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# Connections: African-American History and CRM

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*Cover photo: Niagara Movement meeting, Storer College, Harpers Ferry, WV. Courtesy Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.*

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Features

Harry A. Butowsky

# Passing the Baton

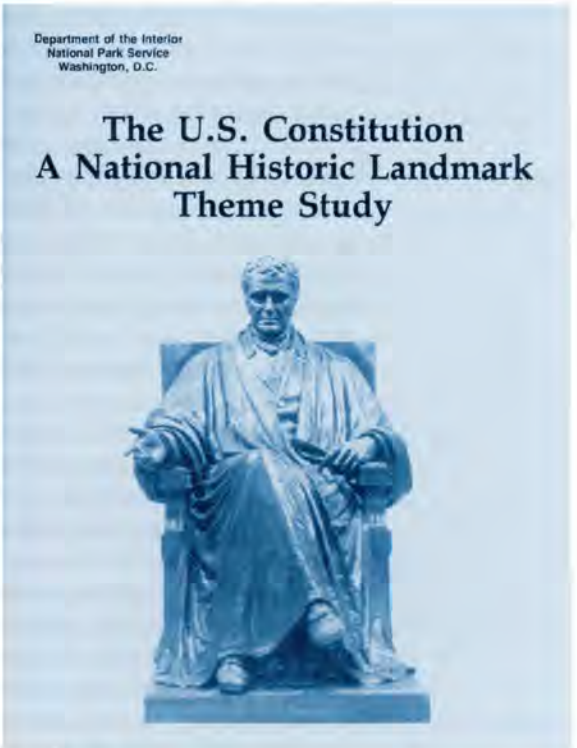
## Preservation of African-American History

This issue of *CRM* is devoted entirely to African-American history. Millions of Americans recently marked African-American History Month, taking time to remember and reflect on the nearly four centuries of achievement and participation by African Americans in the history and culture of the United States. African-American History Month owes its origins to Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the father of African-American historiography. A prolific writer and founder of the Association for the Study of Negro History and Life, Woodson made numerous contributions to the study of African-American history and culture during the early years of this century. In 1921, Dr. Woodson established Associated Publishers, which published the *Journal of Negro History*. In 1926, he proposed and established an annual observance, "Negro History Week," which eventually evolved into African-American History Month.

In planning for this issue of *CRM*, the editors had intended to focus on the issues and history surrounding the famous school desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 1954. It soon became apparent that the scope of this issue would have to be expanded to cover many other areas of interest and importance within African-American history to accommodate the intersections between the preservation programs of the National Park Service and this history. The result of this effort is a series of articles published on the following pages. We hope that these articles reflect and indicate the true scope and depth of this history that involves the many parks, programs, and people of the National Park Service.

These articles are by no means to be seen as a comprehensive series for all aspects of African-American history. They are designed to bring about a greater awareness of and attention to this important aspect of American history and the cultural resource management issues faced by the National Park Service in the interpretation and preservation of this history.

The editors of this issue wish to thank Ray Harper, Superintendent of Brown v. Board of Education NHP, and Cheryl Brown Henderson, Executive Director of the Brown Foundation, for their efforts to make this issue a success. We hope that this special issue will stimulate other articles of related interest for publication in future issues of *CRM*.




My personal association with African-American history began on March 13, 1984, when Chief Justice Warren Burger; Howard Westwood, senior partner of the law firm of Covington and Burling; and Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian of the National Park Service, met in Washington, DC, to discuss a proposed National Historic Landmark Theme Study of the Constitution of the United States as part of the commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution, to be celebrated in 1987. At this meeting, the participants agreed that the purpose of the study was to identify sites associated with the Supreme Court's landmark decisions that have resulted in the growth of the

Constitution and have had such a tremendous effect on our nation, particularly in defining the powers of the branches of the federal government and the rights and responsibilities of the states and the people. The study was also to identify and recognize sites associated with the giants of the court. Shortly after this meeting, I was asked by Bearss to take charge of this study.

In my work on the Constitution National Historic Landmark Theme Study, I learned that a significant number of cases concerned issues involving African Americans within the context of the Civil Rights Movement. The most important of these cases, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, was generally recognized by historians and the American people to be one of the most important decisions issued by the Supreme Court in the history of this nation. The questions posed by the Brown decision concerned issues relating to the exercise of the sovereign power of the people of the United States to protect their natural rights from the arbitrary restriction and limits imposed by state and local governments. The purpose of these restrictions was to maintain a system of segregation of the races that predated the founding of the United States as an independent nation. As such, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* is important not only for the history of African Americans in their struggle to achieve basic guarantees of full civil rights but is also important for the interpretation of the constitutional history of the United States.

As I worked on the Constitution Theme Study, I realized that the interpretation of the history related to the Brown decision needed to be placed in a coherent framework within the context of the larger story of the striving for fundamental human rights. The central question in the Brown decision was the sharing of the American dream of equal justice and opportunity for all and the belated recognition of the pluralistic character of American society. As such, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* was related to the history of the civil rights movement, women's liberation, immigration, ethnics and other minorities, and the evolution of the American Constitutional systems.

In its essence, the Brown decision reaffirmed the original intent of the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, which stated that "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

The case also illustrated the struggle of the American people to achieve basic guarantees of full civil rights for all citizens of the United States. The decision was a product of social and legal history, of the evolution of public attitudes and beliefs, and of the local and regional dynamics of communities such as Topeka.

In addition, the Brown decision was a culmination of the actions and commitment of ordinary citizens as well as leaders and jurists. Many individuals have joined the struggle for civil rights; it is an effort continued by innumerable individuals and organizations today. Their stories are examples of citizen participation in democratic processes that lead to better opportunities for all.

In this special issue of *CRM*, the articles by Jim Horton, "Roberts, Plessy and Brown"; Marty Blatt on the Slavery Conference at Lowell NHP; and Barbara Tagger and Sharon Brown on the Underground Railroad, tell us that the struggle for equal rights began long before 1954. Connie Slaughter in her article, "African Americans in the Civil War," reminds us of the participation of African Americans in the Civil War and the struggle to end slavery. The articles by Angela Bates, "The Kansas African-American History Trail"; and Marsha Starkey on the Niagara Movement, detail the continuing history of struggle and achievement by African Americans in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. Ray Harper's "Beyond Black and White," Cheryl Brown Henderson's "The Brown Foundation Story," Jean Van Delinder's article on oral histories, and Rachel Franklin Weekly's article "Beyond Image and Icon...," bring the struggle for civil rights into the middle of the 20th century. Finally, the many other short articles, opinion pieces, and news notes illustrate the depth and commitment of the National Park Service and other public and private preservation agencies to bringing this history, in its rich complexity, to the American public.

These articles remind us that through the preservation programs of the National Park Service, state and local governments, and the private sector, we are connected to this history. In visiting our national parks and other historic sites, we learn about our past and of the history and events that commemorate our journey through the centuries as a free and sovereign nation. Through the preservation of historic sites, the baton of knowledge is passed from one generation of Americans to the next. Through the preservation of sites reflecting the full diversity of our history and culture, we ensure that our children will *remember* and *cherish* their birthright to liberty and equality, and justice for all.

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*Dr. Harry Butowsky is a historian in the National Register, History, and Education Program of the National Park Service.*

Rayford Harper

# Beyond Simply Black and White

*Ray Harper in front of the Monroe School.*

I grew up in the great sunshine state of Florida. Like many other families, we took the typical annual summer family vacation by visiting our relatives. Those family vacations were very special times because my brothers and I were excited about the opportunity to visit our grandparents; but just as important was the chance to be on a farm. My mother and father grew up about 20 miles apart in two small rural farming towns in the south. We were fortunate to be able to visit both sets of grandparents, uncles and aunts, and cousins frequently during our family vacations. As we got older, our parents allowed my brothers and me to spend most of the summer with our grandparents. My parents may have even felt that the farm was a less likely place for my brothers and me to get into trouble, compared to back at home in the city.

However, it didn't matter to my brothers and me because we were with our loved ones. We were visiting another world living on a farm, and probably more important, we could be children. The weekends were always special. We got to put on our good clothes, visit other relatives who had kids our ages, or our favorite "Uncle Floyd." We fared pretty well too, when it came to being rewarded for discipline, hard work, and obedience by us getting money to buy candy, cookies, ice cream, or soda.

One Saturday morning, my grandparents loaded up the truck and we left for town. When we reached town, my grandfather made his normal rounds before he stopped across the street from a small convenience store. In typical innocent childhood fashion, I raced through the front doors of this store to fulfill my desire to spend. I purchased my cookies and soda, and even had change left. Little did I know how this experience would be a memory that I would never forget.

When I returned to the truck, I was sternly lectured by my grandmother for naive actions. She told me that I could have been thrown out of the store, beaten, killed, or placed the whole family at risk for what I had done. She told me to look up and read the sign located in the corner of the store window. The sign had an arrow underneath it and the inscription read "**COLORED ONLY**." The sign meant that colored people had to go around to the back door for service, opposite the entrance I had so innocently taken. This was my first real encounter with segregation up close. No longer would someone have to tell me about how it used to be, or when things were different.

Throughout history, race has been too often used as a means to distance, distort, and divide people. There have been very few times that most people could say that they have truly experienced any meaningful programs or celebrations, where there have been diversity in cultures and people. Even as children, we are taught that we are different from people who do not look like us, dress like us, or act the same as us. The proposition of this article is that Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site can be one of the ways we begin to go **beyond simply black and white.**

I believe that if we were to look closely at our symbolic and patriotic covenant we call the Pledge of Allegiance, we would find the true meaning of the Brown decision. The Pledge of Allegiance talks about "one nation (not one for black, and one for white), with liberty and justice for all." On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously declared that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal, and as such, violated the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees all citizens equal protection of the laws. Though the decision focused narrowly on education, the principal was broadly applied to every aspect of life for African Americans. In effect, the Brown decision simply reversed the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision of May 18, 1896, which sanctioned the separation and treatment of people based on race, thereby creating the doctrine of "**separate but equal.**"

When we consider how far we have come as a country and as a people, we see that since the 1954 landmark Supreme Court decision, many of

our public schools in major cities today are still under court-ordered mandate to bus students, build magnate schools, and improve the racial balance of children receiving public education. Therefore, I would like to offer several suggestions about how we begin to go beyond simply black and white.

First, we should not be afraid to preserve and interpret history because it is sensitive, unpleasant, emotional, or controversial. Much of the history relative to the contributions and experiences of African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, Women, and others have been left out of general classroom textbooks, thereby providing a perception that either it wasn't important enough, or nothing ever happened. Oral history projects have proven to be excellent means of documenting many of these unknown and unrecorded treasured memories of the past. However, we must put our past before our pride, and be courageous enough and willing to remember the bad times as well as our good times. It is important that we acknowledge and accept that there are differing perspectives, and as additional information and scholarships become available, history and our perspectives will continue to evolve.

Next, we must look **beyond simply black and white** when we commemorate the contributions and experiences of all Americans. For example, we have Women's History Month, Native Americans Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Black History Month that we commemorate. One of the problems with this is that we tend to limit our remembrance and reflection of our people to one program, to one day, or to one week out of the year. An associate of mine said that he spent the first federal holiday honoring the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., with an African-American family. I was pleased to hear that he took advantage of this opportunity; however, my concern was that he simply did it because of the holiday. Are the experiences and contributions of women so insignificant, irrelevant or limited, that one month out of each year is enough time to recognize, commemorate, and celebrate? Of course not, but until we stop defining **history** as Black, Native American, Women, Hispanic, and others, we will continue to be divided by our differences.

Finally, we have an opportunity to commemorate our past, present, and progress. On October 26, 1992, the U.S. Congress passed public law 102-525, creating Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site. The site commemorates the landmark Supreme Court decision aimed at ending segregation in public schools, and the integral role of the Brown decision in the Civil Rights Movement. Unlike any other national park, this site will provide an in-depth examination of the era of segregation in America and the conditions that led to the 1954 Brown decision. The site will interpret the consolidation of five corresponding desegregation cases argued as a part of the lead case *(Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka)*, and how the Brown decision provided the foundation to the Civil Rights Movement.

The *Brown* decision has been described as the Civil Rights case of the century, and even today still ranks within the top 10 most noted cases among lawyers and law students. We often forget that the same principle of the Brown decision still has direct application in our lives today. For example, issues that deal with the rights and privileges of our senior citizens, and age discrimination, go beyond the issue of race. Challenges that deal with accessibility, and reasonable accommodations and the rights of those of us with disabilities, go beyond the issue of race. Benefits that involve the rights of both men and women who have served this country in wars, and distinguished themselves as veterans, go beyond the issue of race. Laws that deal with equal pay, equal employment opportunities, and sexual harassment against women, go far beyond the issue of race. When you really look **beyond simply black and white**, you find people.

Planning for Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site is currently underway. Funding has yet to be appropriated for the rehabilitation of the site (the former Monroe Elementary School) or the production of permanent exhibits to interpret this period of American history. The *General Management Plan and Historic Resource Study* is scheduled to be completed by the spring of 1996. In addition, the Historic Structures Report is scheduled to be completed in December 1996. Staffing currently consists of a superintendent, chief of interpretation, administrative officer, and a term historian. The site was recently awarded a $7,500 grant from the National Park Foundation for the development of a curriculum-based educational program and teacher workshops.

Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site is one of the most significant additions to the national park system, and the commitment to preserve and protect our past for the benefit, enjoyment, and inspiration of the American public.

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*Ray Harper is the Superintendent of Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, Topeka, KS. He served as co-guest editor of this issue of* CRM.

Cheryl Brown Henderson

# The Brown Foundation Story

## Developing Resources to Interpret Public History

Historic events occur almost daily and usually with a whimper, not a bang. This country is resplendent with ordinary people engaged in extraordinary work on behalf of their communities, states, and sometimes this nation. Most often when these happenings reach the light of day, how they were truly able to unfold remains a mystery. Such is the case with one of this nation's most heralded milestones, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Oliver Brown et. al. vs The Board of Education of Topeka.* Oliver Brown was my father, who died in 1961. For my family, the significance of his passing was intensely personal yet profoundly public. In addition to his physical death, we also lost an opportunity to learn his views about the famous case which bears his name.

*Jerry Jones, Mark Stueve, and Cheryl Brown Henderson.*

Within the last twenty years we have lost both attorneys and plaintiffs involved in the five cases that comprise *Brown,* including Charles Scott and John Scott, two of the four NAACP attorneys in Topeka who conceived of the local strategy employed against the Board of Education. Thurgood Marshal's death seemed to signal the end of an era. The loss of this living history heightened the need to research and preserve their work for the benefit of future generations.

In January of 1988, I sat visiting with a young man new to the Topeka community. His name was Jerry Jones and he would have an unparalleled effect on my life and the lives of my family. As he and I prepared to attend one of the many observances of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Jerry asked a seemingly innocent question. What is being done to commemorate the anniversary of *Brown vs The Board of Education*? My response of "not much" both shocked and challenged him. That visit and subsequent conversations developed into a personal mission for us to resurrect and share the *Brown* story. The task, however, would not be simple because we were up against several decades of media reports on this history. What became painfully clear is that the media-created version of *Brown* had eclipsed the facts. One soon understands that both the electronic and print media thrive on simplicity, sometimes omitting what is not convenient to the story they want to put forth.

We discovered that not only were anniversaries of this decision passing unnoted, history classes were only giving cursory mention to *Brown.* Like so many other communities that have a historic legacy of national significance or where historic battles have taken place, Topeka, Kansas was more interested in burying this aspect of its past then boasting of any involvement. America in the 1950s had left its mark and its residue of racial mistrust. Our challenge became how to commemorate and interpret this history, not only for school children but also for the general public.

The climate in Topeka dictated that any organization we might conceive of had to go beyond commemorating dates and places, and include the

untold stories of many individuals who had been on the front line of this school integration struggle. The mission now involved using public history to heal old wounds created by historic omissions and inaccuracies. Some local citizens believed the *Brown* case negatively stigmatized the city. It was obvious that our success would require organizing volunteers from various backgrounds in order to uncover historic connections across the community and the communities of the remaining four cases that comprise *Brown*. This meant also reaching out to individuals in Delaware, Virginia, South Carolina, and Washington, DC.

Out of our work and creativity came the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence, and Research. We believed this organization should continue the quest for educational equity began by the *Brown* decision. The Brown Foundation is a Kansas-based non-profit organization with a mission and purpose designed to further educational equity and multicultural understanding in order to improve the quality of life for individuals and strengthen our overall sense of community. The Foundation provides scholarships to minority students entering teacher education, sponsors programs with emphasis on racial/ethnic diversity, and supports historic research and other such educational activities in keeping with its basic purpose.

*Participants and plaintiffs in the* Brown *case in front of the Monroe School in 1994. Left to right: Carol Kay Lawton Nutter, Leola Montgomery, Linda Brown Thompson, Victoria Lawton Benson, Ruth Ann Scales, Vivian Scales, Lena Carper, Zelma Henderson. Photo courtesy* Topeka Capital Journal.

In 1990, again with the support of Jerry Jones, I found myself on a second road on the way to realizing the mission of sharing the *Brown* story. The former Monroe Elementary School, which had once served as one of four segregated schools for African-American children, now stood empty and was up for sale. The availability of this site added a new dimension to preserving the history of *Brown*. Attempting to save this building led to the uncharted work of establishing a national park in Topeka, Kansas, to interpret the history of the *Brown* case. Using the lessons learned while creating the Brown Foundation, my first step was to organize a cross-section of community volunteers into a task force and to enlist the support of the property owner, Mark Stueve. The task at hand was how to convince the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and the U.S. Congress that interpreting the *Brown* story was in the interest of the American people regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity. The experience of leading this initiative left me with an extremely pleasing revelation—our system of government works exactly as it is intended, we have only to insist that it respond. Although this statement is simplistic, it goes to the heart of how our persistence resulted in the *Brown vs. the Board of Education National Historic Site Act of 1992*. Now under the direction of the National Park Service, work is underway to plan for this new unit of the NPS scheduled to open in the late 1990s. The Brown Foundation is working cooperatively with the NPS and has the unique distinction of being one of a handful of non-governmental agencies that provide researchers, educators, museums, etc., with primary source information about the *Brown* case.

Since its inception, the Foundation has actively engaged in the discipline of public history by developing:

- an oral history collection focusing on the pre- and post-*Brown* era;
- a traveling exhibit of photos and text that examine the history of school integration;
- a tour of historic sites associated with the Topeka, Kansas case;
- a national symposium convened annually to revisit the tenets of *Brown* and its continued impact;
- classroom presentations and university lectures recounting the events surrounding *Brown;*
- an activity booklet on *Brown* for elementary school children;
- a video tape on *Brown v. Board* (in production).

The Foundation's public history work is based on a belief that education programs that step out of the modality of text books play a critical role in helping the public develop a better awareness and understanding of history. For example, the use of exhibits that can travel from place to place provide a vehicle for sharing photos and narrative that personalize historic events. Often the curricular resources available are one dimensional in their perspective and leave out substance with respect to who, what, when, where, why, and how.

