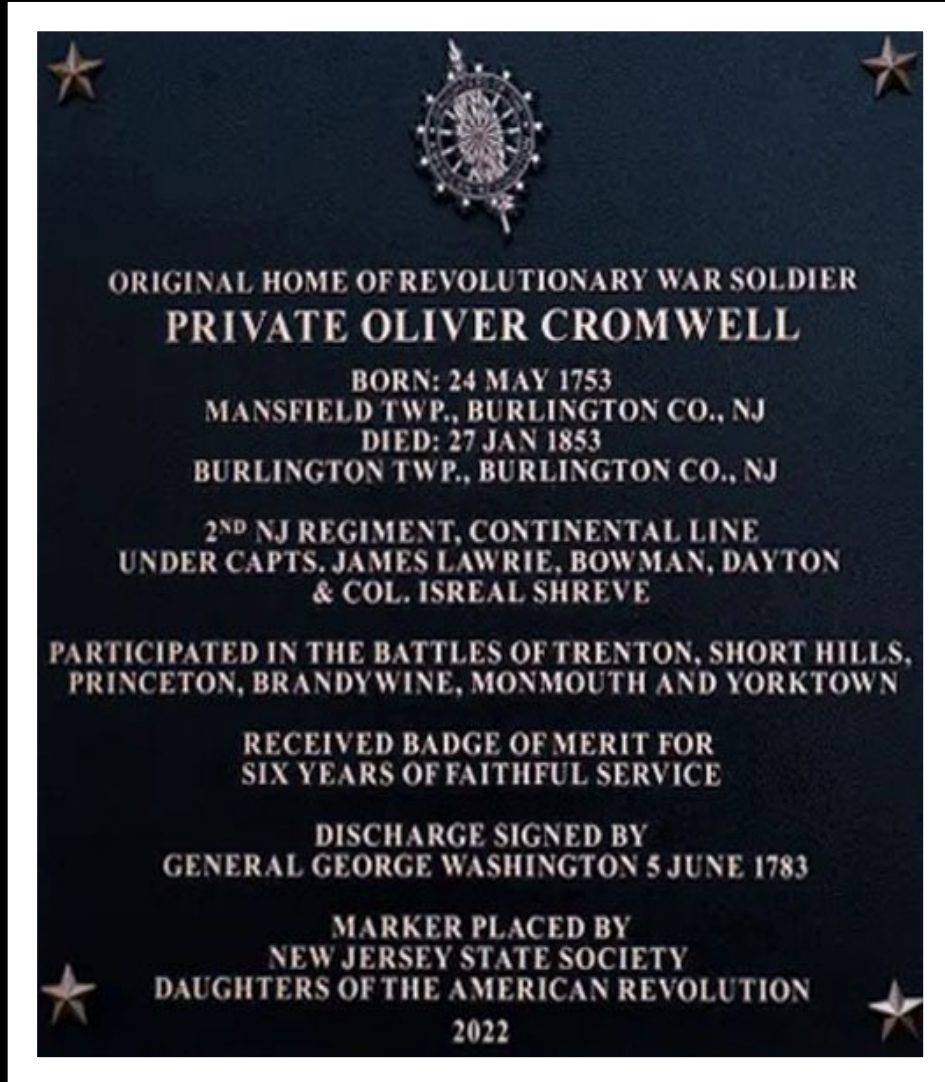
# Oliver Cromwell (1752-1853)

## Another Soldier Dead



Oliver Cromwell, (a colored man) a Soldier of the Revolution, died in Burlington, on January 24, 1853, aged about 100 years. He had lived in Burlington a long time and was much respected by the citizens. The pension of ninety-six dollars a year, allowed him by the Government, was barely sufficient to support him, but being so highly esteemed, he was not permitted to suffer when his funds failed him.