In 1993, the Foundation unveiled its traveling exhibit entitled *In Pursuit of Freedom and Equality*. This exciting visual presentation examines the historical record before, during, and after the *Brown* decision. The exhibit uses photos, quotes, maps, newspaper headlines and short explanatory narratives to interpret the issues of segregation and education. This project was funded in part by the Kansas Humanities Council. The

*Traveling exhibit "In Pursuit of Freedom and Equality: Kansas and the African American Public School Experience, 1855 to 1955" on display at the Washburn University Law School, Topeka, KS.*

content was developed in consultation with humanities scholars from the fields of history, jurisprudence, and minority studies. This integrated humanities approach made it possible to present a thorough examination and discussion of the complexities and the role of the *Brown* case in American educational history. Few people realize that as early as 1849 African Americans fought the system of education in this country that mandated separate schools for their children based solely on race. Kansas attempted 11 legal challenges for school integration before *Brown*. In addition, this approach focuses attention on how *Brown* provided the legal framework which enhanced the development of crucial activities of the civil rights movement.

The traveling exhibit is a 12-panel display mounted on a Nimlock system. The mounting is a series of six two-sided exhibit boards measuring 3' x 4' attached to 8' poles. When on display, space must be provided for viewers to walk freely on both sides of the exhibit. The Foundation produced three sets of this exhibit, one of which is on permanent display at the Washburn University Law Library. The attorneys for the Topeka case received their law degrees from this institution. The remaining sets are traveling displays. One set travels only in Kansas and the other nationwide.

The following are some of the issues illustrated by the exhibit:

- Education as a first act of freedom for African Americans.
- The exodus from post Civil War South.
- Seeking equal educational opportunity.
- Early legal challenges to segregated schools.
- African American parent teacher organizations.
- Achievement under segregation.
- The continued struggle for liberty and equal opportunity.

The Brown Foundation's experience with creating resources to document and interpret public history is one example of a local initiative to preserve a community legacy. Without such initiatives, events in America's past that are not recounted in history books would remain unknown. The Brown Foundation's vision recognizes that history is studied to know the past, to understand the present, and to plan for the future. The true history makers are not those who leave written records; the true history-makers are the people who get involved simply to make life better for the next generation.

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*Cheryl Brown Henderson is co-founder and Executive Director of the Brown Foundation. To borrow the traveling exhibit or to learn about other resources, write: Brown Foundation, P.O. Box 4862, Topeka, KS 66604.*

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## *Related* CRM *Articles*

"Landmarks of Democracy—The U.S. Constitution, A National Historic Landmark Theme Study," *CRM Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1987.

"Black History," *CRM Bulletin*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1989.

"Landmarks of Democracy," *CRM Bulletin*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1989.

"Emancipation Statue, Lincoln Park," *CRM Bulletin*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1990.

"The Paul Laurence Dunbar House: America's First Publicly Owned Afro-American Historic Site," *CRM Bulletin*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1990.

"Pittsylvania County Courthouse," *CRM*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1991.

"Interpreting Slavery—The Kingsley Plantation Example," *CRM*, Vol. 15, No. 4, 1992.

"New NPS Unit Commemorates Civil Rights: Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site," *CRM*, Vol. 16, No. 5, 1993.

"Preserving the Legacy: Georgia's Historic African-American Resources," *CRM*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1994.

"Researching African-American History," *CRM*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1994.

"Kalamazoo's Memorial to Martin Luther King, Jr.," *CRM*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1995.

"Landmark Decision: Remembering the Struggle for Equal Education," *CRM*, Vol. 18, No. 6, 1995.

"Landmarks of Chicago Blues and Gospel: Chess Records and First Church of Deliverance," *CRM*, Vol. 18, No. 8, 1995.

James Oliver Horton and Michele Gates Moresi

# Roberts, Plessy and Brown

## The Long, Hard Struggle Against Segregation

It was no coincidence that Homer A. Plessy, a 34-year-old middle class "colored man," purchased a ticket on the train from New Orleans to Covington, Louisiana on June 7, 1892. Nor was it unexpected that he would be arrested when he attempted to board the "whites only" rail car. The purchase and the arrest were part of a well-orchestrated, on-going attack on Louisiana's Separate Car Act of 1890 by New Orleans blacks with the sympathetic cooperation of The East Louisiana Railway Company which enforced the state's new discriminatory law with reluctance. Homer Plessy was a perfect candidate for this legal test. He was totally acceptable in manners, demeanor, and attire so that the denial of accommodations pointed to the absurdity of the law and, because he was extremely light in complexion, "the mixture of colored blood [hardly] discernible," it also emphasized the arbitrariness of the law's enforcement. For four years the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* worked its way through the court system so that by 1896 it reached the Supreme Court of the United States. After five weeks of argument, the Court handed down its decision which upheld the Louisiana law and declared separate accommodations based on race constitutional. The separation of the races by law, the court argued, did not compromise equality before the law.

The *Plessy* decision was a milestone in American legal history and a turning point in America's constitutional law. The highest court in the land set the constitutional foundation for the "separate but equal," racially discriminatory, Jim Crow legislation which became the hallmark of southern law and northern custom for the next half century. But this decision neither initiated the "separate but equal" principle in law nor settled the question of legal racial segregation. It was based on pre-Civil War legal precedent and became the foil for the most far-reaching court decision of the 20th century. In his statement of the court's majority opinion in *Plessy*, Justice Henry Billings Brown cited an 1849 decision rendered in his home state of Massachusetts by state Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw in the case of *Roberts v. The City of Boston*. That case resulted from a black printer's determination to enroll his daughter at her neighborhood school. Benjamin Roberts violated no law when he took five-year-old Sarah to be enrolled. In fact, a state law instructed that students should attend the school nearest their home. The statute further allowed any student unlawfully excluded from public school to recover damages and when Sarah was refused admittance, Roberts sued the city of Boston under this provision. School authorities argued that special provisions had been made for "colored" students. Since Boston maintained racially segregated schools, that Sarah passed five white schools on her way to the black school, the school board contended, was of no consequence.

In his cause, Roberts retained the talented attorney, abolitionist, and later United States senator, Charles Sumner. Sumner was assisted by the young black abolitionist and activist lawyer from Boston, Robert Morris. This formidable legal team broke new ground in their argument before the court. Invoking "the great principle" embodied in

*Charles Sumner, Attorney in* Roberts v. City of Boston. *Library of Congress photo.*

*Robert Morris, attorney in* Roberts v. City of Boston. *Photo courtesy of the Social Law Library, Boston, MA.*

the Constitution of Massachusetts, they asserted that all persons, regardless of race or color, stand as equals before the law. More specifically, they argued racially segregated schools and equality of education are mutually exclusive, that segregation is unconstitutional because it infringed on the civil rights of individuals, and that it is socially and emotionally damaging to both black and white students. "The school is the little world where the child is trained for the larger world of life... and therefore it must cherish and develop the virtues and the sympathies needed in the larger world." The inculcation of caste distinction among citizens, they argued, precluded "those relations of Equality which the constitution and Laws promise to all."

Chief Justice Shaw, unmoved by impassioned oratory about freedom and equality, decided the case on narrow legal grounds, ruling in favor of the right of the school committee to set education policy as it saw fit. The Boston School Committee strongly asserted that right, as the court decision went against Roberts, establishing the principle of segregated education in law 1n Massachusetts.

Thus, the foundation for the Supreme Court decision in the *Plessy* case was laid. Even more specifically, Sumner and Morris provided the argument which, augmented by modern social science, became that of Thurgood Marshall and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People legal team in the *Brown* decision in the 1950s. Like the *Brown* case, *Roberts* had been a school desegregation case and, like both *Brown* and *Plessy*, the arguments in *Roberts* had implications far beyond the specifics of the case.

Together, these three landmark decisions tell the history of the struggle for racial justice in America. Each was the result of planning, organization, direct action, and support from the African-American community. Each was also the undertaking of a strong progressive interracial alliance which facilitated the legal effort. It was no accident that Roberts was represented by Sumner, an abolitionist who had provided his legal services to fugitive slaves and the anti-slavery movement on numerous occasions and that Robert Morris was a black abolitionist lawyer. These crusaders against slavery had worked together before and would continue as allies for freedom throughout the Civil War period.

Although these efforts were almost always a product of joint community action, they did not necessarily imply a single African-American opinion. Boston blacks had struggled for decades to provide their children with quality education which, in the late-18th century, meant withdrawing them from the city schools. The Boston School Committee was correct when during the Roberts trial it argued that early in the city's history,

PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN BOSTON.

Belknap street. Established, 1812. **SMITH SCHOOL.** Erected, 1834. Cost, $7,485.61.

AMBROSE WELLINGTON, *Master.*

SARAH H. SOUTHWICK, *Assistant.*

This school is for colored children of both sexes. A school for Africans was commenced by themselves, in 1798, the Selectmen having first granted permission, and was kept in the house of Primus Hall. The yellow fever broke it up, and three years afterwards it was revived by Rev. Drs. Morse of Charlestown, Kirkland of Harvard College, Channing, and Lowell, and Rev. Mr. Emerson of Boston. They provided for its entire support two years. It was then proposed to have the colored people hire a building, and a carpenter's shop was selected adjoining to the old church, and this continued three years. The site of the meeting-house was then selected, and purchased by subscription, and the African Baptist Church erected a house, of which the school occupied the basement. The room was completed in 1808, and immediately occupied by the school, and the reverend gentlemen mentioned supported the school, with aid from subscriptions, until 1812, when the town first took notice of it, granting $200 annually. In 1815 Abiel Smith, Esq., died, and left a legacy of about $5000, the income of which is to be appropriated "for the free instruction of colored children in reading, writing and arithmetic." The city then took the school under its entire charge, and in 1833 the ill-condition of the room attracted attention, and a Committee, of which D. L. Child was Chairman, reported in favor of a new house. The present house was built in the next two years, and on the 10th of February, 1835, the school was named for its benefactor. Its Masters have been, Prince Saunders, James Waldach, John B. Russwurm, William Bascom, Abner Forbes, and the present incumbent, since 1846. Latest returns show only 78 pupils; attendance, 53.

*Smith School engraving; 1849 Boston Directory.*

African Americans had petitioned the city to provide for a separate school. Blacks had done so, because teachers and white students in the integrated schools frequently mistreated black students and subjected them to public ridicule. The private African School had been established in 1798 and a generous trust bequeathed to the city in 1815 by a white philanthropist provided adequate funds for the continued support of a separate black school renamed the Smith School. Some black Bostonians felt strongly that separate schools were necessary to educate their children without the degrading experiences of racial prejudice and did not support the efforts to desegregate Boston schools.

Yet, as the physical facilities badly deteriorated at the all-black Smith School, it became clear to many that separated education in the Boston schools was not likely to be quality education for black students. A century before sociologist Kenneth Clark helped NAACP lawyers make the case before the Supreme Court in the *Brown* case, many black Bostonians understood that separation of the races had harmful long-term consequences for the psychological well-being of their children. William Cooper Nell, a community leader-activist in the campaign to integrate Boston schools, related the personal experience that motivated him to become an activist. In 1829, he and two other students were judged as the three brightest students of the Negro school. However, they were not awarded the Benjamin Franklin Medal that was given to white students by the city school board and were not invited to the dinner given in honor of the winners. To satisfy his curiosity, Nell managed to attend the dinner as a waiter. During dinner, Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor Armstrong privately told him that he deserved to be at the dinner alongside the white students. Nell was the child of an economically successful family and the son of a prominent community leader in Boston. Nonetheless, the feeling that be could "never be anything but a nigger anyhow"" plagued his sense of self-worth. Segregated education, he believed, was implicated in his diminished self-image.

Although debate over the benefits of integrated education versus black-controlled education continued among Boston blacks, Nell and other parents organized an effective boycott of Boston's black schools. Black activists and White abolitionists challenged segregation policies through petitions, non-violent protests, and the introduction of bills to outlaw Jim Crow regulations. Repeated petitions to the Boston School Committee throughout the 1840s decried the injustice of exclusive schools "solely on account of color" which deprived blacks of the equal privileges and advantages to which they were entitled as citizens. Thus, when Benjamin Roberts brought suit against the city, he did so as part of a series of efforts and strategies by the community to desegregate Boston schools. The interracial legal team of Sumner and Morris was merely presenting before the court arguments and valid grievances black residents had expressed before. The most eloquent desegregation argument revealed the detriments of segregation policies in the lives of Nell and many other African-American children in Boston and elsewhere. "Nursed in the sentiment of caste, receiving it with the earliest food of knowledge, [whites] are unable to eradicate it from their natures... A despised class, blasted by prejudice and shut out from various opportunities, [blacks] feel this proscription from the Common Schools as a peculiar brand...It adds to their discouragements." No matter that the Massachusetts court was not sympathetic, black people understood only too well, from personal experience.

Justice Shaw, ignoring the moral issues involved, narrowly focused on the question of whether separation by race in public schools violated Robert's right to political, social, and civil equality. When he reasoned that separation of the races does not perpetuate class distinction since existing prejudice in society "is not created by law, and probably cannot be changed by law," he foreshadowed the racial philosophy basic to 20th-century-segregationist law. Echoing this philosophy, the 1896 *Plessy* decision reflected a dominant perception among whites that the races were somehow fundamentally different, a difference immutable by law. "Legislation is powerless to eradicate racial instincts or to abolish distinctions based upon physical differences," said the court. "If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane." Further, the court flatly rejected Plessy's claim, as the Massachusetts court had rejected Robert's contention, that separation marked blacks with "a badge of inferiority." "If this be so, "wrote Justice Brown, it is only "because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it."

These were the assumptions of popular culture of the 19th century which remained strong even by the mid-20th century. It would not be until social attitudes fostered and supported by social scientific evidence, began to reconsider the wisdom of racial hierarchy that the "separate but equal" doctrine would be reevaluated by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954 with the *Brown v. Board of Education* case. By mid-century, the harmful effects of racial segregation were scientifically documented and could no longer be easily dismissed. During the 1920s, mainstream social scientific

thought had moved from the assumption that mental inferiority and anti-social behavior are racially inherited, to the understanding that environment and social process are the primary determinants of intellect. Gunner Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* (1944), a widely acclaimed critique of American racism which detailed the cycle of social prejudice and economic deprivation, was one source used by Marshall to urge the Court to reconsider *Plessy*. Further strengthening the argument against segregation was President Truman's report in 1947 from the Committee on Civil Rights which also cited social scientific evidence and called for an end to legally-enforced segregation. The time was right for the Supreme Court to declare decisively that "in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

Yet, this declaration was a long time in the making and it was the result of more than a century of determined struggle.

Like the overnight sensation who has worked a lifetime for that distinction, the Civil Rights Movement which many Americans assume to have begun in 1954 was a long time coming, with the sacrifice and support of thousands, black and white, committed to racial equality and justice long before *Brown* and even before *Plessy*. The *Plessy* decision, the *Brown* decision, and all those who struggle for racial justice stand on the shoulders of Benjamin Roberts, a man who simply wanted a good education for his five-year-old daughter.

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Jean Van Delinder

# Oral Histories
## Capturing Forgotten Moments in Civil Rights History

The names of Farmville, Virginia, or Summerton, South Carolina are not on the lips of the average citizen in thinking about the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Yet these communities, and others, also had significant parts in the case as did Topeka, Kansas.

The newly established Brown v. Board of Educational National Historic Site will serve to remind us of the very significant step on the road toward equality, taken in Topeka, but also many steps to desegregate American schools taken elsewhere. This site is located at the Monroe Elementary School. Over 40 years ago, the school was used to educate African-American children separately from white children. Monroe School once again will open its doors, but its mission has been transformed to educate us all. It will also be a reminder to all Americans that equal rights do not come at little cost. The African-American challenges to "separate but equal" arose in many places. A park dedicated to this historical struggle should connect the events in Topeka, Kansas with those in other states. How can what is known primarily as a legal case be represented through a park exhibit, so that others can share the experience of those who lived through those events?

One way to supplement the historical record is through oral history interviews. Oral histories have been gathered through interviews of persons who lived through the events surrounding these cases, many of whom were participants. In the particular history of *Brown*, these interviews connect legal abstractions with personal experiences. The location of the site at the former Monroe Elementary School and other sites are tangible symbols of the force of the "separate-but-equal" doctrine. At its best, they connect us with what people underwent in forever changing that doctrine. Oral histories help to uncover the actions

and experiences of civil rights "footsoldiers" from beneath historical abstractions. There really was an African-American family named Brown who lived in the city of Topeka, Kansas in the early-1950s who stood with 12 other families as plaintiffs in a suit brought by the NAACP against the Topeka School Board.

In 1991, the Kansas State Historical Society, in cooperation with The Brown Foundation and Washburn University Law School, developed a proposal to create an oral history collection focusing on the people involved in and those effected by the *Brown* case. This would include not only the Kansas case but its companion cases from Delaware, Virginia, South Carolina, and the District of Columbia.

These stories and others connected to the case lend meaning to the human dimension of *Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site.* This collection of oral histories will remind visitors to the site that Topeka did not act alone in trying to bring about desegregation. In Summerton, South Carolina, school enrollment attempts were not as courteously conducted as those remembered in Topeka. One of the major participants in the South Carolina school litigation, Reverend J.A. Delaine, left his residence in the middle of the night in fear of his life. His house was later burned to the ground. Defendant Harry Briggs, the first named plaintiff on the case that would later be called *Briggs v. Elliott*, found he could no longer get his cotton ginned anywhere in the county. He eventually left South Carolina seeking work in Florida. Annie Lawton not only lost her job as a maid in a local motel, but her husband was forced off land his family had sharecropped for over 50 years. In recounting those events of over 40 years ago, Annie said that if the segregated schools had had desks she never would have signed her name to the petition demanding better educational facilities. The price she and her family had to pay was high.

Those interviewed in Virginia spoke of events just before graduation in May 1949, when students attending Robert Morton High School in Farmville, Virginia, walked out of class and went on strike for two weeks. Student leaders protested the use of poorly constructed shacks for classroom space. Attorney Oliver Hill of Richmond, Virginia, remembers receiving a telephone call from one of the student leaders in Farmville asking for help. A Howard Law School classmate of Thurgood Marshall, Hill had handled numerous civil rights cases for the NAACP in Virginia. He was also familiar with the overcrowded conditions in the segregated schools in Prince Edward County, the school district where Farmville was located. He doubted that the strike would have much effect on current district policies, but he did agree to meet with the students and assess the feasibility of filing a lawsuit in Farmville. His legal assistance combined with the determined efforts of community residents resulted in the school desegregation case called *Davis, et. al. v. Prince Edward County School Board.* This lawsuit was reviewed by the United States Supreme Court along with the *Brown* case.

Interviews conducted in Topeka contained recollections of September 1951 when a local NAACP plan was put into action. A total of 13 African-American parents tried to enroll their grade school children into neighborhood schools that fall. Mrs. Lucinda Todd with her daughter Nancy and Mrs. Lena Carper with her daughter Catherine attempted enrollment in Randolph Elementary School. Mrs. Sadie Emmanuel tried to enroll her young son James in Lafayette Elementary. Oliver Brown took his eldest daughter Linda and tried to enroll her in Sumner Elementary School, a few blocks from their home. Throughout Topeka the story was similar. Though these young children lived within four to five

## The Living Memory of the Past

Orally-communicated history—that vividly detailed information that is brought to light when people speak from memory of times past—is increasingly recognized as a valuable research tool. As the historian investigates his subject and moves from the documentary to the physical evidence, he still may be faced with gaps in the record. It is at this time that oral history—the living memory of the past—becomes important and useful.

The vast amount of this information never gets recorded and the documentary record is left incomplete. Human beings simply never take the time or have the opportunity to record their feelings and preserve the memory of their role in history. Historians such as Alex Haley and Studs Turkel have shown that oral history techniques can and should be used to complement the documentary evidence. Indeed, oral history provides another view of history by preserving the memory, emotions, and feelings of the participants of the history event in question.

This technique is extremely important in preserving and recording the memory of the modern Civil Rights movement as illustrated by Jean Van Delinder's article. Hopefully, as a result of these efforts, the stories of the people who lived the events associated with the *Brown v. Board of Education* cases will be preserved and remembered by subsequent generations of Americans.

*—Harry A. Butowsky*

*Mrs. Lucinda Todd with her daughter Nancy. They were plaintiffs along with twelve other families in the* Brown *case. Mrs. Todd served as NAACP secretary and had taught in a segregated black school. She was the first to volunteer to act as a plaintiff in the Topeka case.*

blocks of a white school, they were bussed 10 to 20 blocks to one of the four segregated schools.

The children remember their experience, that fall, of waiting in hallways for their parents to return from hushed conversations with school officials. Linda remembers waiting outside the principal's office while her father went inside to speak to Frank Wilson, the principal of Sumner. She doesn't remember much else about that day except afterward when they were walking home her father held her tightly by the hand, hurrying her with his long strides. Frank Wilson remembers Oliver Brown arriving at his office that September morning. He remembers him as a quiet, dignified looking man. He wasn't surprised by the arrival of this reticent man with his eldest daughter standing shyly next to him. Wilson had been expecting such a visit since early summer when he was warned by Topeka School Superintendent, Kenneth McFarland, that the local NAACP would attempt to enroll African-American children in schools that were reserved for white Topekans. Wilson, like principals of white schools across Topeka encountering African-American parents that fall, politely received Oliver Brown and listened to his request to enroll his daughter, and politely refused to allow it. African-American children had their own schools to attend.

*Participants in* Briggs v. Elliott. *Photo courtesy A. Delaine, Jr.*

Under the existing state statutes, Topeka was within its rights to segregate elementary schools on the basis of race. The scene played out just as Superintendent McFarland had planned. The threat of legal action did not deter McFarland in his mission to keep segregation status quo in Topeka. He had been named as a defendant before in lawsuits. McFarland, and Wilson too, knew they probably would later be named as defendants in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case. This did not alter either of their courses of action. For one reason or another, each in his own way felt responsible to maintain segregation.

Over 50 interviews have been completed to date with individuals ranging from former plaintiffs and attorneys to NAACP officials and those who served as expert witnesses. Key interviews include Robert Carter, formerly an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF). It was Carter who assisted local attorneys in arguing the Kansas case; Jack Greenberg, former LDF attorney, who went on to head that organization; and finally, Paul Wilson who argued for Kansas and those not wanting to dismantle segregated schools.

Because of the complex stories that comprise *Brown*, an oral history advisory committee was established. The committee's purpose was to identify individuals to be interviewed and issues to be addressed in the interviews. The committee was composed of long-time residents of the area (over thirty years) and representatives of the three cooperating agencies.

Additional interviews are scheduled to take place in the spring of 1996. These interviews will include individuals involved in the cases from Delaware and Washington, DC.

The personal sacrifices made by these and many other African Americans of Summerton, South Carolina and Farmville, Virginia are as essential to the *Brown* story as the events that happened in Topeka. Through oral history interviews, these forgotten moments in civil rights history provide an engrossing way to make history come alive.

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Sharon A. Brown and Barbara Tagger

# The Underground Railroad
## A Study in Heroism

*Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus!*
*Steal away, steal away home,*
*I ain't got long to stay here.*
*My Lord calls me, He calls me by the thunder;*
*Green trees are bending,*
*Poor sinners stand a trembling;*
*My Lord calls me, He calls me by the lightning;*
*The trumpet sounds within-a my soul:*
*ain't got long to stay here.*

—*"Steal Away" Spiritual*

The Underground Railroad was perhaps the most dramatic protest action against slavery in United States history. It was a clandestine operation that began during the Colonial period, later became part of organized abolitionist activity in the 19th century, and reached its peak in the period 1830–1865. The story of the Underground Railroad is one of individual sacrifice and heroism in the efforts of enslaved people to reach freedom from bondage.

The phenomenon known as the Underground Railroad involved both a deep personal commitment (sometimes resulting in the loss of one's own life) and defiance of certain laws in the name of a higher moral imperative. The Underground Railroad was neither "underground" nor a "railroad." Usually scholars describe it as a loosely constructed network of routes that originated in the South, intertwined throughout the North, and eventually ended in Canada. Escape routes, however, were not restricted to the North, but also extended into western territories, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Its operations relied heavily on secret codes as railroad jargon alerted "passengers" when travel was safe. Runaways usually commuted either alone or in small groups, and were occasionally assisted by black and white "conductors" who risked their lives to escort runaways to freedom. By definition, this activity was clandestine, so information about sites and routes was kept secret or not widely distributed.

*The historic Lovejoy homestead. Princeton, IL. Photo by Terry Donnelly.*

After slavery ended, the story of the Underground Railroad was kept alive by oral tradition and written works, including personal accounts and historic documentations. Although the history of the Underground Railroad has been described in several publications, information about the current condition of sites and structures is limited. Many of these sites and structures, especially in urban areas, have been demolished or substantially changed to make way for development.

Various historians and organizations worked diligently to keep the memory of the Underground Railroad experience alive, such as William Still in his book *The Underground Railroad* (1872), and William H. Siebert's publications and collections in the 1890s. A contemporary effort by Charles L. Blockson resulted in the establishment of the Charles L. Blockson Collection at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mr. Blockson's collection is a primary resource for documents and files on the Underground Railroad collected over three decades.

Former House Representative Peter Kostmayer (PA) introduced the concept of tracing the Underground Railroad, and asked Mr. Blockson if the project was a feasible one. Mr. Blockson told the congressman that based on his research he thought it was. In 1990, Representative Kostmayer and Senator Paul Simon introduced legislation to study options for commemorating the Underground Railroad. With the active support of delegations from several states, Congress enacted Public Law 101-628 on November 28, 1990, which directed the Secretary

of the Interior through the National Park Service (NPS) to study ways to commemorate and interpret the Underground Railroad.

A special resource study was undertaken by the Denver Service Center, Washington Office, Southeast Regional Office (now Southeast Field Area), and Harpers Ferry Center. The study is to consider establishing a new unit of the national park system; consider establishing various appropriate designations for routes and sites used by the Underground Railroad, and alternative means to link those sites, including in Canada and Mexico; and to recommend cooperative arrangements with state and local governments, local historical organizations, and other entities. An advisory committee of nine members representing the fields of historic preservation, African-American history, United States history, and members of the general public with special interest and experience in the Underground Railroad cooperated with the NPS during the course of the study. Committee members were Dr. John Fleming, Dr. Ancella Bickley, Dr. Thomas Battle, Mr. Charles L. Blockson, Ms. Barbara A. Hudson, Dr. Robin Winks, Ms. Vivian Abdur-Rahim, Ms. Rose Powhatan (Pamunkey), and Ms. Glennette Turner.

*Levi Coffin House, Indiana. Photo by Ralph Pyle.*

Upon congressional funding for the Underground Railroad study, the NPS in 1992 began data collection. The special resource study involved consultation with 34 states, two territories, hundreds of interested individuals and organizations around the country, as well as connections with Canada and the Caribbean. The study considered 380 suggestions about potential sites of significance to the Underground Railroad story. Although this list contained the names of several NPS areas, existing national historic landmarks, properties on the National Register of Historic Places, etc., it was not regarded as either comprehensive or definitive; rather, it is illustrative of the richness and variety of resources that can be used to tell the Underground Railroad story.

The Underground Railroad originated in the southern states and led to or through all the northern states to Canada, although some routes led to Mexico and the Caribbean as well. Some enslaved African Americans and Native Americans managed to live in relative freedom in remote areas within the South, including swamplands and parts of Florida. Other enslaved Africans found refuge with some of the Native American tribes that lived in the South and other parts of the country. However, they remained in constant peril of being caught or killed.

The geographic area in which the Underground Railroad story took place encompassed most of the present-day United States, although, in general, significant events occurred east of the Mississippi River. The territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, acquired in 1898 and 1917, respectively, had a far different experience with slavery. However, their experience before they achieved territorial status also forms part of any comprehensive view of the U.S. history of the Underground Railroad. These two areas represent the larger context of slavery in the Western Hemisphere. They further show how areas outside the United States played a role in the way slavery evolved in this country.

The special resource study also outlined visitor experience goals to describe conditions that can be reasonably provided and offered to visitors within the range of alternative concepts addressing Underground Railroad interpretation and preservation. These goals could be achieved through activities and interpretation available in different ways and places under different concepts. People visiting Underground Railroad-related resources or wishing to learn about the Underground Railroad should be offered opportunities to

- understand the history and meaning of the Underground Railroad
- appreciate the heroism of the unsung and often unknown people who escaped on the Underground Railroad
- be inspired by the Underground Railroad story and be motivated to share the story with others
- learn more about the controversial aspects of the Underground Railroad story—such as those dealing with race, human rights, and the continuing struggle for freedom
- sense the presence at related sites of people who participated in the Underground Railroad system, including runaways and others who risked censure, jail, or loss of life

Although alternatives such as creation of a new unit of the national park system or a special program of technical and financial assistance will require action by Congress, many ideas in this study can be pursued and implemented—as time and funding permits—by federal, state, and local governments and the private sector without any special authorization by Congress. For example, a private foundation either alone or in combination with other entities could create a national commemorative and research center.

In addition, some resources could be developed as part of a joint partnership between federal and other entities. These projects could use a variety of methods to accomplish mutually agreed-upon goals, with the federal participant assuming some tasks and other government and nongovernment organizations assuming other tasks. This mutual support would increase the effectiveness of each entity's programs.

Given the national significance of the story, the need for long-term preservation of resources, the public enjoyment potential, and the current amount of public ownership, the Underground Railroad story could become an example of a cooperative or partnership park. Several other products are being, or have been, produced in addition to the special resource study: a National Historic Landmark theme study, an interpretive brochure and handbook, and an Underground Railroad "home page" on the Internet.

NPS will seek to coordinate efforts with parks in Canada to create an international commemoration of the Underground Railroad. Since northern underground lines extended into Canada, several sites, including the Josiah Henson House in Dresden, Ontario; John Free Walls Historic Site, Windsor, Ontario; and the Raleigh Township Centennial Museum/Elgin Settlement in North Buxaton are available for public use, and are considered key places in developing a proposed international trail.

In short, the Underground Railroad is an example of a time in American history when people of different races, religions, and communities came together to help those who were willing to risk their lives for freedom. It was a "grass roots" effort, but one that had numerous successes. In the same way, whatever action Congress decides to take, grass roots efforts still can achieve successes in commemorating and interpreting the Underground Railroad.

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*National Park Service historian Barbara Tagger and interpretive planner Sharon A. Brown, Ph.D., both worked on the Underground Railroad project.*

Martin Blatt and Liza Stearns

# The Meaning of Slavery in the North

## Interpreting Historical Ties Between the Industrial North and Slave South

Lowell National Historical Park was established in 1978 to preserve and interpret Lowell's pioneering role in America's Industrial Revolution. The park includes over five miles of canals, mill complexes, operating gatehouses, mill worker housing, and a museum with an operating weave room. The park's primary objective is to make the complex story of the Industrial Revolution accessible to the public. Interpretive programs include exhibits, tours, several award winning slide shows, special events and festivals, and a hands-on museum education center. Between 400,000 and 500,000 people visit the park annually.

### *Recognizing Interpretive Shortcomings*

Until recently, the park has done little to interpret the connection between Lowell's 19th-century textile industry and the South's system of slavery. The significance of this omission was heightened when the park invited a group of industrial policy experts to participate in planning a new video, *Work in the 21st Century*. One participant was James Jennings, a scholar from the Trotter Institute at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. The focus group began by viewing the slide show at the park visitor center, *Lowell: An Industrial Revelation*. Jennings pointed out that the otherwise very good program did not mention the slave labor upon which the textile

industry depended for cotton. With this omission, the program failed to make a critical historical link and further failed to speak to black Americans about their critical role in the early development of the United States economy.

*A Conference to Address the Problem*

To address the interpretation of slavery at the park, the staff organized a conference, *The Meaning of Slavery in the North*. The goals of the June 1993 conference were fourfold: (1) to raise awareness of the connection between Northern industrialists and Southern plantation owners; (2) to increase communication among interpreters, museum professionals, teachers, and academics; (3) to enhance the visibility and credibility of the park in the African-American community; (4) to broaden the traditional approach used to teach antebellum industrial history.

*Photo by Gretchen Sanders Joy, courtesy Lowell National Historical Park.*

The first day of the conference was designed specifically for museum educators and classroom teachers. The second and third days of the conference focused on scholarship, and attracted a host of academics and professionals from throughout the country.

*Positive Outcomes*

Parallel and related to the development of the conference, the park enhanced its interpretation of slavery in the permanent Boott Cotton Mills Museum exhibit. The museum's slide show, *Wheels of Change: The First Century of American Industry,* includes a very clear reference to the links between North and South: "The profitable but unholy business alliance between the Yankee 'Lords of the Loom' and the Southern 'Lords of the Lash'...." In addition, the installation of a reproduction slave shackle in a plantation economy exhibit, and the revision of accompanying text, greatly strengthened these connections.

There have been exciting outcomes directly stemming from the conference. Several instructors from Boston-area university teacher-training programs have modeled two weekend conferences for student teachers after the Lowell conference. The Tsongas Industrial History Center, a hands-on museum education center jointly operated by the National Park Service and the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, and co-sponsor of the 1993 conference, organized a day-long history conference for middle and secondary school teachers closely following the outline of the Lowell conference. Subsequently, the Tsongas Center has piloted a new curriculum kit, "Lords of the Lash," that focuses on the connection between industrial North and slave South. The Center has also integrated this thematic link into its on-site education programs.

Finally, the success of the conference and stated interest in the topic by conference attendees prompted Park Historian Martin Blatt and conference speaker David Roediger to co-edit a collection of essays based on conference proceedings. This collection will be published by Garland Publishing.

*What Have We Learned?*

The success and varied outcomes of the conference have a number of implications for Lowell National Historical Park and the National Park Service. It is possible to interpret history in a manner that includes the historical experiences of more than the majority culture. African Americans do have reason to visit Lowell National Historical Park. Sources for lesser-known elements of history can be accessed. Interpreters can tell these stories in a way that invites the public to ask their own questions and discover the shortcomings of "History as We Know It."

*"Hidden History"*

Historic sites across the nation contain "hidden histories." These untold histories encompass the lives and struggles of people who have traditionally been excluded from the historic record. As interpreters and historians—as keepers of some of the country's finest natural and cultural resources—it is our responsibility to make these stories and experiences accessible to the public. By enhancing interpretive programming to relate the history of the United States in its full richness and complexity, our sites will have relevance to a broader audience; this audience is the caretaker of our resources.

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*Dr. Martin Blatt is the park historian at Lowell National Historical Park.*

*Liza Stearns is a park ranger at Lowell.*

Connie Slaughter

# African Americans in the Civil War

*1st Kansas Colored Volunteers engaging Confederate forces at Island Mound, MO, October 28, 1862. Courtesy Fort Scott National Historic Site.*

*"Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters, U.S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pockets, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States."*

These words, spoken by Frederick Douglass, moved many African Americans to enlist in the Union Army and literally fight for their freedom. With President Abraham Lincoln's issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1862, the Civil War became for the Union a war to free the slaves.

Approximately 180,000 African Americans, comprising 163 units served in the Union Army during the Civil War, and many more African Americans served in the Union Navy. Those who joined the war effort ranged from free blacks fighting for their rights to escaped slaves fighting for their freedom.

The Union Army used blacks as laborers and slaves from the beginning of the war. On July 17, 1862, Congress passed two acts allowing the enlistment of African Americans, but official enrollment of blacks into the Union Army occurred only after the September 1862 issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. Thanks to several Union officers, however, five black regiments were in uniform before the proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863. By the first week of August, 1863, 14 Negro regiments were in the field and ready for service. The general opinion of white soldiers and officers was that black men lacked the courage to fight and fight well. Given the opportunity, however, African Americans silenced their critics with exemplary bravery. One of the first combat experiences for black troops came in October 1862. The soldiers of the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment defeated attacking Confederate forces at the battle of Island Mound, Missouri. At the battle of Port Hudson, Louisiana, May 27, 1863, blacks fought well, advancing over open ground in the face of deadly small arms fire. Although the attack failed, the black soldiers proved their capability to withstand the heat of battle.

On July 17, 1863, at Honey Springs, Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, the 1st Kansas Colored established its military reputation. Union troops under General James Blunt ran into a strong Confederate force under General Douglas Cooper. After a bloody engagement lasting two hours, Coopers' soldiers retreated. The 1st Kansas, which held the center of the Union line, advanced within 50 paces of the Confederate line and exchanged fire for some 20 minutes until the Confederate line broke and ran. Critics were silenced in the face of the 1st's bravery and courage. General Blunt wrote after the battle, "I never saw such fighting as was done by the Negro regiment. ... The question that Negroes will fight is settled; besides, they make better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command."

The most widely known early battle fought by African Americans was the assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina, by the 54th Massachusetts on July 18, 1863. The 54th volunteered to lead the assault on the strongly fortified Confederate position. The soldiers of the 54th showed great courage as they charged the stronghold under heavy fire. While the attack failed, the soldiers proved their courage as they were willing to die for their freedom.

The 54th was not the only regiment to face great odds and show such courage. Every time a black soldier faced a Confederate force, he knew that, if captured, he would be killed, but yet he fought on with great courage and skill. At the end of 1863, Christian A. Fleetwood, a Baltimore free African American who had joined the army, expressed the feelings of most black men, as he wrote in his diary, "This year has brought about many changes that at the beginning were or would have been thought impossible. The close of the year finds me a soldier for the cause of my race. May God bless the cause, and enable me in the coming year to forward it on."

Christian A. Fleetwood, courtesy Richmond National Battlefield Park.

Although black soldiers proved themselves reputable soldiers, discrimination in pay and other areas remained widespread. According to the Militia Act of 1862, soldiers of African descent were to receive $10.00 a month, $3.00 of which was to be paid in clothing. A white soldier of the same rank received $13.00 a month, plus a clothing allowance of $3.50. Many regiments struggled for equal pay, some refusing any money until, on June 15, 1864, Congress granted equal pay for all black soldiers.

African-American soldiers participated in every major campaign of 1864–1865 except Sherman's invasion of Georgia. The year 1864 was especially eventful for African-American troops. On April 12, 1864, at Fort Pillow, Tennessee, Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest led his forces against the Union-held fortification, occupied by 292 black and 285 white soldiers. After driving in the Union pickets and giving the garrison an opportunity to surrender, Forrest's men charged and swarmed into the fort with little difficulty. White and black Union soldiers surrendered, and African-American soldiers were shot down in cold blood by Rebels who yelled, " No quarter! No quarter!" The Committee on the Conduct of the War concluded that the Confederates were guilty of atrocities which included murdering most of the garrison after it had surrendered, burying black solders alive, and setting fire to tents containing Federal wounded. The battle cry for the African-American soldier east of the Mississippi River became "Remember Fort Pillow!"