**“Obituaries,” The New Jersey Mirror , 3 February 1853, p.3, col. 2**



- Born free in Columbus, New Jersey on the farm of tavernkeeper John Hutchin; raised as a farmer.
- Served in several companies of the 2nd New Jersey Regiment between 1777 and 1783, seeing action at the battles of Trenton (1776), Princeton (1777), Short Hills (1777), Brandywine (1777), Monmouth (1778), and at the final siege of Yorktown (1781).
- George Washington personally signed his discharge papers



# Peter Hill (1767-1820)

- Born on July 19, 1767 in Burlington, New Jersey; assumed to be the son a couple enslaved by a clockmaker named Joseph Hollinshead, Jr.
- Grew up in the Hollinshead household; learned clock making to assist Hollinshead in his store Manumitted at 27.
- Married Tina Lewis on September 9, 1795. She was known in New Jersey for her writing skill and efforts to provide free schooling for African Americans in the community through the Society of Friends.

## Peter Hill (1767-1820)

- Began making clocks and watches in a shop attached to his home in 1795. Later, he expanded his estate to include cattle, horses, and several acres of land. In 1814, Hill moved his clock making business to Mount Holly partly to be near the Quaker farming community which also included a paper mill and an iron works.
- On February 20, 1820, he bought a brick house and a lot of land in Mount Holly. He dies later that year.





## Peter Hill (1767-1820)

- Two Peter Hill clocks have survived. The first is a clock made for his neighbor, Rowland Jones, in 1812 which is now located in Westtown School in Westtown, Pennsylvania.
- The second is a tall case clock which is now held in the National Museum of History and Technology of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.



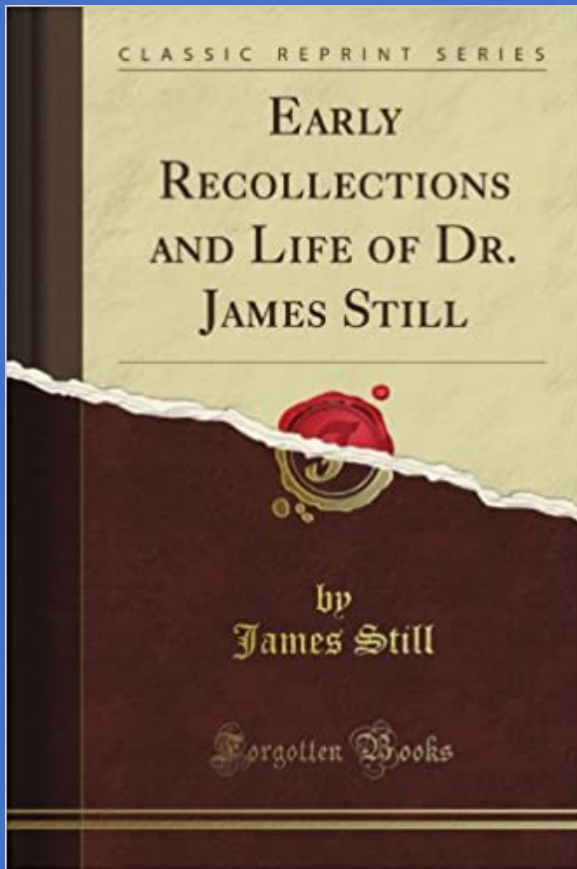
James Still  
1812-1882

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# James Still (1812-1882)

- Physician, herbalist, and author. Known as "The Black Doctor of the Pines"
- One of 18 children of Levin and Sidney Steel, who were born enslaved in Maryland. His parents escaped separately to New Jersey; changed name to Still to avoid capture.
- With much hard work and self-education, became a successful and much-respected doctor in the Southern New Jersey and Philadelphia.
- Chronicled his life in *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* in 1877.





William Still  
1821-1902

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# William Still (1821-1902)

- Free-born; became an abolitionist movement leader and writer during the antebellum period; born on October 7, 1821, in Shamong Township, youngest of 18 children.
- In 1844, he moved to Philadelphia and in 1847 married Letitia George, who gave birth to their four children. That year, he was hired as clerk for the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery.
- He became an active agent on the Underground Railroad, assisting self-emancipated Africans who came to Philadelphia.
- Best known for his self-published book *The Underground Railroad* (1872) where he documented the stories of formerly enslaved Africans who gained their freedom by escaping bondage.

# William Still (1821-1902)

- Kept meticulous records concerning African resistance to slavery by running away
- Was one of the organizers and financiers of the Pennsylvania Civil, Social, and Statistical Association that collected data on freed men and women.
- He was an advocate for universal suffrage.
- As a successful businessman, he purchased real estate, opened a new and used stove and coal business and eventually a coal yard in 1861.
- Because of his reputation, he was named to the Philadelphia Board of Trade and in 1864 appointed to the post of peddler for the provisions of black soldiers at Camp William Penn.

# NEW-JERSEY MIRROR.



MOU N T H O L L Y :

Thursday, February 27, 1851.

## Hezekiah Hall c.1791-1851

“Obituaries,” The New Jersey Mirror,  
27 February 1851, p.3, col. 2

## D I E D .

In this town, on Friday the 14th inst., MARY BUDD, infant daughter of James B. and Rebecca S. Coppuck, aged 12 days.

In this town, on Friday last, JOB BISHOP, in the 82d year of his age.

In Camden, on Saturday last, Mr. RICHARD C. CAKE.

In Bordentown, on Sunday last, GEORGE W., Son of Daniel Deacon, aged about five years.

In Timbuctoo, near Mount Holly, on Friday last, HEZEKIAH HALL, (colored) aged about 60 years.

The deceased, in early life, was a slave, and belonged to Charles Carroll, of Carrollton. He escaped from bondage in the year 1814. He settled in our midst about the year 1824, since which time he has resided here. He was regarded by every one as a man of unblemished character, and his truly upright walk and Christian deportment commanded the highest respect. His remains were followed to the grave on Sunday last by a very large concourse of friends and neighbours.

# Timbuctoo, New Jersey

Settled beginning in 1826 by formerly enslaved and free African Americans with the assistance of Quakers

Was one of several antebellum free Black settlements in New Jersey, most of which were in the southern part of the state

Timbuctoo, like many of the settlements, was a stop on the Underground Railroad

Timbuctoo residents owned land, established schools and churches, and sometimes read about themselves in the local paper

NEW JERSEY MIRROR.



Mount Holly, Thursday, June 28, 1877

One of the first four  
Timbuctoo settlers in  
September 1826

Very prominent  
Community leader

Identified in  
incorporation  
documents and news  
reports.

Associated with  
multiple land  
transactions

## *Death of David Parker*

*David Parker, an aged colored man who for perhaps one-half century has occupied a prominent position with his race in this vicinity and has commanded the respect and esteem of a large number of white friends, died at his residence in Timbuctoo on Sunday, aged about 75 years.*

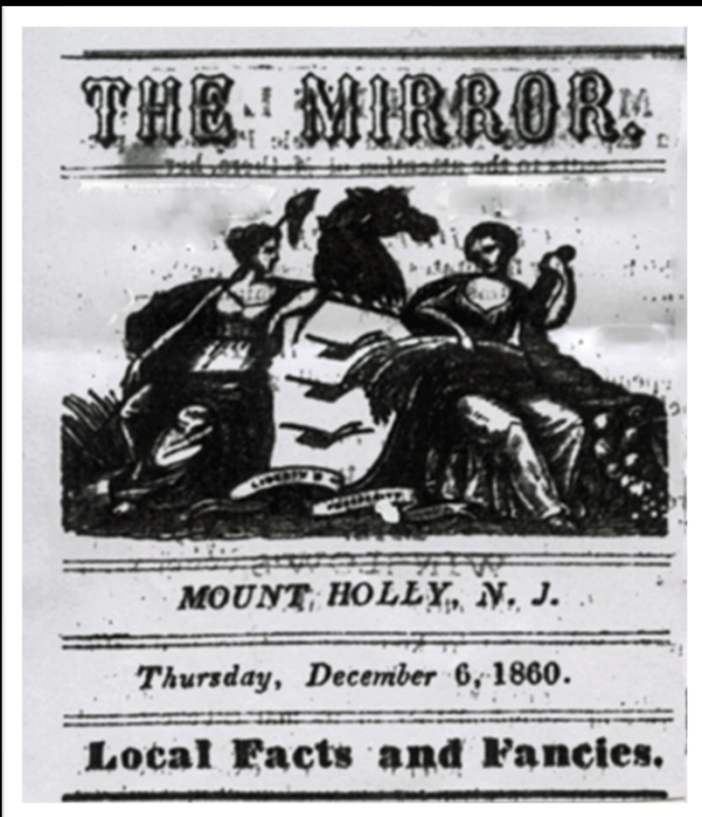
*“King David,” as he had been known in other years, was possessed of more than ordinary intelligence, and a determined will, which made him a natural leader as long as his physical strength lasted, and he was general at the head of any movement among them....*