One of the most heroic, lesser known, engagements involving African Americans was the September 29, 1864 battle of New Market Heights and Fort Gilmer, Virginia. New Market Heights, part of a larger operation planned and directed by Union Major General Benjamin Butler, is also known as Chaffin's Farm. After being pinned down by Confederate artillery and small arms fire for about 30 minutes, the Negro division of the XVIII Corps charged the earthworks and rushed up the slopes of the heights. The division suffered tremendous casualties and they were engaged in battle for just over one hour. For their heroic efforts, 14 African Americans received the Medal of Honor. This is especially significant because only 16 Medals of Honor were awarded to black army troops during the entire Civil War.

In January 1864, a group of Confederate officers in the Army of Tennessee, headed by General Patrick Cleburne, proposed that because the Union was using slaves against the South, the Confederacy should use them as soldiers, too. Cleburne's reports also offered African Americans the option of freedom if they fought and survived.

The National Park Service has made great strides in interpreting the role of African Americans who fought in the Civil War. Specific examples can be found at these four National Park Service areas: Fort Scott National Historic Site, Fort Scott Kansas; Richmond National Battlefield Park, Richmond, Virginia; Petersburg National Battlefield, Petersburg, Virginia; and Vicksburg National Military Park, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Fort Scott National Historic Site has the distinction of being the site where the 1st and 2nd Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiments were mustered into service. During the Civil War, Kansas was the first Union state to officially recruit and train colored troops. The historic site has an excellent site bulletin entitled *First to Serve* that discusses the service and bravery of the 1st and 2nd Kansas Colored. Richmond National Battlefield Park encompasses the battlefield of New Market Heights where members of the 4th, 5th, 6th, 36th, and 38th United States Colored Troops fought gallantly. Of the 16 African-American Medal of Honor recipients, 14 received the medal for their bravery at the Battle of New Market Heights. The park has photographs of several of the recipients as well as appropriate exhibits.

Petersburg National Battlefield also has a site bulletin on the African American involvement entitled *African Americans at Petersburg*. This bulletin is very popular with visitors, and the City of Petersburg also distributes the bulletin at various locations. The living history program at Petersburg also interprets the role of African Americans. At their Union encampment, one or two United States Colored Troop units are in attendance to educate and instruct the visitor. Vicksburg National Military Park has recently included the role of the African American in their wayside exhibits. These waysides interpret the digging of Grant's Canal and the Battle of Miliken's Bend in Louisiana. They also have a living history program available upon request.

Confederate President Jefferson Davis refused to consider Cleburne's proposal and forbade discussion of the idea. The concept, however, did not die. By the fall of 1864, the South was losing more and more ground, and some believed the only way to avoid defeat was to arm the slaves. On March 13, the Confederate Congress passed General Order 14, and President Davis signed the order into law. The order was issued March 23, 1865, but only a few companies were raised and the war ended before they could be used in battle.

In actual numbers, African-American soldiers made up an estimated 9–10% of the Union Army. Losses among African Americans were high, and from all reported casualties, approximately one fifth of all African Americans enrolled in the military lost their lives during the Civil War. Black soldiers did not have a high desertion rate despite the discrimination in pay and duty, the threat of death or return to slavery if captured, and the ravages of battle.

African-American soldiers overcame the tremendous odds against them and made an important and valuable contribution to the Civil War. They fought for their freedom with courage and bravery. A government commission which investigated the condition of the freedman, in May 1864, summed up the impact African Americans had on the Civil War. "The whites have changed, and are still rapidly changing, their opinion of the Negro. And the Negro, in his new condition as a freedman, is himself, to some extent, a changed being. No one circumstance has tended so much to these results as the display of manhood in Negro soldiers. Though there are higher qualities than strength and physical courage, in our present state of civilization there are no qualities which command from the masses more respect."

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*Connie Slaughter is a historian at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, Missouri.*

John Peterson and Ida Jones

# Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Project

The Civil War Soldiers and Sailors (CWSS) project is a cooperative effort by the National Park Service and several other public and private organizations to computerize information about the Civil War. The goal of the CWSS is to increase the American people's understanding of this decisive era in American history by making information about it widely accessible. The CWSS will enable members of the public to make a personal link between themselves and history, fostering an appreciation of history that is crucial to gaining support for preserving historic sites. The CWSS will also further the development of innovative educational and research tools.

The National Park Service's Information and Telecommunications Center (ITC) is managing the overall CWSS project, working with a number of cooperating organizations. Two activities which are part of the CWSS project which relate to African-American history are described below.

### *U.S. Colored Troops Data Entry*

One of the first uses of the CWSS data will be for the African-American Civil War Memorial in the Shaw neighborhood in the District of Columbia. The memorial is scheduled to be dedicated by President Clinton in 1996 and will be managed by NPS. The approximately 185,000 names of soldiers who served in the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) have been given first priority for data entry in the CWSS Names Index project, managed by the Federation of Genealogical Societies. Nationwide there are 27 states and the District of Columbia working on data entry. Information on the status of the CWSS and how to volunteer can be found on the CWSS homepage, the url is http://www.cr.nps.gov/itd/welcome.html. A group in Washington, DC, organized by Lyndia Grant in Council member Frank Smith's office, has sent in a large number of names. The Genealogical Society of Utah (Mormon Church) is editing and processing the names in partnership with NPS.

### *Howard University Research on African American Civil War Sailors*

As part of the CWSS Project, the NPS has established a cooperative agreement with Howard University. Under this agreement, the History Department at Howard is conducting research to identify African-American sailors who served during the Civil War. Funding is provided by Department of Defense Legacy funds. Identification of African-American sailors requires

specialized research since, unlike the Civil War-era Army records, the Navy service records were not separated by race. Howard's research team, headed by Dr. Joseph Reidy, has examined numerous Civil War-era Navy muster rolls. Information on thousands of men has been entered into a research database. Following up on clues in the muster rolls, researchers have also begun looking at selected pension records. The project's work with primary sources means that not only is the project identifying sailors names, but it is also compiling new and important information about the role of African-American sailors in the Civil War-era Navy. The three-year project is a cooperative effort of Howard University, the National Park Service, and the Naval Historical Center.

For more information about the CWSS, contact the NPS Project Manager, John Peterson, at 202-343-4415, or Ida Jones at 202-343-4447.

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*John Peterson is Project Manager of the CWSS.*

*Ida Jones is a public historian working on the CWSS project.*

John H. Dryfhout

# The Search for African-American Descendants of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site is actively trying to locate African-American descendants of the famed Massachusetts 54th Regiment whose courageous story was told in the movie, *Glory*. This regiment was also the subject of sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens' masterpiece, the *Shaw Memorial*, which stands in Boston Common.

The final version of the heroic-sized Shaw Memorial, one of the greatest works of American sculpture ever produced, is exhibited at Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, New Hampshire. This particular cast, completed in 1901 for the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, represents Saint-Gaudens' final rendition of the earlier (1897) bronze in Boston Common. The relief in Cornish is made of plaster, and was never cast in bronze. Temperature and humidity have caused serious deterioration in the plaster and in order to preserve the monument for the future, the National Park Service and the Saint-Gaudens Memorial, a partnership organization, are raising $450,000 to cast the relief in bronze.

*Shaw Memorial, Boston, MA.*

The project is planned for completion in 1997, the hundredth anniversary celebration of the Shaw Memorial unveiling. The full scale plaster relief will be made available on a long-term loan by the National Park Service to a major museum in the United States.

Donations toward the $450,000 project are being accepted by the Saint-Gaudens Memorial, c/o the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, RR 3, Box 73, Cornish, NH 03745.

In conjunction with the casting project, the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, and the Boston African-American National Historic Site are seeking descendants of the men who served in the 54th Regiment. At the same time, information is also being sought on the African-American men who Saint-Gaudens hired during the 1880s and 1890s as models for the sculpture. Historic photographs of the unveiling and dedication of the Shaw Memorial showing the 54th veterans in their uniforms are also needed.

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site consists of the home, studios, gardens, and collections of the sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848–1907). One of only two National Park Service units dedicated to a visual artist, the 150-acre site is open daily from late May through late October.

For more information on the project, contact Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, telephone 603-675-2175, Fax 603-675-2701, e-mail SAGA@VALLEY.NET.

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*John Dryfhout is Superintendent of Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site.*

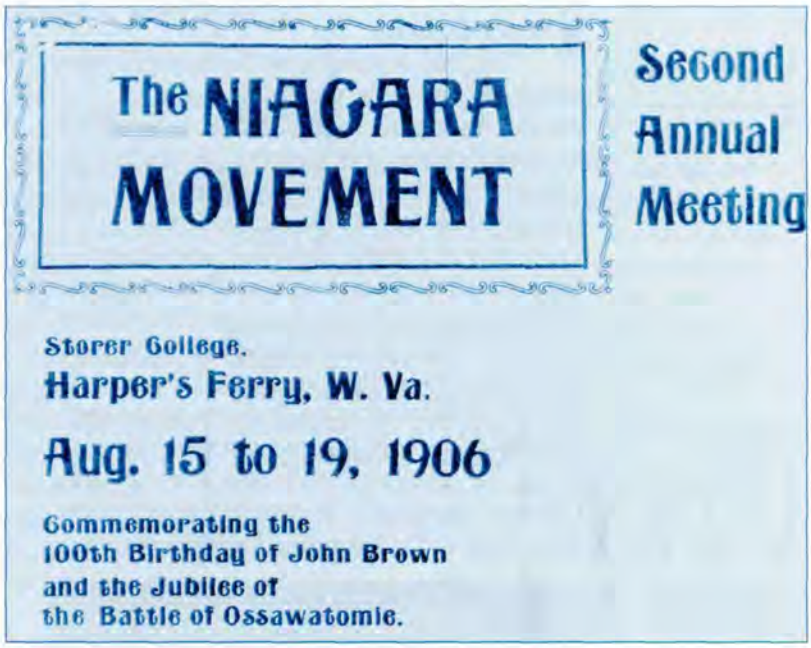
Marsha B. Starkey

# Harpers Ferry and the Niagara Movement

*".... we talked some of the plainest English that had been given voice to by black men in America."*

These words by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois described the 1906 Niagara Conference held in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Strong sentiments expressed by an outspoken leader, yet all but forgotten, or worse, never known. The historic meeting of the Niagara Movement in 1906 has, through the years, been overshadowed by later, perhaps, more successful movements in the area of civil rights. This fact, however, does not and should not diminish its importance in the pages of history. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park didn't include the Niagara Movement in its interpretation until about five years ago. Today, history of the Niagara Movement is shared through interpretive tours, presentations, and exhibits. A temporary exhibit has been on display since 1994 and a permanent space for this exhibit has been chosen. The opening is targeted for August 1996. So five years later, after additional research and on the eve of the 90th anniversary celebration, Harpers Ferry NHP has come a long way toward uncovering and providing adequate interpretation about this event. Our job, however, is not over. The park will continue to enhance the education and interpretation of the Niagara Movement so that it might gain its rightful place in history.

In August 1906, 45 members of the Niagara Movement, an early civil rights organization, met on the campus of Storer College, in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. This meeting was monumentally and symbolically important since this was their first meeting on American soil. The first meeting of the Niagara Movement, organized by W.E.B. Du Bois, was held in July 1905, at the Erie Beach Hotel in Ft. Erie, Ontario, Canada. Racial prejudice forced Du Bois to move the meeting to the Canadian side of Niagara Falls when accommodation was refused the group in Buffalo, New York. Harpers Ferry had been carefully selected as the location for the second meeting because of its connection to John Brown and his infamous raid to free slaves in 1859. In fact, the meeting was promoted as "the 100th anniversary of John Brown's birth, and the 50th jubilee of the battle of Ossawatomie." (Brown was actually born in 1800, making this the 106th anniversary of his birth.)




The connection to the martyred Brown was powerful indeed; but it was not the only connection to African-American history—Harpers Ferry was also home to Storer College. Storer had been opened in 1867 by the Freewill Baptist as a mission school educating former slaves. For 25 years Storer was the only school in West Virginia that offered African Americans an education beyond the primary level. In the ensuing years, Storer expanded

in acreage, curriculum, and enrollment. In 1906, it provided the backdrop for this historic conference.

Convening on the 15th, these 45 men undoubtedly carried strong hopes that their voices would be heard and action would result. Many of the Niagrites, as they were called, were drawn to this organization by common goals and desires. They had tired of Booker T. Washington's theory of "accommodation" and sought to actively seek equality for their race.

It is interesting to note that women attended this conference, but were not officially recognized as members until the third annual conference in Boston, Massachusetts. One of the women in attendance, Mary White Ovington, a reporter, covered the meeting for the New York *Evening Post*. Ms. Ovington had long admired Dr. Du Bois before finally meeting him in 1904. They communicated often and she had suggested that Du Bois invite her to the conference. Ms. Ovington wrote of the participants, "Their power and intellectual ability is manifest on hearing or talking with them." Her interest in the organization and its cause did not end at Harpers Ferry. In 1909, Ms. Ovington became co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Speeches, meetings, and special addresses filled the week at Storer; a highlight for the participants, men and women, was John Brown's Day, August 17—a day devoted to honoring the memory of John Brown. A light rain was falling as the day began with a silent pilgrimage to the site of John Brown's fort. Led by Owen Waller, a physician from Brooklyn, New York, the Niagrites, numbering 100 strong, removed their shoes and socks before treading this hallowed ground. Following prayer and stirring remarks offered by Richard T. Greener, former dean of the Howard University Law School, the assemblage marched, single-file, around the fort singing, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "John Brown's Body". This inspirational morning was followed by an equally stirring afternoon as the Niagrites listened to Henrietta Leary Evans, whose brother and nephew fought with Brown at Harpers Ferry; Lewis Douglass, son of Frederick Douglass; W.E.B. Du Bois, and Reverdy C. Ransom, pastor of the Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston. Ransom's address was described by many as a masterpiece and according to Benjamin Quarles in *Allies for Freedom* "was the most stirring single episode in the short life of the Niagara Movement."

The second annual conference of the Niagara Movement concluded with an "Address to the Country." Penned by Du Bois, this document was a five-point resolution demanding:

"1. ... we want full manhood suffrage, and we want it now, henceforth and forever.
2. We want discrimination in public accommodation to cease. Separation ... is un-American, undemocratic, and silly.
3. We claim the right of freemen to walk, talk, and be with them who wish to be with us.
4. We want the laws enforced...against white as well as black.
5. We want our children educated ... either the U.S. will destroy ignorance or ignorance will destroy the U.S."

The address also stated, "We will not be satisfied to take one jot or title less than our full manhood rights. We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil, and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America. The battle we wage is not for ourselves alone but for all true Americans." With thunderous applause the Harpers Ferry conference drew to a close. Years later, recalling this conference, Du Bois referred to it as ..."one of the greatest meetings that American Negroes ever held."

The Niagara Movement continued until 1911 at which time various factors contributed to its demise. In 1911, Du Bois wrote to his colleagues advising them to join the new National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Niagara, as an organization, ceased to exist, but its principles and ideals that evolved during its years continued to gain momentum into the 21st century as part of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

August 24-25, 1996 Harpers Ferry National Historical Park will be commemorating the 90th anniversary of this historic conference. Special guest speakers, including Dr. David Du Bois, son of W.E.B. Du Bois, will present a symposium on this nationally-significant event. During the weekend celebration, a pilgrimage will be made to the Murphy Farm, the site of John Brown's Fort in 1906. This walk will be held to honor the members of the Niagara Movement. For further information, call Harpers Ferry National Historical Park at 304-535-6029.

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*Marsha Starkey is an education specialist at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.*

Robert R. Weyeneth

# Historic Preservation and the Civil Rights Movement

The author has recently completed a study on historic preservation and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. The report of this study, synopsized below, is being circulated to heritage agencies to encourage the identification, preservation, and interpretation of civil rights sites. The research for this study was conducted through a combination of field work, archival research, correspondence, and presentations to national academic conferences over a two-year period from the fall of 1992 through the fall of 1994. A report was circulated for review and comment to state historic preservation offices and other interested agencies and individuals in November 1994.

*The interpretation of the material legacy of the civil rights movement has educational potential...if done well, these efforts can facilitate historical understanding of what is arguably the most important social transformation in 20th-century America.*

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This report surveys the extent to which the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s has been commemorated in the United States. It concludes that there are wide-ranging and imaginative efforts that seek to identify, preserve, and interpret historic sites associated with the modern African-American freedom struggle. These efforts, however, have been hampered by the difficulties of commemorating chapters of history that are local, recent, and controversial. These problems of selectivity are analyzed in order to facilitate incorporation of missing aspects of civil rights history into future heritage preservation projects.

In a final section of the report, the results of the survey are summarized on a state-by-state basis. The survey demonstrates that there are significant public efforts to recognize the legacy of the civil rights movement at all levels of government, from the National Park Service to state and municipal undertakings. These include new additions to the national park system, the designation of National Historic Landmarks, nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, placement of state historical markers, and the creation of local preservation districts. Interpretive efforts include county and city funding of new museums (through adaptive use of historic structures as well as new construction), the publication of guides to

*In Dallas, Texas the former home of activist Juanita J. Craft is being converted into a civil rights museum.*

*The effort to integrate the bowling alley in the corner of this South Carolina strip mall ignited the confrontation in 1968 that came to be known as the Orangeburg Massacre. It has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.*

African-American heritage sites by state and local governments, and the erection of historical plaques. In addition to these public efforts, private non-profit organizations are also playing a significant role. Their work has ranged from commissioning memorial sculpture to establishing museums and research centers.

As impressive as these diverse efforts are in their recognition and interpretation of the civil rights legacy, what has not been commemorated is as revealing as what has been recognized. The report identifies three problems of selectivity that suggest some of the challenges of commemorating chapters of history that are locally important, recent, and controversial. If historic preservation and heritage commemoration are significant agents in the construction of public memory, at present we are remembering only parts of the civil rights story.

The first problem of selectivity could be called the challenge of local resources. Local activism is arguably the one great chapter of civil rights history that really has not received its due in terms of commemoration or scholarship, even though civil rights activity was most frequently a local undertaking. Some efforts have been made to recognize local activism. In Dallas, Texas, for example, the former home of activist Juanita J. Craft has been adaptively reused as a museum to civil rights history. This type of site may well be one of the most significant for understanding the history of the civil rights movement. The homes of local activists, many of whom were women, were "action central." They functioned as offices and meeting places, provided guest accommodations for visiting national leaders, and sometimes became targets for racist violence. Despite this and other intriguing attempts to recognize local civil rights activity, though, the general pattern has been commemoration of the dramatic events that captured national and international headlines (like the Birmingham confrontations and the Selma voting rights marches) and recognition of nationally prominent figures like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who has been lionized through preservation of his birthplace, his neighborhood, his assassination site, and his tomb. Paying more attention to local resources will help us remember that it was sustained local activity, often organized by women, that desegregated American cities.

A second problem of selectivity in the preservation of the civil rights legacy is the challenge of "young" resources. Much of the movement's material legacy is not yet recognized as significant because it is often vernacular architecture and its historic importance is relatively recent. The civil rights movement has left a rich material legacy consisting of places connected with organizing, demonstration, and confrontation. Sites associated with the process of organizing include churches, schools, and the homes of local leaders, as well as modern utilitarian buildings that would not normally attract the attention of historic preservationists. On the latter, one thinks of the so-called "Black Capitol of Mississippi," the Masonic Temple in Jackson, where Medgar Evers and the NAACP had offices and held meetings. Sites of protest include places of public accommodation like bus stations, the lunch counters of national chain stores, and even bowling alleys. Sites of marches are associated with state capitols, city halls, roadways, bridges, parks, and other public spaces. While many of the most visible sites of the civil rights movement are monumental civic buildings and places like college campuses and churches that tend to be well-maintained, the vernacular architecture associated with the movement is more vulnerable. At the moment, there are no

*The figure of Martin Luther King, Jr. dominates how we are commemorating the modern civil rights movement, as in the preservation of his birthplace in Atlanta. In contrast, the role of black power and black nationalism seem too controversial to remember.*

systematic efforts underway anywhere in the country simply to survey buildings or sites associated with the civil rights movement, even though it represents the nation's most significant social revolution in the 20th century.

A third problem of selectivity is the challenge of controversial history. Where is black power? Where are the Black Panthers? Where is Malcolm X? At the moment, these seem to be chapters of the African-American freedom struggle that are too difficult or too dangerous to commemorate. To be sure, the life and work of Malcolm X have received some commemoration through historical markers placed at the sites of childhood homes in Omaha, Nebraska and Lansing, Michigan. In addition parks, schools, mosques, and streets have been named for him in several northern cities. But it is the figure of Martin Luther King who dominates how we are remembering the 1950s and 1960s, probably because Dr. King's philosophy fits the model for social change that the majority finds congenial. Non-violent means, the vocabulary of Christian love, and integrationist goals are easier for public agencies to commemorate than sites associated with violence, armed resistance, and racial separation. The subject of black power raises the related issue of white resistance. Should historic white resistance to the civil rights movement be identified in some fashion? From one perspective it is an appalling and fearsome question that perhaps should not even be asked. But from the perspective of using material culture to tell the full story of the civil rights movement, white resistance is as much a missing chapter as black power.

To summarize, selectivity remains a problem despite the truly impressive and imaginative efforts that recognize and interpret the civil rights movement through commemorative architecture and diverse preservation strategies. Some of the difficulty in presenting controversial history is rooted in the challenges of assessing the civil rights movement after 1965 or so, when the story becomes more complicated: when the heroes, victims, and villains become harder to define; when violence seems to take on some utility; when we as a society lose consensus about the meaning of the movement and what the future should hold. It becomes easier to leave out black separatism and white backlash, for example, and to follow the story only through the end of Dr. King's life in 1968. The problem of selectivity is also rooted in the contemporary relevance of these historical issues. Black separatism continues to be a major news story and a subject of public discussion that inflames passions, as does white racism. As a result, it is harder to put the subjects on text panels at museums, even though the timeliness of the issues might be the best argument for trying to locate them in broad context and historical perspective.

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*Dr. Robert R. Weyeneth is Co-Director of the Applied History Program at the University of South Carolina.*

For copies of the full report, contact Robert Weyeneth, Department of History, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208; telephone 803-777-6398; fax 803-777-4494; email weyeneth@scarolina.edu.

Photos by the author.

Angela Bates

# The Kansas African-American History Trail

Buffalo Soldier Monument, Ft. Leavenworth, KS. Photograph by Mike Snell.

*While there are only a handful of existing sites to remind us of their important role in Kansas history, African Americans are now being recognized in Kansas through memorials, historic designations, and commemorations. Though few, all remaining physical reminders are of significance for they exemplify the existence of the African American and his participation in settling the western frontier. Still fewer sites remind us of the African-American heroes and events of the 20th century. All over the state, Kansans are working hard through legislative and grass roots efforts to ensure that African-American history in Kansas is not forgotten but is researched, preserved, and celebrated.*

African Americans began coming to the promised land of Kansas as early as the 1850s. They came—both freestaters and former slaves—to break virgin prairie sod and to build new homes. In doing so, they changed the color of the face of the Kansas frontier forever, joining white settlers and Native Americans in integrating the prairie. Their legacy of courage carried into the 20th century as Kansans spearheaded the effort to end segregation in America's public schools. African Americans are now being recognized through memorials, historic designations, and commemorations for their important role in Kansas history.

The site of old Fort Blair, which was built with the assistance of the black soldiers, is now owned by the Baxter Springs Historical Society and plans are underway to rebuild it when funds are available. Fort Blair was located just north of the museum and the battle site is located north and west of Baxter Springs High School.

Mounted 9th Cavalry Drill. From. Riley, KS. Photo courtesy of Kansas State Historical Society.

With the western migration of white settlers as well as African Americans, the Native Americans began to see a slow invasion of their land. The Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Osage, Pawnee, and other Plains tribes began to fight to hold on to their native homelands. As their battles ignited into full-blown war, the U.S. Army increased its regiments insisting that the military need was now in the western frontier where the country was rapidly growing. Many felt enough military assistance already had been given to reconstruct the war-torn South.

In 1866, the African American was given full military status by Congress, and the Army designated the 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalries as all Colored regiments. The 10th U.S. Cavalry was organized and headquartered at Fort Leavenworth where these first official African-American soldiers were given a blue uniform, equipment, and a horse and immediately sent to posts scattered around the state.

Dubbed "buffalo soldiers" by the Cheyenne Indians because their hair looked similar to that of the buffalo, these African-American soldiers patrolled throughout Kansas and helped to build forts, lay telegraph lines, guard railroad workers, as well as fight the Native American. Members of the 10th U.S. Cavalry wore the name "buffalo soldier" with pride, using the buffalo as a symbol in their military insignia.

Although Fort Leavenworth served as headquarters for the 10th U.S. Cavalry, the soldiers were forced, because of prejudice, to camp in a swampy area outside the fort. In this same area today, visitors can peer up at the 14' Buffalo Soldier Monument, dedicated by General Colin Powell on July 25, 1992. The monument commemorates the outstanding contributions and military records of the men of the 10th U.S. Cavalry.

The 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalries became the most decorated regiments in U.S. Army history. Twenty-three members received Congressional Medals of Honor for their gallant efforts and exceptional service under such harsh and rigid conditions. The regiment was disbanded in 1952 when the armed services were integrated. At the U.S. Cavalry Museum at Fort Riley, an exhibit depicting the history and expeditions of the 9th and 10th Cavalries is on display.

## Nicodemus

After the Civil War, thousands of African Americans left the South looking for new land and a fresh start. Many of these individuals became know as "exodusters" and moved to Kansas in hopes of finding homes and a new life. The town of Nicodemus, Kansas founded in 1877 in the rugged, wind-swept plains of the prairie, was one of the many settlements of the exodusters.

At first, the town of Nicodemus grew rapidly during the 1870s and 1880s. Many businesses were established and the population continued to grow. By 1910, there were over 600 residents of Nicodemus, Kansas. After World War I, Nicodemus began to decline with the onset of the depression and hard times for local farmers. Although the town never became deserted, the population continued to fall until only a few pioneers remain.

On January 7, 1976, Nicodemus became a National Historic Landmark. In 1993, the National Park Service completed a special resource study to assess a range of options relating to the future management, protection, interpretation, and use of Nicodemus as a site suitable and feasible for addition to the national park system. At the present time legislation concerning the final decision on Nicodemus is still pending in the Congress.

The Nicodemus story reminds us of the African-American pioneers who struggled to carve out an existence on the harsh plains of Kansas after the Civil War and of the bravery and courage of the men and women who struggled to become part of the American fabric in a violent and harsh environment.

*—Harry A. Butowsky*

Members of the 9th and 10th Cavalries spent much of their time in other Kansas forts and out in the field. From 1867–1869, Fort Larned, now a National Historic Site operated by the National Park Service, was the first duty station for the 10th Cavalry. The men were sent to assist in guarding the Santa Fe Trail.

Fort Hays also became the temporary station for the 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalries during the years of 1867 to 1869 and 1881 to 1885. While the soldiers were stationed at Fort Hays, there were tense racial conditions and many town battles erupted between the soldiers and the white settlers. Several soldiers were lynched as a result. Across from Fort Hays College, near a train truss, a roadside sign marks the place where these soldiers were hung.

Gradually, African Americans moved into the western frontier, first as soldiers and then with a slow and steady migration into and through Kansas as drivers and assistants on wagon trains and stagecoaches and as homesteaders on free government land.

For three seasons in the early 1870s, Wichita was a booming Kansas "cowtown" as thousands of Texas longhorn cattle were driven by cowboys up the Chisholm Trail for shipment east by railroad. More than one-third of the cowboys were African American, Native American, or Mexican.

"Cattle raising dominated the South as a means of livelihood from the end of the 18th century until King Cotton achieved primacy just before the Civil War," wrote author David Dary in *Cowboy Culture*. "It was not unusual for a plantation owner in the South to have slaves on horseback herding and hunting down lost cattle. Descendants of these southern cow-hunters were probably among the first black Texas cowboys."

According to a Kansas State Historical Society publication titled *Cattle Towns*, "Black cowboys rode the ranges of Texas before the Civil War. After the war and abolishment of slavery, many chose to remain cowboys. The black cowboy was very much a part of the long drives north." Their stories are told at the Old Cowtown Museum in Wichita, Kansas.

During these pioneer years, many African-American towns were organized, platted, and settled. Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, a former slave from Tennessee, is noted for fueling the great "exodust" of 1879–1880, when an estimated 20,000 African Americans from the south sought the free lands of Kansas. An African-American town organized by Singleton and named after him was located five miles north of Baxter Springs. Singleton was also responsible for assisting and organizing the Dunlap settlement near Council Grove and Morton City in Hodgeman County. Although there were over a half dozen all African-American settlements in Kansas, little is known about their short-lived histories. Many of these small towns were organized and promoted by ministers, freed slaves, and former runaway slaves.

Nicodemus is the only remaining African-American town that stands as witness to this time in frontier history. Located on the southeastern border of Graham County on the high plains of northwestern Kansas, Nicodemus with fewer than 60 residents, struggles to hold on to its rich past. The town is the site of the oldest recorded African-American-operated post office in the U.S. It is also the oldest and only remaining African-American town west of the Mississippi River. It survived the lack of a railroad, the Great Depression, and its residents leaving because of hardship and misfortune. Since 1878, the town has pulled together for its annual Emancipation Celebration in July. Plans are underway for the town to be declared a National Historic Site and incorporated into the National Park Service.

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*Angela Bates is President of the Nicodemus Historical Society. She is a member of the founding family of Nicodemus, the oldest existing African-American settlement.*

*Reprinted courtesy of the Kansas Department of Commerce,* KANSAS Magazine, *3rd Issue/1994.*

# Interpreting African-American History in the National Parks

*The study and interpretation of African-American history discussed in the following examples illustrate the comprehensive attempt by the National Park Service to tell this story to the American people. In recent years with new scholarship, historians have come to understand more of the wide breath and depth of this story and its relationship to the overall fabric of American history. The National Park Service will continue to work with our partners to see that all sites in the national park system associated with this history are preserved and interpreted for the education and enjoyment of the American people.*

**Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, Jacksonville, FL**

At Kingsley Plantation themes of slavery and the struggle for freedom for the black population of antebellum Florida are explored. From the intriguing remains of 23 tabby slave cabins to the restored plantation house of Zephaniah Kingsley and his African wife Anna Jai, Kingsley Plantation is the setting for a story of conflict and survival. Through exhibits, daily ranger programs, tours for educational groups, and special events, visitors learn of African heritage and life in slavery. From multiracial Spanish colonial Florida to American territorial Florida, the site illustrates the effects of changing policies and practices on people of color—free and enslaved.

*Brian Peters*

**Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, Fredericksburg, VA**

Chatham is a colonial plantation manor house which was used as a federal headquarters, artillery position, and hospital during the Battle of Fredericksburg. Among the display panels inside the building is an *Antebellum 19th Century* exhibit, containing information about the January 2, 1805 slave insurrection at Chatham; an advertisement to sell the Chatham estate, including 230 slaves; and the will of one of Chatham's owners, which includes the desire that some slaves be manumitted.

Ten African-American soldiers are interred in the Fredericksburg National Cemetery (five Civil War era, and five post-Civil War era). Maps indicating the locations of the graves are available as handouts at the Fredericksburg Battlefield National Cemetery.

One of the key Confederate artillery positions on the Fredericksburg Battlefield was the Bernard Cabins—a cluster of modest dwellings where Alfred Bernard's slaves resided. A recent trail to the site will contain interpretive markers yet to be installed.

*Greg Mertz*

**Boston African-American National Historic Site, Boston, MA**

*To Freedom's Land*

Through puppetry, visitors learn about Lewis Hayden, Harriet Tubman, and William Lloyd Garrison, and their trials and tribulations as they traveled on the Underground Railroad. Visitors also learn about Boston's 19th-century Abolitionists and the free African community that successfully sought to end slavery.

*From Boston Harbor We Set Sail*

Join the staff from Boston African-American National Historic Site and the Kendall Whaling Museum for a fun-filled day of activities as you learn about African Americans in the Maritime Industry. For more information or a teachers curriculum guide, call Boston African-American National Historic Site at 617-742-5415, or the Kendall Whaling Museum at 617-784-5642.

*The Black Heritage Trail*

The Black Heritage trail is a 1.6-mile walking tour. See 15 19th-century historic sites and tour the African Meeting House. Learn about the oldest extant free Black Baptist Church and the largest concentration of pre-civil war black-owned structures in the United States. Learn about the free African-American community that protested to not only to end slavery, but fought tirelessly to enhance the quality of life regarding issues of education, housing, employment, etc. Slides are available for loan.

*Resisting for Justice*

Experience first hand how people in Boston have protested against laws that they thought were unfair. This program uses role play to explore two different historical instances of protest. Students will learn about events that shape the present and discover how to stand up for what they believe in.

First, at the Old South Meeting House students take on the role of actual patriots and loyal-

ists who debated the tax on tea. Then, at the African Meeting House, they learn how Boston's citizens protested the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850.

*Kenneth A. Heidelberg*

**Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Washington, DC**

*Freedom Fighters Museum Exhibit*

Ford's Theatre is proud to present Freedom Fighters, a special museum exhibit relating the story of African-American soldiers during the Civil War. This exhibit includes period photographs, newspapers, and other artifacts.

*(February-May 1996)*

*Jeffrey Leary*

*They Also Served: African-American Women and the Union Cause*

This program examines the unique contributions made by African-American women on behalf of the Union war effort. Over the course of the Civil War these women—some free, some slaves—made invaluable contributions as nurses, spies, teachers, and reformers.

From "General" Harriet Tubman to the quiet Susie King Taylor, discover how these women helped win the war. This program includes an exhibit.

*(February 5 and March 5, 1996)*

*Karen Byrne*

**Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, St. Louis, MO**

In addition to Jefferson National Expansion Memorial's (JNEM) interpretive themes of westward expansion and the struggles for civil rights, the urban location of the park brings with it the important responsibility of presenting National Park Service messages to an urban audience. Each year, programs are given to nearly 140,000 students, teachers, scouts, and educational groups of all ages, a sizable group of people for whom concepts such as biodiversity, conservation, recycling, and a drug-free America can be emphasized.

Despite the fact that more than 50,000 students attend regular and special Museum Education Programs annually at JNEM, however, there are thousands of others who do not have that opportunity. Traveling trunks, which serve as mini-museums, help bridge this gap. The philosophy behind the program is, "if the people can't come to the museum, send the museum to the people." Traveling trunks are full-sized footlockers packed with tools, utensils, clothing, games, toys, maps, posters, slides, videotapes, books, and other instructional materials. Subjects covered by the traveling trunks include African-American heritage.

Information on educational programs at JNEM, including Traveling Trunks, may be obtained by calling 314-425-6010.

Beneath the **Gateway Arch** is the **Museum of Westward Expansion**, which tells the story of the United States' 19th-century expansion from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. From the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the farmers settling the Great Plains, the museum interprets 100 years of American history. Artifacts, quotes, and photographs fill the Museum and provide an excellent atmosphere for learning about the westward expansion movement.

*Programs in the Museum of Westward Expansion:*

***The Lewis and Clark Expedition.*** This tour, which teaches about the people, animals, and lands encountered by the explorers of 1804-06, includes information on York, William Clark's slave, who accompanied the expedition and served as an equal member from start to finish.

***Trappers and Traders.*** This program covers the lives and dangers faced by mountainmen such as Kit Carson and Jim Bridger, as well as James P. Beckwourth and other African-American trappers.

***Cowboys.*** The life of the 19th-century cowboy is discussed, including the roles of African-American cowboys, who made up at least 1/5 of those who worked at this trade during the period.

***Farmers.*** This program investigates what it's like to live in a house made of soil and grass with wooden crates for furniture and newspapers fashioned into window curtains. The struggles and accomplishments of the early farmers who homesteaded on the Great Plains are celebrated, including the African Americans who settled such towns as Nicodemus, Kansas.

***African Americans of the West.*** A survey program which covers the important roles played by African-American explorers, mountainmen, soldiers, cowboys, miners, and homesteaders during America's 19th-century westward expansion movement.

Completed in 1862, the **Old Courthouse** provides a unique learning environment. Its elaborately-decorated rotunda, restored courtrooms, and St. Louis history galleries make it an attractive place for visits year-round. The Old Courthouse was brought into the National Park Service in 1940, primarily because of its historic association with the nationally-significant Dred Scott case. This makes the Old Courthouse the oldest National Park Service area created because of its association with African-American heritage.

*Programs in the Old Courthouse:*

***The Dred Scott Trial.*** The Dred Scott case is the most famous trial in the history of the Old Courthouse. This program considers the second trial of Dred and Harriet Scott held in the building in 1850, allowing visitor participation and interaction through the use of a reading script taken from

historical records of the trial itself. The program is conducted in one of the building's historic courtrooms.

***Freedom School.*** In 1847, Missouri passed a law forbidding the education of African Americans. This program shows how African Americans were secretly educated in St. Louis despite this law. Park rangers help groups recreate a "freedom" school in a remote room of the Old Courthouse.

***Williams vs. Bellefontaine Railway.*** In 1867, Mrs. Caroline Williams, a young, pregnant African-American woman, and her two- year-old child were pushed out of a St. Louis streetcar by the conductor because the company had a policy which did not allow African Americans to ride inside. Mrs. Williams sued for damages at the Old Courthouse, and her trial is dramatically recreated by visitors using a prepared script in one of the historic courtrooms.

***African-American Heritage of St. Louis.*** The contributions of African Americans to the development of St. Louis are discussed. Topics may include Dred Scott, slavery, the Underground Railroad, Scott Joplin, music, art, and sports figures such as "Cool Papa" Bell of the black baseball leagues.

*Museum Stores* at JNEM feature a wide variety of materials, books and videos relating to African-American heritage in the West and in St. Louis. A catalog and mail-order service is available; call 1-800-537-7962.

*Mark Engler*

### Hampton National Historic Site, Towson, Maryland

Hampton National Historic Site preserves 62 acres of land with a Georgian mansion, finished in 1790, and associated outbuildings and gardens. One family, the Ridgelys, owned the property until 1948. At its peak in the 1820s, the estate was an agricultural-industrial complex of over 24,000 acres, depending on an ironworks as well as crops and livestock.