*... David was an ardent Republican, no effort availing to seduce him from the support of the party that gave him the ballot, and he allowed none of his followers to be caught by the enemy. The deceased will be missed by citizens of both races, and much sincere regret felt that his light has gone out.*

# Battle of Pine Swamp

Led by David Parker  
December 1860

- *A well-known “slave-catcher,” George Alberti, sought to capture an escaped slave by the name of Perry Simmons.*
- *Alberti traveled with several associates and enlisted the help of a local constable to help take Simmons into custody*
- *Reportedly, Simmons had lived in the Timbuctoo area for a decade or more and had a strong network of supporters among Timbuctoo residents.*
- *When news of the attempt to capture Simmons reached his allies, a large group rushed to Simmons aid yelling and screaming, wielding weapons and scared the smaller raiding party off.*



<sup>1</sup>Excitement at Timbuctoo, the Battle of Pine Swamp: Invaders forced to Retreat. The New Jersey Mirror, 6 December 1860. Transcribed from microfilm on 21 March 2017

# *How do we know those details?*

*An 1100 word “blow by blow” account from the New Jersey Mirror*

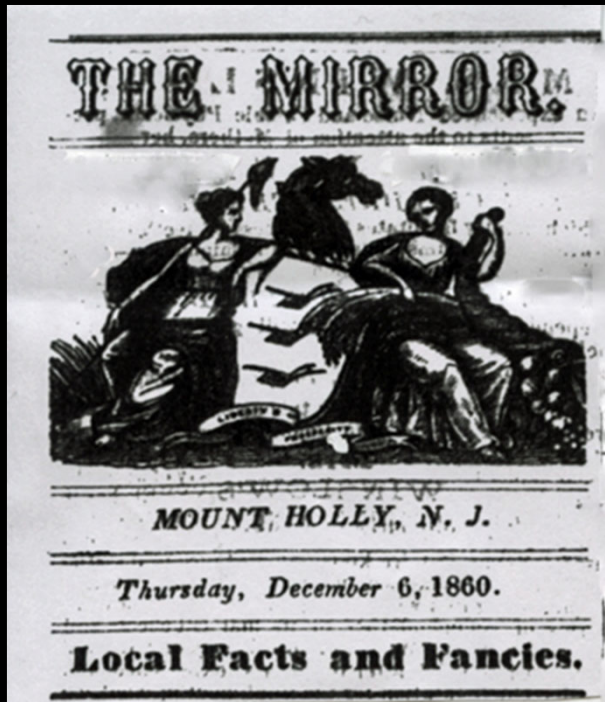
*Uses words like “kidnapers” and “invaders” to describe the “slave catchers.”*

*Full of humorous anecdotes describing Simmons’ response:*

- ***“Perry at once suspected who they were and the object of their midnight errand, and very coolly answered that they ‘could not fool Perry Simmons with any such story as that.’”***
- *“Old Alberti, at one time, started up the stairway, but as he turned round, so that the top was visible, he saw that muzzle of Perry’s musket was but a short distance from him, and he came down something quicker than he went up.”*

# Battle of Pine Swamp, continued

- *They ...concluded that ‘discretion was the better part of valor’ and hastily retreating to the carriages left the scene of their brilliant achievement as though Old Satan was after them.*
- *This midnight attack upon the Pine Swamp Fortress will long be remembered. The heroic party came, they saw, but didn’t conquer. Timbuctoo’s Fusiliers, Reserve Guard, and Petticoat Rangers, under the command of KING DAVID (PARKER) came up, with shout and song, swept the field, and set the captives free!*



<https://timbuctoonj.com/battle-of-pine-swamp>

# HONORING TIMBUCTOO SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT IN THE CIVIL WAR

## US Colored Troops (USCT) interred in this Zion Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal African Church Cemetery

**Lewis (Louis) B. Armstrong (Pvt.)** of Co. D, 22nd USCT. Enlisted Dec. 1863 Philadelphia, PA & same day was mustered into Co. D at Camp William Penn. Hospitalized for typhoid fever, pneumonia, pleurisy, bronchitis, mumps Mar.-Apr. 1864. In Ambulance Corps, wounded in left leg by saber slash and gunshot. Honorably discharged as Pvt., Oct. 1865, TX.  
**Born: about 1833 in Medford, NJ. Died: May 11, 1903 in Timbuctoo, NJ.** He was an important witness in behalf of many veteran soldiers and their widows who were trying to secure war pensions from the government.