The tour of Hampton Mansion, offered daily on the hour from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., includes discussion of the enslaved African Americans at Hampton. Fourth and eighth grade curriculum packets, available on request, also incorporate aspects of African-American history at Hampton. In addition, Hampton offers a grounds tour including the Farm House, stables, and slave quarters. This tour incorporates data from Ridgely family papers, so that visitors learn about slaves' names, ages, physical descriptions, jobs, family relationships, and experiences (manumission, escape, illness, etc.). Interpretive materials will be updated through ongoing research into the rich store of records kept by the Ridgelys and a search for descendants of Ridgely slaves and the insights they can provide on their family histories.

*Jenny Masur*

### Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, Sullivans Island, SC

The Charles Pinckney NHS is a recent addition to the national park system. The primary focus is Charles Pinckney's involvement in the development of the U.S. Constitution, the early history of the United States, and Snee Farm, his plantation site. African-American contributions to the development of Pinckney's Snee Farm plantation included agricultural activities and specialized trade skills. In addition, archeological investigation is being interpreted to provide information about the daily life of slaves on site. These facts and an explanation of sweetgrass basket making, which parallels low country Gullah culture with that of West Africa are displayed as well.

A new video is currently in production. This will incorporate African-American contributions here on the plantation. In addition, we are developing Parks as Classrooms materials which include a teacher's guide and a classroom program. Both will feature the impact and influence of African Americans on Pinckney's life-style.

Our sales area (ENP&MA) has a variety of worthwhile titles which cover the contributions, life-styles, and influences of African-Americans during the Colonial Era through the development of the new nation.

*Michael Allen*

### Chiricahua National Monument, Wilcox, AZ

Chiricahua NM is very proud of its Buffalo soldier history. The Faraway Ranch Historic District includes the story of the Tenth Cavalry, Troops E, H, and I. These men were part of General Crooks campaign to keep Geronimo away from known watering holes. The troopers established semi-permanent Camp Bonita in September 1885 and remained until September 1886. Today, there is evidence of their stay in the form of a magnificent fireplace in the Faraway Ranch House. Sixty stones are carved with the names of those men—stones they carved themselves.

*Kate Neilsen*

### Gettysburg National Military Park, Gettysburg, PA

Gettysburg has recently developed an interpretive wayside exhibit that describes the impact of the battle on two free African-American property owners. The primary subject, Abraham Brian, owned a farm located at the center of the Union battleline near Zieglers Grove. Heavy fighting raged around the farm, particularly on July 3, dur-

ing the Pickett-Pettigrew Charge. The wayside highlights the personal impact of the fighting on Brian, his family, and property, and will be installed sometime this spring/early summer.

*Brion Fitzgerald*

**Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, PA**

Independence offers tours, talks, a dramatic presentation, exhibits, free publications, and many items available in the museum shops which all focus on the role and accomplishments of African Americans during the time period interpreted at the park.

"Rachel Hatcher: Looking to Freedom," is a dramatic 30-minute presentation written and performed by park ranger Ajena Rogers. Ms. Rogers used historical records, letters, spirituals, slave narratives, and books to create this drama which explores aspects of slavery and freedom and the relationships of those times between the black and white communities.

*Second Bank of the United States:*

African-American Moses Williams operated a physiognotrace (silhouette making) machine in the first public museum in America, once located in Independence Hall. His ability caused the silhouettes' popularity to soar, making him highly successful. Demonstrations and Williams story.

*Tours and lectures:*

Outdoor walking tours given periodically throughout the year include "African Americans in the Capital City," focusing on the black experience in Philadelphia; and "The Yellow Fever Epidemic-Crisis—in the Capital," about the epidemic of 1793 and the roles African-Americans Absalom Jones and Richard Allen played in combatting the illness.

*Mary O. Reinhart*

**Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, Elverson, PA**

Hopewell Furnace site bulletin, *African-Americans at Hopewell Furnace*, discusses the important role played by African Americans in the construction and operations of Hopewell Furnace and in building the local communities of Six Penny Creek and Mt. Frisby.

*Frank Hebblethwaite*

**Booker T. Washington National Monument, Hardy, VA**

Booker T. Washington National Monument is one of only a few units of the national park system with a primary interpretive theme of African-American history. Using tours, exhibits, videos, storytelling, special programs, and educational packets for students, the park interprets the realities of 19th-century slavery in Piedmont Virginia, the quest by black Americans for education and equality, and the post-Civil War struggle for political participation which shaped the life of Booker T. Washington.

*Qefiri Colbert*

**Boston National Historical Park, Boston, MA**

"It was a summer day in Boston in 1761 more than 200 years ago, when a slave ship landed at Beach Street wharf. This ship brought about 80 Africans, kidnapped from their homes, to be sold in American as slaves.

"One of these Africans was a seven year old girl. A woman named Susannah Wheatley bought the small girl for a low price. This frail girl would later be known to the world as Phillis Wheatley. She would become a famous poet and write the first book ever published by an African American."

Thus, begins a biography of Phillis Wheatley for our **Parks as Classrooms** fifth grade program, "Published Poet: Phillis Wheatley" at Boston National Historical Park and one of our collaborative historic sites, the Old South Meeting House. In this 90 minute program, fifth-grade Boston school children explore the life and writing of an extraordinary woman with a visit to the Old South Meeting House where Phillis became a member when she was 17.

Educator Jane Schwertfeger from Old South developed this program and wrote the pre-visit materials. She presents this program with Boston National Historical Park rangers. "Published Poet: Phillis Wheatley" is part of two programs focusing on two 18th-century women and their writings. In the other program, fifth graders visit Adams National Historic Site in Quincy, Massachusetts to learn about Abigail Adams through her letters. Students discover the distinct differences in the lives of Abigail Adams and Phillis Wheatley, yet they might also notice the similarities among women of the 18th-century era.

*Sheila Cooke-Kayser*

**Fort Davis National Historic Site, Fort Davis TX**

As part of normal non-personal services during the entire year, visitors may access a military field equipment exhibit which focuses on the issue used by the buffalo soldiers and their accomplishments in the region in the early 1880s. Next to this is a completely furnished barracks squadroom. Interpretive panels for off-season reference, and costumed staff in the summer, highlight the building's occupancy from 1875 to 1885 by Troop H of the 10th Cavalry, one of the African-American units at Fort Davis.

The commanding officer's quarters is furnished to reflect the time of Benjamin Grierson's

residence. Grierson led the 10th Cavalry; a permanent photo and text exhibit in the building emphasizes his role and expert guidance of the buffalo soldiers. Next to the ruins of the post chapel is a wayside sign with text and illustrations concerning the court-martial of Henry O. Flipper there in 1880. Flipper was an officer with Troop A of the 10th Cavalry from 1877 to 1881.

Plans for major rehab of the park museum and production of a site video include a more balanced account of the African-American contribution to the fort's history. Both projects have been in the planning and "request" stages for over 10 years.

*Allan Morris*

# African-Americans at Hopewell Furnace

### *Built by African Americans*

For the 112 year history of Hopewell Furnace (1771–1883) African-Americans played an important role in one of the area's most active industries.

The builder of the furnace, Mark Bird, was a slave owner along with most ironmasters in the 18th century. In 1780 Bird was listed as the largest slave owner in Berks County. He had 10 men, 4 women, 3 boys and 1 girl.

These slaves worked at his forges in Birdsboro and are said to have dug Hopewell's original headrace which turned the water wheel supplying air to fire the furnace. Over 220 years after the erection of the furnace, visitors can see remnants of the east headrace near the Big House. Although slavery in Berks County declined rapidly after 1780 when the Assembly passed an act ordering gradual emancipation, African-Americans continued to work at Hopewell. "Black Bill" Jacobs lived his entire life of about 100 years at Hopewell, working first as a teamster and then as a coachman and a gardener.

### *A Safe Haven*

Some of Hopewell's African-American workers lived in the nearby forest. Beginning in 1835 this remote area around Hopewell Furnace figured prominently in the Underground Railroad. Runaway slaves came across the Hopewell hills to the home of Elizabeth Scarlett and her son Joseph, the Quaker owners of Scarlett's Mill. Here a community founded by African-Americans from the South who had reclaimed their freedom grew up in the valley of Six Penny Creek close to Hopewell Furnace, Joanna Furnace and forges in Birdsboro .

Many former slaves earned their living in the iron industry as woodcutters, colliers and teamsters. Some, such as Isaac Cole, became landowners too.

### *Fuel for the Furnace*

The names of runaway slaves employed as woodcutters were probably not entered in the furnace records in order to protect their identity. Some may have worked for contractors without showing up in the Hopewell Furnace records.

Other African-American workers such as Draper Nixon, Edward Ford, Stephen Brown, Peter and Henry Jones, John Allen, John Hart and Joseph Tolbert were credited in nineteenth century Hopewell journals for cutting cordwood used to produce charcoal to fuel the furnace. African Americans also worked as teamsters, hostlers, colliers, miners, fillers and maids.

### *The Mount Frisby AME Church*

In 1856 the African-American community at Six Penny Creek established an African Methodist Episcopal Church on land owned by the Cole family. This church served as a station stop on the Underground Railroad and is the site of the oldest known African-American cemetery in Berks County. Many African-Americans who worked at Hopewell are buried here. The cemetery, carefully restored and maintained by the Cole family, serves as a silent reminder of the once thriving African-American community that helped fuel the iron industry in southern Berks County.

*Adapted from Hopewell Furnace site bulletin.*

# Departments



## POINT OF VIEW

### *Beyond Image and Icon: History's Bounty at the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site*

Ever since Linda Brown walked with her father to Sumner Elementary School in the fall of 1950, the nation has been captivated by the image of a little girl turned away by a stern principal from the neighborhood grade school that her friends attended. This event brought attention to their status in a color-based society and exclusion from the group that dominated it. The incident represented the time in the lives of all African-American children when they became aware that American society, at large, identified them primarily by their race and secondarily as an inferior minority. The story and images of Oliver and Linda Brown's humiliating experience were shown repeatedly in the mid-1950s and during every May beyond that, in hopes that the cruelty of prejudice could be understood somehow by those who never felt its sting. If a little girl and her father could function as innocuous exemplars of their people, then perhaps they could dispel some of the negative stereotypes commonly associated with African Americans.[1]

Because it froze a seminal event in time, this powerful image became a popular American icon that characterized prejudice and discrimination. U.S. history includes several popular figures whose names and faces have become synonymous with momentous events, including Crispus Attucks, Dred Scott, Homer Plessy, Rosa Parks, and Oliver and Linda Brown. Such important figures have achieved symbolic status over time, representing far more than the single historical event in which they participated. Their stories are critical to a full understanding of this nation's history, but sometimes present a too-homogenized view of past events. Like myths and fables, historical icons serve valuable social purposes because they represent broad-sweeping trends and movements, serving as readily-identifiable forms for a wide spectrum of events and feelings. The picture of Linda Brown launched a national revolution for the equalization of civil liberties and equal justice to end a society that based status and opportunity on race. The image of this child provided a powerful symbol which may have facilitated the equalization of rights by defusing many irrational white fears of angry, faceless African Americans.

The Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, a new unit in the National Park System, marks recent attempts by public historians to come to terms with complex aspects of race relations in the United States. Comprised of Monroe Elementary School and its adjacent playgrounds in Topeka, Kansas, the park represents both historical fiction and irrefutable fact, refraction, and reality regarding the long struggle that ended segregated public education. During its period of significance from 1950 to 1955, Monroe Elementary School exemplified a formal institution which captured a fundamental shift in American society and politics, and as a community center where African Americans could define, express, and sustain their cultural values. It provides a comprehensive, dynamic instructional tool which incorporates the messy processes of change, not merely its benchmarks, by examining incremental stages and individual actors.

Monroe received national attention in the mid-1950s as the representative "black" school that Linda Brown attended because, as an African American, state law and local school board policy denied her access to the nearby Sumner Elementary, reserved for white youth. Linda Brown's picture encapsulated a variety of personalities and events associated with the acquisition of equality in education. But this popular image has masked the necessary complexity of history, for Linda was not alone. Twenty children, represented in the litigation by twelve mothers and one father, were dispersed among Topeka's four "black" elementary schools. These minor plaintiffs largely remain anonymous because Linda Brown functions as the symbol for them, as well as students in four companion cases. These class action suits, by extension, represented all African Americans in each respective jurisdiction. The lone Monroe School became the focal point because of its association with Linda Brown. Its physical plant and faculty, in fact, far surpassed the inferior facilities that prompted litigation in the companion cases.

The course of events commonly known as *Brown* involved a

complex mix of social currents, federal proceedings, extensive litigation, and direct action by individuals and groups. Under the successive leadership of Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) enacted a well planned legal campaign to end racial segregation in graduate and professional education. Co-counsel from the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) offices in New York oversaw the coordination of many cases. Through the 1930s and 1940s, litigation by a very talented group of counselors in federal and county courts chipped away at the "separate but equal" doctrine in higher education. Social scientists and legal scholars provided substantive proof of the inherent unconstitutionality of the *Plessy* finding. A full-fledged assault on segregation in primary and secondary schools was underway by 1952, with five promising cases coming to the forefront.

Federal appeals culminated a year later in a hearing of the five unified school cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. Topeka's lead plaintiff, Oliver Brown, headed a docket which included *Harry Briggs, Jr.* v. *R.W. Elliott* (South Carolina), *Dorothy E. Davis* v. *County School Board of Prince Edward County, Virginia, Francis B. Gebhart* v. *Ethel Louise Belton* (Delaware), and *Spottswood Bolling* v. *C. Melvin Sharpe* (District of Columbia).[2] *Brown* v. *Board* gave its name to the composite case because, by circumstance, it led the docket and epitomized the basic issue of each, the denial of due process as guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution through the practice of racial segregation. After several delays, Earl Warren announced the unanimous landmark decision which overturned the *Plessy* precedent on May 17, 1954. The high court ruled that segregation violated due process granted to all citizens in the 14th Amendment because separate schools were "inherently unequal" and bestowed a sense of inferiority upon their students. After further hearings, the Court issued another unanimous opinion in May 1955 urging states to comply "with all deliberate speed."[3]

*Linda Brown in front of Monroe Elementary School. Photo by Carl Iwasaki, March 1953; courtesy* Life Magazine, *©Time, Inc.*

While the opportunity to eradicate inequality came through the judicial system, this national debate about desegregation included a virtual cross-section of all Americans. Jack Greenberg, former NAACP LDF Director, remarked that the school desegregation cases "helped to crystallize a national commitment to eradicate racial inequality."[4] The convergence of grassroots and federal action initiated a groundswell of responses, from those who sought equalization and integration as well as those who fought to retain the old system. Segregationists rallied quickly to oppose what they perceived as an encroachment of state and local authority by the federal government. The two camps squared off in the 1960s over the desegregation of public accommodations, housing, and interstate travel, and equality in the political process. Although the civil rights movement fragmented, many African Americans and white supporters ultimately sought the same goals—to equalize economic opportunity and fair treatment across the country.

The fundamental story of change lies in the people who initiated it, who retained the inner will and stamina to translate ideas into action and accomplishments. One must move beyond Linda and her father, therefore, to interpret a wide spectrum of people and events. History is the aggregate of past events, which occurred because of specific human action in a particular place at a certain moment. For the most part, it involves untangling a messy and intriguing mix of simultaneous actions and reactions of people driven by cross-purposes. The result is a tangle of concurrent motivations and accidental happenings which may or may not lend themselves to precise sorting and categorization. In previous generations, the historical academy often concentrated on the actions of "great men" and the neatness of past events. Scholars and history buffs, alike, raised a few to symbolic status that approached historical fiction and left the rest to timeless anonymity. While sites still initially attract visitors by regaling these cultural heroes, hopefully, they now will imbue a greater sense of the full history that such characters represent.

Brown v. Board of Education NHS illustrates this more modern approach by exploring individual issues of control and inclusion in a democracy. These events clearly illustrate democratic aspirations of African Americans in the mid-20th century, their insistence on quality education, and demand for inclusion in mainstream society. Historical figures like the Browns are extremely important, but should be viewed as compilations of events and people rather than singular entities who stood alone against society's storm. This new unit provides the opportunity to analyze a comprehensive collection of actions, policies, and feelings which denote the remarkable power of people to change their society. As a cultural resource associated with these events, Monroe School allows us to move beyond Topeka—beyond static iconography and symbolism to communicate its history of affirmation and initiative. Like a prism, this new site will display the full spectrum of history that lies beyond image and icon.

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**Notes**

1 I wish to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Harry Butowsky, Ron Cockrell, Bill Harlow, Dr.

Donald S. Stevens, and Mark R. Weekley for comments which sharpened many points in this essay.

2 The *Belton* case was linked with *Bulah* v. *Gebhart*, which addressed segregation in Hockessin, Delaware.

3 Because it pertained to public schools in the nation's capital, *Bolling* v. *Sharpe* received a separate ruling, which stipulated that segregation by the federal government violated the Fifth Amendment.

4 Jack Greenberg, "The Supreme Court, Civil Rights and Civil Dissonance," *The Yale Law Journal* 77 (1968): 1523.

*—Rachel Franklin Weekley*
*Park Historian, NPS*
*Omaha, Nebraska*

## *Telling the Truth*

*"The overall approach to historical information would be simply to tell the truth."*

So read the draft General Management Plan for Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park (NHP). The next sentence read: "Where historians and others differ on the description and interpretation of past events, visitors would have direct access to the differing perspectives." I wrote both sentences. Many people didn't like the first one.

Several reviewers objected to the direction "... to tell the truth;" several others approved. Many of those objecting called it naïve, citing the subjective nature of history, the importance of perspective, of interpretation. My first question of reviewers was whether they had read the second sentence. I wondered whether a semicolon between the two sentences would have led to better communication (reviewers might have considered both clauses before reacting to "telling the truth"). Probably not. Eventually the park (who didn't object to the phrase) rewrote the section. The same point was made, but with more clarity (albeit more length and perhaps less punch), and presumably everyone was happy. But still I wondered: why did that phrase cause such consternation? Should we not tell the truth?

Well, the obvious problem with "telling the truth" is that there are many versions. This was the reason for the second sentence, that "visitors would have direct access to the differing perspectives." But that still was inadequate for several reviewers.

It seems that history shades objective truths. History is the study of the past; what that study yields are functions of our current perspectives, attitudes, beliefs, and values, and of the evidence available. Since those variables have diverse answers from one person to another, we have multiple histories to deal with. Thus, the controversy over the interpretation of the Enola Gay exhibit by the Smithsonian Institution, the furor over national history standards, and questions about political correctness in historical interpretation.

Several years ago, I was challenged by a creationist visitor when I stated in an interpretive talk that people had come to this continent at least 10,000 years ago. I thought about how I knew that to be true, and realized that a more accurate statement would be "most anthropologists believe that people came to this continent at least 10,000 years ago." If this migration were a major theme of the talk, I might then describe the evidence for such an assertion. I might also describe the evidence for earlier and later arrivals.

Interpreters, like the general public, rely on historians, anthropologists, biologists, geologists, and other scientists and scholars to study the world and communicate their insights and the evidence for them. Yet these experts often disagree; then what is an interpreter to do? Tell the truths. Tell the public about the differing points of view, and let the public choose. Performance standards for interpreters don't include omniscience.