**Edward Chapman (Sgt., Pvt.)** of Co. G, 22nd USCT. Enlisted Dec. 1863 Northampton, NJ & same day was mustered into Co. G at Camp William Penn. Hospitalized Oct. 1864 for several months with undiagnosed illness. Honorably discharged as Pvt., Oct. 1865, TX.  
**Born: about 1834 in Burlington County, NJ. Died: May 2, 1882 near Mount Holly, NJ.** His death from tuberculosis was reportedly due to the ill effects of exposure and sickness contracted in the war.

**William H. Davis (Cpl., Sgt., Cpl., Pvt.)** of Co. D, 22nd USCT. Enlisted Dec. 1863 Philadelphia, PA & same day was mustered into Co. D at Camp William Penn. Wounded by musket ball to the chest June 15, 1864 before Petersburg, VA. Honorably discharged as Pvt., Oct. 1865, TX.  
**Born: Apr. 6, 1836 in Northampton, NJ. Died: Apr. 4, 1914 in Timbuctoo, NJ.** He could read and write and after the war was a School Board Trustee in the Timbuctoo School.

**John Johnson (Pvt.)** of Co. B, 6th USCT. Enlisted July 1863 Philadelphia, PA & was mustered into Co. B at Camp William Penn. Became ill from digging Army canal Dutch Gap VA. Hospitalized for frost bite and typhoid fever after Dec. 1864 attack on Fort Fisher, NC. Honorably discharged as Pvt., Oct. 1865, NC.  
**Born: about 1840 in Stanton, DE. Died: Apr. 10, 1895 in Westampton, NJ.** He could read and write and after the war was "Principal" of Timbuctoo School.

**Charles H. Love (Pvt.)** of Co. F, 22nd USCT. Enlisted Dec. 1863 Philadelphia, PA. & was mustered into Co. F at Camp William Penn. Honorably discharged as Pvt., Oct. 1865, TX. Enlisted Sept. 1867 into post Civil War Regular Army. (Pvt., Sgt.) of Troops G & E US 10th Cavalry. Served 27 years as Buffalo Soldier in Indian Wars. Later received medal for Indian Wars Campaign. Honorably retired as Sgt., June 1894.  
**Born: Dec. 20, 1844 in MD. Died: July 16, 1922 in Timbuctoo, NJ.** When he returned home to Timbuctoo, he was remembered for his Sergeant's uniform that he wore all the time.

**Ephraim Marshall (Pvt., Cpl., Pvt.)** of Co. G, 22nd USCT. Enlisted Dec. 1863 Northampton, NJ & same day was mustered into Co. G at Camp William Penn. Served in Ambulance Corps May 1864 to Sept. 1865. Hospitalized Oct. 1865 in New Orleans, LA. Honorably discharged as Pvt., Oct. 1865, TX.  
**Born: about 1840 in Mount Holly, NJ. Died: before 1877 near Mount Holly, NJ.** Nicknamed "Eph", he would die young. After his death, an imposter collected his pension for several years.

**Theophilus W. Pinion (Pvt.)** of Co. I, 29th Connecticut Infantry (Colored). Enlisted Jan. 1864 Norwich, CT & was mustered into Regiment Mar. 1864 New Haven, CT. Severely wounded by minie ball to hip and thigh Oct. 27, 1864 at Kell House, VA. Honorably discharged as Pvt., Oct. 1865, TX.  
**Born: 1847 in New Hope, PA. Died: Dec. 14, 1904 in Timbuctoo, NJ.** Because of the war, he was a young invalid with a limp. His left leg was 2 inches shorter with shrunken muscles and decreased range of motion. He could only work light duty jobs.