Are we obligated to include all points of view? Should we give equal time to theories of alien visitation to explain prehistoric migrations or remains? Hardly. While such ideas may be interesting in a tabloid sort of way, they needn't receive equal billing with scientific and scholarly insights. Interpreters must use professional judgement in identifying important, valid, and relevant perspectives. Good interpretation requires selection, culling, paring down to the most essential ideas. Yet the public is being short-changed if they always receive only one approved version of history or science.

"Facts" in any scholarly discipline are subject to revision as new information becomes available. Truths evolve; each succeeding history is revisionist history. Visitors can become empowered as they are exposed to differing interpretations and the evidence for them.

Telling the truth means not avoiding controversial issues. It includes interpreting all relevant sides, and giving visitors the evidence for each. It includes the affirmation of basic values. Of course, it's not that simple. We do editorialize by nuance, emphasis, implication, and selection.

It is also important to recognize that science and history have no monopolies on truth. Traditional and spiritual perspectives are often significant as well. At Petroglyph National Monument, the interpretation of the 17,000 images chipped and abraded on rocks may encompass at least two major perspectives: the western scientific view, and what Puebloan descendants of the petroglyph makers want visitors to know. The perspectives wouldn't be mutually exclusive; yet each is a function of a distinct world view.

At Brown v. Board of Education NHP, visitors will learn much objective and documented information: the chronology of events, the defense and plaintiff positions, the evidence of educational

inequalities, contrasting constitutional interpretations, reports of observers and participants, mitigating factors, accounts of social conditions, subsequent developments, and so on. Interpretation will also include subjective perspectives: reports, accounts, opinions, prejudices, interpretations, allegations, and conjectures. The appropriateness of including subjective perspectives will be judged in many ways, including accuracy, relevance, and completeness. That these subjective perspectives existed is the truth; that they are relevant, important and interesting will be the judgment of interpreters and designers; how to respond to them will be up to each visitor. Anchoring these perspectives will be basic precepts, including the 1954 Supreme Court decision, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

Perhaps that problematic sentence in the Brown v. Board of Education Plan should have read: "The overall approach to historical information would be simply to tell the truths."

*—Sam Vaughn, Interpretive Planner, Harpers Ferry Center/Denver Service Center, National Park Service*

# STATE NEWS

## *New York State Guide to African-American Historic Resources*

Under the National and State Historic Preservation Acts, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is charged with the identification, evaluation, and protection of historic and cultural resources. Despite the inclusive nature of this mandate, resources associated with African-American history are significantly under-represented in the statewide historic resources inventory and the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Exclusion of these properties at the identification and evaluation stages makes it far less likely that they will be considered in preservation planning activities and fosters an exclusionary record of the state's history. As many of these resources are, by their nature, anonymous, rare, fragile, and threatened, devising strategies to address their identification and protection has become a critical issue in contemporary historic preservation.

To this end, the New York SHPO has formed a task force to develop initiatives to encourage African Americans to participate in state and local preservation programs and to motivate local preservationists to focus on this neglected category of resources. The task force has recently completed its first project, the *Guide to the Survey of Historic Resources Associated with African-Americans*. This guide, prepared by a team of SHPO staff and academic consultants with expertise in African-American history, is designed to provide assistance in researching, identifying, and evaluating cultural resources associated with the history of African Americans. Although to some degree aimed at an audience already familiar with the survey process, the guide is also an attempt to reach out to members of the public who have not worked with us before.

In preparing the guide, the task force explored some of the reasons why historic resources related to African-American history have been overlooked in traditional preservation activity:

- The preservation movement itself grew out of efforts to protect monuments to a national history that was written by the majority cultural group. Although our definition of history has expanded considerably in recent years, we are still feeling the effects of outdated hierarchies and limited world views. Some continue to find it difficult to recognize historic resources that are associated with other cultural groups and the everyday lives of their members.
- In the wake of Urban Renewal, the preservation movement gained great momentum through efforts to preserve highly visible architectural landmarks, threatened urban centers, and declining residential neighborhoods. The overwhelmingly visual orientation of this era skewed the focus of the profession toward architectural history, an approach that encouraged preservationists to overlook resources whose significance might be obscured by their ordinary character or revealed only by examining their meaning within the specific themes of African-American history.
- While many scholars have developed expertise about the history of traditionally under-represented groups, efforts within academic communities to identify and protect specific properties associated with these groups have lagged.
- Some have been uncomfortable with preserving resources that represent less than noble aspects of the past, such as resources that recall the oppression of one race by another.

In addition to the subtle effects of this "baggage," many problems of exclusion and omission can be attributed simply to oversight and unfamiliarity. Thus, rather than reinventing the survey process, the new guide attempts to redirect surveyors toward a more inclusive view of local history and supplements rather than replaces the survey guidance developed by the National Park Service. The guide contains general information about the survey program, advice about community participation, a methodology for carrying out historic resources surveys, case studies that illustrate specific issues, a list of major themes and contexts for this subject area, and a bibliography.

The heart of the survey guide is the methodology. This methodology itself is not new. The standard survey methodology published by the National Park Service in *National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Surveys* outlines appropriate research

methods for dealing with a wide variety of historic resources. The new guide repeats and expands upon this methodology. Under each step, conscious actions are suggested that can be taken to find evidence of the African-American presence within the survey area. These range from the obvious to the innovative and refer to specific research methods, tools, sources, and examples. For example, the guide stresses the importance of using oral tradition to uncover the history of a group that was virtually undocumented in more traditional published records and explains how biases (both historical and our own) can influence the surveyor to disregard important clues about African-American history that may be found in standard sources.

One important aspect of this redirection is to encourage surveyors to focus more on the research and data gathering phases of the survey project than upon state and National Register evaluations. Because so little has been identified, the New York SHPO is interested in developing a substantial body of contextual information and building a database of properties and property types that have the potential to document New York's African-American history. Therefore, we are encouraging surveyors to record as much information as can be uncovered about the African-American presence in their communities, even if they are not able to complete documentation of specific resources within the scope of the survey project. The more information that can be compiled about this theme now, the easier it will be to identify and evaluate the resources associated with it in the future.

The New York State Historic Preservation Office is encouraging all individuals and groups conducting historic resources surveys to incorporate this aspect of local history into their overall project design. At the same time, New York's SHPO staff will give high priority to projects that focus on identifying and recording properties associated with African-American history. We hope that these actions will ensure that more research is done, more context is developed, and more properties are added to the state and National Registers. More important, resources associated with African-American history will be better represented in the resource protection planning process.

*—Kathleen LaFrank, Program Analyst in the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.*

Adapted from an article originally published in *Preservation New York*. Limited copies of the *Guide to the Survey of Historic Resources Associated with African-Americans* are available from Kathleen LaFrank, Field Services Bureau, Peebles Island, P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189; 518-237-8643, ext. 261.

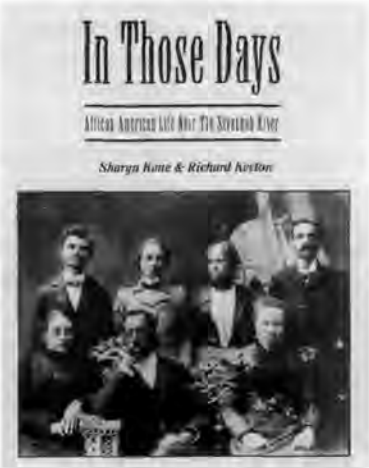
# PRESERVATION RESOURCES

## *Publications*

In 1993, Independence NHP reprinted one of the first pamphlets published in America by African Americans. It is *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People During the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia in the Year 1793 and a Refutation of Some Censures Thrown Upon Them in Some Late Publications*. It was written by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, former slaves, community pioneers, and founders of the Free African Society. It is a compelling and graphic account of the experiences of black citizens during the yellow fever epidemic which ravaged the capital of the new republic. Unselfish service during the epidemic earned Philadelphia's African-American community respect and helped to strengthen African-American institutions like Jones' African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas and Allen's Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church which still thrive in Philadelphia.

The book is available through Eastern National Park and Monument Association for $1.75.)

*—Joanne Blacoe*
*215-597-7115*




*In Those Days: African-American Life Near the Savannah River* by Sharyn Kane and Richard Keeton, 1994. An account of oral history from elderly African Americans in Elbert County, GA, and Abbeville County, SC. The text explores many facets of African-American life, beginning with slavery and continuing through to modern times. Many historic photos illustrate the text. The oral histories were collected by researchers as part of the Richard B. Russell Dam construction in the early 1980s. The volume was published by the Technical Assistance and partnerships Division, Southeast Archeological Center, National Park Service, with funding supplied by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

*—John Jameson*

The Harpers Ferry Historical Association, a National Park Cooperating Association supporting Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, carries a large collection of titles and videos on African-American history. Videos include

Booker T. Washington, The Life and the Legacy; Frederick Douglass: An American Life; the Maggie L. Walker Story; and the John Brown Raid Videopack, which includes the video To Do Battle in the Land, the John Brown Raid Handbook, and a comprehensive study guide for use in the classroom.

Other titles carried by the association include biographies on Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, and John Brown; histories of African-American soldiers during the Civil War; guides to African-American historic sites; histories of the Underground Railroad; and a variety of children's titles.

For more information, contact the Harpers Ferry Historical Association, P.O. Box 197, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425; 1-800-821-5206.
(http://www.nps.gov/hafe/hf_shop.htm.

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The State Historical Society of Wisconsin has received funding for a five-year project entitled *African-American Newspapers and Periodicals; a National Bibliography and Union List*. The bibliography will be based on the large collections at the Society, University of Wisconsin System libraries, and specialized collections throughout the nation. The project is expected to result in a two-volume work detailing 4,000-6,000 extant publications.

Contributions regarding titles published in your area or held at your institution are welcome. Contact Danky or Hady at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706-1488; 608-264-6532; fax: 608-264-6404; email mex@ccmail.adp.wisc.edu.

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*Virginia Landmarks of Black History*, published by the Department of Historic Resources, edited by Calder Loth, describes the 64 sites associated with African-American history in Virginia that are listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register. Available from the University Press of Virginia, 804-924-3468.

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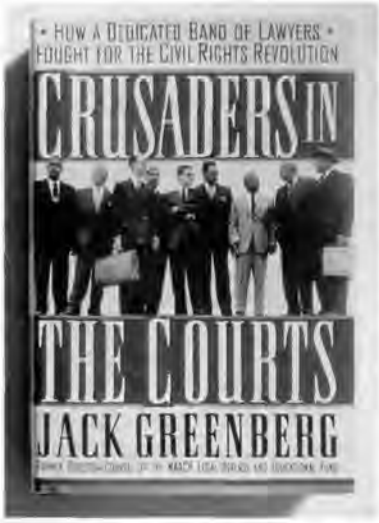


*Crusaders In The Courts - How A Dedicated Band Of Lawyers Fought For The Civil Rights Revolution* by Jack Greenberg, Esq. (Basic Books 1994)

This book is considered to be both a powerful personal memoir and a definitive history of an organization that helped change American society, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF).

Together with Thurgood Marshall and a cadre of brilliant young attorneys, Greenberg became a key figure at the LDF. He joined the staff in 1949 and remained with the organization for 35 years, succeeding Marshall as Director-Counsel in 1961 with Marshall's appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. During Greenberg's tenure, most cases associated with civil rights history—school integration, equal employment, fair housing, voter registration—were argued with his participation or litigated under his direction.

More than a history of the litigation that made the LDF so important, the book offers unique insights into the organizations strategies, courtroom techniques, values, and personal relationships. It is filled with stories of experiences, including the school cases in *Brown v. Board of Education;* representing Martin Luther King, Jr. in Birmingham to win him the right to march from Selma to Montgomery; the integration of the University of Mississippi, and the University of Alabama when George Wallace stood in the school house door. *Crusaders in the Courts* is an epic saga of a critical period in American history. Jack Greenberg joined the faculty of Columbia Law School in 1984. He served as Dean of the College from 1989 to 1993. He remains a member of the LDF Board of Directors.

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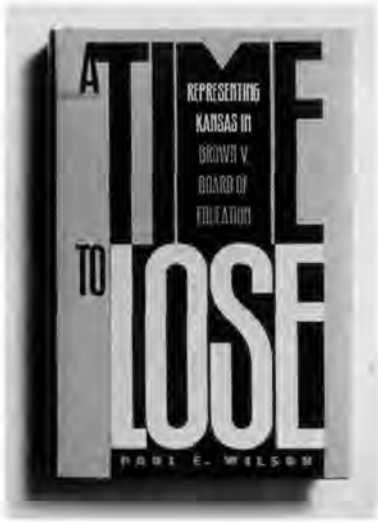
*A Time To Lose: Representing Kansas In Brown v. Board of Education* by Paul Wilson, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Law at the University of Kansas. (University Press of Kansas 1995)

Through his narrative, Wilson recalls events known only to Brown insiders. He recreates the world of 1950s Kansas, places the case in the context of those times and politics, and provides important information about the state's ambivalent defense. Reflections from his perspective reveal that the Kansas case and his own role were different from the other cases joined with Brown in significant ways. After all, this U.S. Supreme Court decision was not based on one case, but five cases combined under the heading of Brown. These cases were *Briggs v. Elliott* from South Carolina, *Bolling v. Sharpe* from the District of Columbia, *Belton v. Gebhart (Bulah v. Gebhart)*



*African American Historic Places* describes more than 800 properties in 42 states and two U.S. territories listed in the National Register of Historic Places for their significance in African-American history. Also included in the book are eight articles on the African-American experience and study and five geographic and thematic indexes which make the book a valuable reference for anyone interested in African-American history. Edited by Beth L. Savage, an architectural historian with the National Register of Historic Places, the 623-page book may be ordered by calling 1-800-225-5945. The book was a collaborative effort among the National Park Service, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and others.

from Delaware, *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka* from Kansas, and *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County, Virginia*. Although the basic contention in these cases was the same—the injustice resulting from racial segregation in public schools—the Kansas case permitted a challenge of segregation *per se*, did it in fact violate the 14th Amendment.

Wilson uses this book to step back and to suggest some fundamental lessons about his experience, the evolution of race relations, and the lawyer's role in the judicial resolution of social conflict. He concludes that, "Any scheme that classifies people on the basis of race or color and withholds from one class benefits that are enjoyed by others is indefensible. As a lawyer, I spoke in defense of a law that permitted such a result."

*Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.*

## Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

Events in Birmingham, Alabama during the 1960s stirred the conscience of the nation and influenced the course of civil and human rights around the world. The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama captures the spirit and drama of the countless individuals who dared to confront racial discrimination and bigotry. Dedicated on November 15, 1992, the Institute is a community's commitment to the courageous souls who walked to freedom. It is also a testament to building bridges of understanding among all people.

The exhibits take the visitor through the history of African-American life and the struggle for civil rights and human rights worldwide. Visitors experience for themselves the drama of this courageous story as it is reenacted in the permanent displays.

The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute is a "living institution" which views the lessons of the past as a positive way to chart new directions for the future. Its programs and services are designed to promote research, provide information, and encourage discussion on human rights issues locally, nationally, and internationally.

520 Sixteenth Street North
Birmingham, AL 35203;
205-328-9696

## Teaching with African-American Historic Places

There are now 54 Teaching with Historic Places lesson plans available. Many of these are based on places important in African-American history or include materials that deal with issues fundamental to understanding that history:

*The Vieux Carre* explains the origins of the distinctive New Orleans' culture created by the Creoles, including Creoles of Color;

*When Rice was King* describes life and work at an antebellum rice plantation in South Carolina;

*The Old Courthouse in St. Louis* includes a reenactment of the Dred Scott trial;

*Chicago's Black Metropolis* uses the once-vibrant city-within-a-city created by the Great Migration as a case study for discerning history in places around us;

*Glen Echo Park* chronicles the evolution of this once-rural Maryland get-away, and looks at the segregation practiced during Glen Echo's days as an amusement park;

*The Liberty Bell* provides information on the many groups and movements that have adopted the bell as a symbol of their causes, including 19th-century abolitionists and 20th-century civil rights advocates.

Several additional lesson plans in draft incorporate African-American themes and places as well. And the nearly-completed *American Work: American Workplaces* education kit contains a lesson plan on entrepreneurship that features Madame C. J. Walker, the first black American woman to become a millionaire.

Teaching with Historic Places lesson plans now are sold by Jackdaw Publications. For information on ordering, contact Jackdaw at P.O. Box 503, Amawalk, NY 10501, or call 1-800-789-0022.

For more information, write to Teaching with Historic Places, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20013-7127, or call 202-343-9536.

*—Beth Boland*
*Historian, National Register*

# FURTHER READING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# BULLETIN BOARD

**Fort Laramie**

Fort Laramie National Historic Site Superintendent Bill Gwaltney has been successful in creating a linkage between interpreters of cultural sites that relate to the experiences of African Americans, the National Association for Interpretation, and the African-American Museums Association. Using a grant from the Albright-Wirth Fund, Gwaltney met with the African-American Museums Association and the National Association for Interpretation. The result has been the creation of the Section for the Interpretation of African-American Issues. The Section already has 51 members, many of whom are from the National Park Service and other agencies, organizations, and state parks. The Section will soon publish its first newsletter and is looking into sponsoring a scholarship for attendance at NAI. Comprised of people from many different backgrounds, the Section for the Interpretation of African-American issues is gaining momentum.

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The exhibit, *Buffalo Soldiers West,* was developed, designed, and written by Bill Gwaltney as part of a strategy by Colorado Historical Society vice president Andy Masich to find ways to tell more inclusive stories that reflect the African-American experience, engage all potential museum visitors, and give the museum time to locate and obtain objects that can be used in the future to diversify its mission and exhibitry. As guest curator, Gwaltney follows well-known black western folklorist Paul Steward who curated an exhibit on Jazz in Denver in the early-20th century. Gwaltney is presently serving as consultant for Walter B. Sanderson of Frederick, MD who is penning the exhibit plan for the next exhibit which will focus on the presence and role of the black cowboy in the west.

Gwaltney credits NPS historian Jerome Greene with making the exhibit possible by not only lending artifacts from his collection in amazing condition, but offering multiples of many objects. *Buffalo Soldiers West* will be on exhibit until September 1996 at the Colorado History Center, 1300 Broadway, Denver; 303-866-3670.

**Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site**

The Brown Foundation and Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site will hold a symposium, *American History Unmasked: Remembering Plessy v. Ferguson 1896–1936,* May 16–18, 1996, at the Holidome Convention Center, Topeka, KS. For information, call 913-235-3939 or 913-354-4273.

**Gettysburg National Military Park**

The 5th Annual Gettysburg Seminar sponsored by Gettysburg National Military Park and Eastern National Park & Monument Association was held on March 23, 1996 in Gettysburg, PA. The theme for this years seminar was **The Unsung Heros of Gettysburg** which focused on the soldiers, civilians, and families; people whose remarkable experiences and achievements have faded into the mists of history.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Edward C. Smith, the Director of American Studies and Special Assistant to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at American University. The topic of his presentation was "**Blacks in Blue and Grey: The Afro-American Contribution to the Civil War**". Dr. Smith is also a Civil War and Afro-American Cultural Heritage Lecturer and Study Tour Leader for the Historical Society of Washington and the Smithsonian Institute.

## "African-American History Month" Activities

February was African-American History Month, a time designated for officially celebrating the role African Americans played in the history of this nation. Although this month-long observance is over, the editors of this special issue of *CRM* are including the following reports of activities that took place in some of the parks around the country, with the hope that they will stimulate ideas for next year's African-American History Month.

**Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, St. Louis, MO.**

A busy program of music concerts and film screenings at the Old Courthouse rounded out the events. Company A 10th Memorial Cavalry, a recreated troop of Buffalo Soldiers from the Fort Concho Museum in San Angelo, Texas, was featured. Although a special emphasis is placed on African-American contributions to westward expansion and the City of St. Louis during February, most programs on African-American themes are given year-round.

*—John Tucker*
*803-883-3123*

**Fort Moultrie**

In celebration of Black History Month, an exhibit highlighting the roles of African Americans during the Civil War was on display at the Fort Moultrie Visitor Center on Sullivan's Island during February. The exhibit entitled, *Invisible Confederates–The Role of Black Southerners in the Confederacy*, explores the little-recognized contributions of both slave and free Black Southerners to the Confederate war effort.

Information on the role of African Americans in the Union army was also exhibited. A five-minute, continually running slide show tells the story of the 54th Massachusetts regiment, one of the first African-American units raised during the Civil War. A diorama depicts their attack on Battery Wagner on Morris Island in July 1863. Educational materials relating to African-American history are available for purchase at both Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter.

The Fort Moultrie Visitor Center is located at 1214 Middle Street on Sullivan's Island and open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission to the visitor center and Fort Moultrie is free. For additional information call 803-883-3123.

**Boston National Historical Park, Boston, MA**

USS *Mason*, a Destroyer Escort and the only US Navy warship to have an African-American crew during WWII, was built and commissioned in the Charlestown Navy Yard, now part of Boston National Historical Park. The park hosted a reunion of *Mason's* crew in May 1995. An exhibit on the *Mason* and her crew was up for six months in the visitor center and at the USS Constitution Museum, and a scaled-down version of that exhibit was on display in the lobby of the Forbes Building in New York City in February. The spring 1996 issue of American Legacy, a Forbes magazine, will have as its lead article, "Mason Comes Home," dealing with the USS *Mason*.

*—John Benjamin*
*617-242-5643*

**Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Salt Flat, TX**

During February there was an art exhibit depicting Buffalo soldiers. Prints showed the works of artists such as Frederick Remington, Clyde Heron, Bob Snead, and Burl Washington. In March there is a planned program on the Buffalo Soldiers to be given by Clarence Wadkins from Fort Larned NHS and Lynn Chelewski from Guadalupe Mountains NP.

*—Lynn Chelewski*

**Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, Elverson, PA**

African-American History Month program featured a talk on the historic role of African-American workers at Hopewell Furnace and in the local Birdsboro/Berks County, PA area. The speaker was Dr. Joseph Amprey, Dean of Academic Services at Kutztown University.

**The National Mall, Washington, DC.**

Interpretive programs during February included a program about Ida B. Wells and Billie Holiday, presented at Frederick Douglass Home; "African-American Women: Past, Present, and Future"; and a program about Marion Anderson at a suburban elementary school.

*—Gerry Gaumer*

**Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Porter, IN**

African-American History Month programs included "Celebrating African Rooted Traditions", a highly interactive program depicting the songs, stories, and games of the African people; "Story of a People," a 45-minute program honoring several African Americans who have overcome slavery, poverty, and prejudice to make significant contributions to American history; and "Celebrate Black History Month," a slide show of national historic sites that recognize the contributions made by African Americans.

*—Deanna Ochs*
*Mark Bluell*

## *African-American History in the National Parks*

**Jenny Masur**
**Hampton National Historic Site**

Parks identified as having cultural and natural resources of traditional significance to African Americans fall into several categories: those associated with important historical figures; those associated with the institution of slavery or the movement to abolish slavery; those forts and battlefields associated with African-American soldiers; and those associated with traditional African-American communities.

### *Parks Associated with African-American Communities*

**Amistad NRA, TX**—Descendants of Black Seminole Indians live in the area, and a former post where scouts were assigned lies under the reservoir.

**Boston African-American NHS, MA**—This unit marks the site of one of largest antebellum communities of free African Americans in North America which existed through 1890s (there are still nearby neighborhoods which are largely African American).

**Cane River Creole NHP & National Heritage Area, LA (newly established)**—Cultural resources in this area of northwest Louisiana are of possible significance to the Caddo of Oklahoma, the Clifton Choctaw/Appalachee, the Tunica Biloxi, and descendants of the communities of Creoles of color (for example, at Isle Brevelle).

**Castillo de San Marcos NM FL**—This park has an exhibit on free blacks living under Spanish rule. Slaves fleeing from Georgia and the Carolinas could find refuge with the Spaniards who built and manned this fort; Fort Mose, now an archeological site, was set up near St. Augustine for escaped slaves by the Spanish in 1738 and included a community of about 100 free African Americans.

**Colonial NHP, VA**—Yorktown was an important port of entry for enslaved Africans arriving in Virginia before 1750. A group of indentured Africans arrived at Hampton or Jamestown in 1619, an act symbolic for contemporary African Americans.

**Cumberland Island NS, GA** —The north end of the island was settled by freed slaves; Half Moon Bluff includes cemeteries where former slaves were buried and buildings from 1930s–1950s. Elsewhere on the island are remains of plantations (Stafford has remains of slave cabins), so the island shows the continuity of the African-American community from slavery through the 20th century.

**Everglades NP, & Big Cypress NP, FL**—Seminoles harbored and integrated fugitive slaves into their society for over 100 years; such help led to the Seminole Wars.

**Fire Island NS, NY**—The Floyd family, owners of the William Floyd Estate at the seashore, had a 250-year relationship with Poospatuk Indians who intermarried with local blacks; the Floyds also owned slaves before the Civil War and some were buried in a segregated cemetery at the park.

**Fort Scott NHS, KS** —The First Kansas Colored, the first black regiment to see combat in the Civil War, was mustered here; fleeing Indians brought black slaves to the fort, and the town still has a black community.

**Hopewell Furnace NHS, PA**—Built by African-American slaves in 1770, freedmen continued to work and live in the area, supporting the Underground Railroad.

**Hot Springs NP, AR**—As park exhibits show, many of the workers at the bathhouses were African American, and segregation meant two sets of resort and bathing facilities.

**Independence NHP, PA**—The Constitution did not resolve the slavery issue, but incorporated provisions legitimizing continuing enslavement of African Americans. In the park area lived several well-known African Americans of the Colonial era.

**Jean Lafitte NHP&Pres, LA** — New Orleans has multiple significance for African Americans: the development of jazz; Creoles of color; participation of free men of color in the battle at Chalmette and burial of African Americans in the national cemetery; an African-American community was located on the site of the battlefield through the 1960s.

**Jimmy Carter NHS, GA**—Enabling legislation refers to all the people of Plains, of whom 60% are African Americans.

**Maggie L. Walker NHS, VA**—The neighborhood around the Maggie Walker site is a Historic District, Jackson Ward, long associated with African Americans.

**Manassas NBP, VA**—The ongoing African-American community in Manassas and in Prince William County dates from the antebellum period. NPS archeologists have conducted excavations producing evidence of the slaves who lived (1820–1861) on the John Cundiff wheat-producing plantation and at the Lewis Farm (also called Folly Castle and Brownsville), and evidence of the homes of freedmen (e.g., "Gentleman Jim" Robinson).

**Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS, GA**—This site is located in a designated Historic District, an important African-American neighborhood in Atlanta called "Sweet Auburn".

**Natchez NHP, MS**—The enabling legislation specifies attention to the experience of all peoples of Natchez, a notable slave-holding region in the antebellum period. The park includes the William Johnson House, the home of a freedman whose diary chronicles pre-Civil War African-American life.

**National Capital Field Area**—Sites include the Lincoln Memorial ("I have a dream" speech, Marian

Anderson's concert); Lincoln and Mary McLeod Bethune statues; etc.

**New Orleans Jazz NHP, LA (newly established)**—This park was created to foster preservation, education, and interpretation of jazz as it evolved in New Orleans.

**New River Gorge NR, WV**—As was common in West Virginia at the turn of the century, Kay Moor miners included African Americans, usually recruited from out-of-state.

**Nicodemus, KS (proposed)**—This town in Kansas, settled by African-American homesteaders, still has about 40 permanent residents and hosts an annual homecoming for former residents, descendants of settlers, and others interested in the town's history and resources.

**Prince William Forest Park, VA**—The area incorporated into this park included African-American communities dating between 1650–1942, and park neighbors include contemporary African-American communities. Camps for city children set up after establishment of the park were segregated, despite national NPS policy.

**San Francisco Maritime NHP**—Many black seamen were associated with sea trade, especially whalers.

**Virgin Islands NP, VI** —The park covers part of St. John's Island, which had been used for 250 years for sugar plantations and slash-and-burn subsistence agriculture for African-American workers. Local African Americans continue to use beaches and fish.

### *Slavery or Abolition Movement*

**Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Mem, VA**—Arlington House was a plantation owned by the Custis family, although Robert E. Lee did not believe in slavery, and himself did not own any slaves. After the war, part of the plantation served as a Freedman's Village.

**Big Thicket NP, TX**—Reputedly a hiding place for fugitive slaves.

**Booker T. Washington NM, VA**—Booker T. Washington was born a slave on a small plantation (only 10 slaves) in the Blue Ridge Mountains where his mother was the cook and where he lived in the slave quarters until 1865.

**Boston African-American NHS, MA**—The antebellum community of free African Americans included activists working for abolition of slavery and civil rights.

**Charles Pinckney NHS, SC**—The park will interpret the economic and political implications of the institution of slavery because Snee Farm was formerly a plantation and contains remains of slave cabins.

**Congaree Swamp NM, SC**—The swamp is said to be the hiding place of slaves, likely as it was located near several plantations, and contains slave-built dikes and cattle mounts.

**Frederick Douglass NHS, DC**—Although Cedar Hill in Anacostia was the home of Douglass only between 1877–1895, Douglass was a famous abolitionist before he lived there—lecturer about his experiences as a slave in Maryland, author of two pre-Civil War autobiographies, and editor of the North Star in Rochester.

**George Washington Birthplace NM, VA**—There is an exhibit on the life of slaves living here who were owned by Washington's family.

**Hampton NHS, MD**—The mansion was part of a 2000-acre estate which maintained over 200 slaves and was built by Charles Ridgely in 1790.

**Harpers Ferry NHP, WV** —Here took place the famous raid by abolitionist John Brown. There are exhibits on the history of African-American residents of the town and on Storer College. Storer College was an African-American co-educational college, one of the first after the Civil War, and was the site of a meeting of the Niagara Movement led by W. E. B. Du Bois, essential to the formation of the NAACP.

**Hopewell Furnace NHS, PA** (see above)

**Independence NHP, PA**—The Constitution did not resolve the slavery issue, but incorporated provisions legitimizing continuing enslavement of African Americans. The Christiana Trials were held here. The Liberty Bell became so named because of its association with the abolitionists.

**Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, MO**—Slave auctions were held here. At the Old Courthouse were conducted the first two trials (1847, 1850) leading to the Dred Scott Supreme Court case, related to a slave's emancipation on the basis of residence in free territory. Dred Scott's direct descendants still live in St. Louis and other parts of the Midwest.

**Lowell NHP, MA**—There's a clear link between northern mills like those in Lowell and southern cotton grown by slaves. Also, Lowell was the site of abolitionist meetings.

**Salem Maritime NHS, MA**—Salem was home of one of the few integrated abolitionist women's organizations and depended until the mid-19th century on shipping, including with the West Indies (site of slave plantations and source of sugar for New England rum). There were many African-American merchant seamen during the period interpreted at this site.

**Thomas Stone NHS, MD**—Habre de Venture, located in southern Maryland, grew tobacco and had enslaved laborers in the 18th and 19th centuries; the "tenant house" (1850-59) may have served as a slave quarters, and the park may include a slave burial ground.

**Timucuan Ecological & Historic Reserve, FL**—One of this park's three units is Kingsley Plantation, a sea island plantation named for Zephaniah Kinglsey who ran it from 1813–1839. One of the unit's challenges is interpreting slavery.

**Trail of Tears NHT, NM**—Some Cherokees who were forcibly removed from their homes in North Carolina took along enslaved African Americans, and so fared better because of the help received.

**Women's Rights NHP, NY**—The activists for women's rights at the Seneca Falls meeting were also active in the abolition movement.

### *Notable African Americans*

**Booker T. Washington NM** (see above)

**Frederick Douglass NHS** (see above)

**Maggie L. Walker NHS** (see above)

**Martin Luther King, Jr NHS** (see above)

**Dayton Aviation Heritage NHP, OH**—The life and works of Paul Laurance Dunbar, a close friend of the Wright Brothers, will be a park theme.

**George Washington Carver NM, MO**—This was the first park dedicated to commemoration of a major African American, the famous scientist and educator. George Washington Carver was born a slave on this plantation, and was brought up by the owners.

**Mammoth Cave NP, KY**—Stephen Bishop, a slave belonging to the owner of the cave who opened it for tours, was one of the original guides and explorers of the cave.

**Mary McLeod Bethune Council House NHS, DC**—This was the Washington residence of the famous educator, civil rights activist, federal official, and founder of the National Council of Negro Women and Bethune-Cookman College.

**Santa Fe NHT, NM**—The trail was used by African-American mountain men such as Jim Beckwourth.

**Tuskegee Institute NHS, AL**—This institution is associated with George Washington Carver, famous for his agricultural research and teaching, as well as its founder and first president, Booker T. Washington (includes Booker T.'s home, "The Oaks" and Carver Museum).

### *African-American Military*

**Andersonville NHS, GA**—The prison population included many African Americans. The Confederacy threat to sell black POWs into slavery and to execute their white officers ended prisoner exchanges and the use of prison camps.

**Antietam NB, MD**—The battle included black troops and was related to issuing the Emancipation Proclamation.

**Big Bend NP, TX**—Neville Spring Cavalry Outpost was an outpost of Fort Davis, staffed with Seminole Negro Indian scouts and occupied during 1885–1891.

**Chiricahua NM, AZ**—A Buffalo Soldier Camp has been excavated and documented within the park at Bonita Cañon.

**Colonial NHP, VA**—Blacks from Rhode Island participated at Yorktown, although Virginia denied free or enslaved African Americans the right to enlist in local military forces.

**Fort Bowie NHS, AZ**—Black military units encamped and built a stone memorial to President Garfield.

**Fort Davis NHS, TX**—During 1867–1885, Buffalo Soldiers (9th and 10th U.S. Cavalry and 24th and 25th U.S. Infantry) were garrisoned here while involved in struggles with Apaches and Comanches.

**Fort Frederica NM, GA**—Although commemorating a fort built in 1736 by Oglethorpe, this park is located on St. Simons Island, the home of a historic Gullah population. Fugitive slaves from South Carolina played a part in precipitating the War of Jenkins' Ear and there was a 1741 offensive by the Spanish (including Fort Mose Blacks) against the fort.

**Fort Laramie NHS, WY**—Fort Laramie was a major site on the route through which passed African Americans such as the California gold miner Alvin Coffey, Washington State farmers George Bush and George Washington (founder of Centralia), and the Mormon guide named Green Flake. Mormon pioneers used the fort too, when travelling along the Mormon Trail.

**Fort Larned NHS, KS**—This fort was used during the period of the Indian Wars (1867-69) by Company A, 10th Cavalry, Buffalo Soldiers.

**Fort McHenry NM and HS, MD**—A battalion of 200 black "colonial marines" recruited from fugitive slaves during the British invasion of the Chesapeake Bay fought here because of an offer of freedom.

**Fort Scott NHS, KS** —The right to bear arms against the Confederate army was considered a part of emancipation. The First Kansas Colored, the first black regiment to see combat in the Civil War, was mustered here.

**Fort Smith NHS, AR**—There were blacks among the Cherokees and Creeks who resettled the area, which, during the Civil War, was headquarters for units of U.S. Colored Troops and the Union Indian Brigade (which included black Indians).

**Fort Sumter NM, SC**—It was near here that the famous African-American regiment, the 54th Massachusetts under Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, made its heroic attack. Sullivan's Island (Fort Moultrie) was the port of entry for as many as 40% of the African slaves brought to America.

**Horseshoe Bend NMP, AL**—African Americans participated on the side of the Creeks in the war (if not at this battle), and fugitive slaves were a precipitating issue for the Creek War.

**Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, OH**—Perhaps one quarter of the sailors were African American (both free and enslaved) and acquitted themselves heroically.

**Petersburg NB, VA**—Here was fought the Battle of the Crater, where black soldiers suffered terrible losses. The city had a large antebellum free black population. At City Point unit, the 1864–65 Union occupiers and civilian workforce were largely African American.

**Port Chicago Naval Magazine NMem, CA**—This affiliated area was a naval ammunition base, site of the largest explosion within the U.S. during World War II. The explosion caused 320 men to die (of whom 202 were African American) and destroyed 2 cargo ships. As a result, there was a mutiny of ammunition loaders who were afraid unsafe conditions would lead to another disaster.

**Presidio (Addition to Golden Gate)**—Black units stationed here during early-20th century who journeyed to Sequoia-Kings Canyon NP in summer and has museum exhibits in U.S. forces through the years.

**Richmond NBP, VA**—General Benjamin Butler, believing the war was about black freedom, did not hesitate to use regiments of U.S. Colored Troops in the Battle of Claflin's Farm to show their effectiveness.

**Sequoia NP, CA**—Captain Charles Young, Ninth Cavalry, was the first African-American park superintendent (of Sequoia and General Grant parks) and was responsible for road construction to develop the park for tourism and for recommendation of acquisition of patented lands in the park. At the time of his appointment as superintendent in 1903, he was the only active commissioned African-American graduate of West Point.

**Tuskegee Institute NHS, AL**—Associated are the Tuskegee Airmen (including Coleman Young, Percy Sutton, and Daniel "Chappie" James), African-American pilots during WWII who had to struggle for de-segregation of bases and the right to enter combat.

**Valley Forge NHP, PA**—In 1993, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority erected a statue commemorating the role of the African-American soldier at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777–78.

**Vicksburg NMP, MS**—17,869 out of 186,000 servicemen in army and naval units of both sides during the Civil War were African Americans from Mississippi; for example, at Milliken's Bend and Port Hudson in 1863 blacks engaged in the battles.

**Vietnam Veterans Memorial, DC**—The Wall commemorates all the dead of the Vietnam War, including African Americans.

**Yosemite NP, CA**—The park was guarded by Buffalo Soldiers for a year.

### *The Civil Rights Movement*

**Brown vs. Board of Education NHS, KS**—This new unit commemorates the Supreme Court decision to de-segregate U.S. schools.

**Castillo de San Marcos NM, FL**—Civil rights activists held rallies on park grounds in 1964.

**Harry S Truman NHS, MO**—This president integrated U.S. military forces and the U.S. civil service.

**Selma to Montgomery Trail, Alabama** (Proposed)—This proposed historic trail would commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s march in 1965, and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

### *Key*

| | |
|---|---|
| NB | National Battlefield |
| NBP | National Battlefield Park |
| NHP | National Historical Park |
| NHPres | National Historic Preserve |
| NHS | National Historic Site |
| NHT | National Historic Trail |
| NMem | National Memorial |
| NMP | National Military Park |
| NM | National Monument |
| NP | National Park |
| NPres | National Preserve |
| NRA | National Recreation Area |
| NR | National River |
| NS | National Seashore |

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