**William H. Sullivan (Pvt., Cpl., Sgt.)** of Co. D, 29th USCT. Enlisted June 1864 White House, VA. & was mustered into Regiment near Petersburg, VA. Claimed wounded in hand by gunshot July 30, 1864 at Battle of the Crater, VA. Honorably discharged as Sgt., Nov. 1865, TX.  
**Born: about 1842 in Philadelphia, PA. Died: Mar. 20, 1895 in Mount Holly, NJ.** He claimed that another William Sullivan in his company caused discrepancies in his Army record.

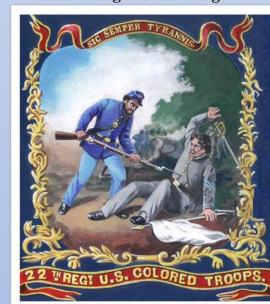
*This listing represents 8 of about 70 graves in the cemetery, according to a geophysical survey conducted in 2009. The unmarked remaining graves likely had wooden markers, which were commonplace during this period, but not durable. USCT members were more likely to have stone grave markers as a benefit of military service.*

Western Front Buffalo Soldier Cavalry Post Civil War



Image courtesy of Stivers Publishing Company

22 USCT Regimental Flag



Five soldiers buried here were mustered into the 22nd USCT that was noted for its high number of New Jersey volunteers. This regiment fought in several major battles. It was the only black regiment given the honor to be part of President Lincoln's funeral procession in Washington, DC and also participated in the Army's pursuit of John Wilkes Booth.

This burial ground is the resting place for several African American Civil War soldiers and many early residents of Timbuctoo whose markers have long since disappeared. Three infantry regiments of the United States Colored Troops and one infantry regiment of a state Colored Troop are represented: 22<sup>nd</sup> USCT, 6<sup>th</sup> USCT, 29<sup>th</sup> USCT and 29<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Infantry (Colored). Most of these soldiers mustered into service at Camp William Penn near Philadelphia to serve for a three-year enlistment. They served as Privates, Corporals and Sergeants in various companies. Most were free-born; some could read and write, but all were eager to fight for freedom and citizenship. Charles Love also enlisted in the Regular Army after the Civil War and served as a Buffalo Soldier until 1894. Most information for these soldiers comes from military records and pension files. For more information about US Colored Troops from Timbuctoo, scan your smartphone here:



or visit <https://timbuctoonj.com/us-colored-troops-bios-1>



# US Colored Troops (USCT) from Timbuctoo

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**Timbuctoo**

On August 1, 1862, the 1st South Carolina Heavy Artillery, a regiment of African American soldiers, was sent to Timbuctoo, New Jersey, to defend the area from Confederate forces. The soldiers were ordered to dig trenches and build fortifications. They spent the winter of 1862-1863 at Timbuctoo, enduring harsh weather and limited supplies. The regiment was eventually sent back to South Carolina in the spring of 1863.

**THE BATTLE OF TIMBUCTOO**

The Battle of Timbuctoo was a significant event in the Civil War, as it was the only battle fought by African American soldiers in the North. The battle took place on August 1, 1862, and resulted in a Confederate victory. The African American soldiers of the 1st South Carolina Heavy Artillery fought bravely and suffered heavy casualties.

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The battle of Timbuctoo was a significant event in the Civil War, as it was the only battle fought by African American soldiers in the North. The battle took place on August 1, 1862, and resulted in a Confederate victory. The African American soldiers of the 1st South Carolina Heavy Artillery fought bravely and suffered heavy casualties.

**TIMBUCTOO CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL**

WE HONOR THE BRAVE AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN FROM THE CONFEDERATE ARMY WHO SERVED THE UNION AT TIMBUCTOO, NEW JERSEY, IN 1862. WE REMEMBER THEM FOR THEIR COURAGE AND SACRIFICE IN THE LINE OF DUTY. WE REMEMBER THEM FOR THEIR COURAGE AND SACRIFICE IN THE LINE OF DUTY. WE REMEMBER THEM FOR THEIR COURAGE AND SACRIFICE IN THE LINE OF DUTY.

# Conclusions / Discussion:

- What surprises you most about our history makers in Burlington County?
- How does our history challenge common stereotypes about achievements of Black people during the antebellum period?
- How should this information be used to broaden comprehension of our history?

# Contributions

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CashApp: \$TimbuctooHistory

Checks payable to Timbuctoo Historical Society

*Tax deductible receipt provided*



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