

# Alternative Junior Ranger Activity for President's House

Tell our Nation's History the right way!



Kids, get your parents involved. Do this as a family.

**First,**

Download the file and print out the map and each of the panels on a separate sheet.

**Second,**

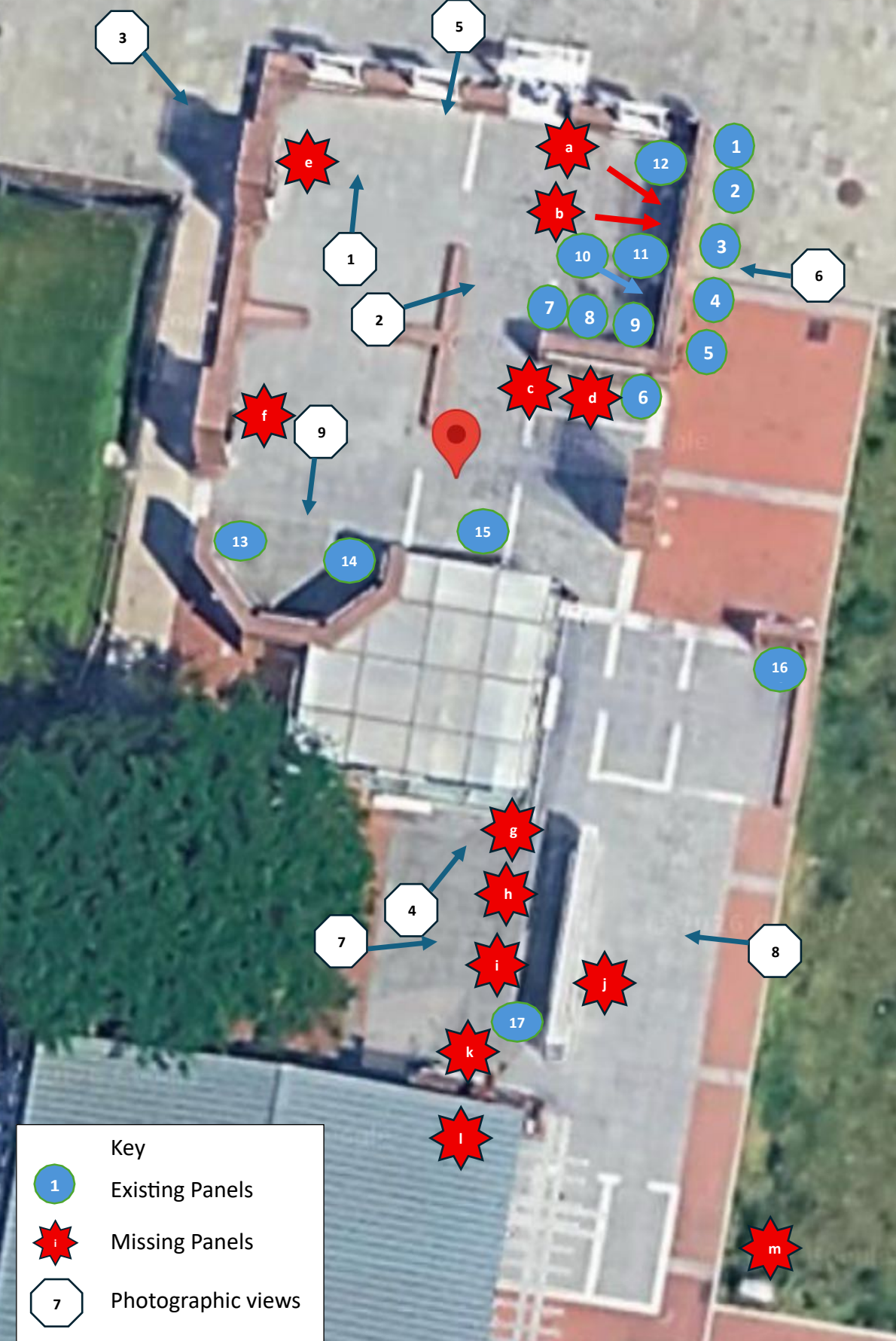
Grab some painter's tape (which is less likely to leave a residue than masking tape), as well as a Sharpie.

**Third,**




Visit the President's House at 598 Market Street, in Philadelphia.

Tape up the missing panels. If existing panels have been revised, put the original (correct) panels over them.

Hint: Try to do this early in the morning. the Park Rangers are probably going to remove everything you've done later in the day. But take heart. Visitors and citizens will have seen your good work and be inspired to do this as well!



**Key**

-  Existing Panels
-  Missing Panels
-  Photographic views

## President's House Panels

### Existing

- 1 Death Carts
- 2 Refuge in the Country
- 3 A Day of Reciprocity
- 4 The Opener of the Way
- 5 I Am Free Now
- 6 I Will Fear No Evil
- 7 The Keeper of the House
- 8 Suppressing the Opposition
- 9 An Act Respecting Fugitives from Justice
- 10 We Shall Come to a Civil War
- 11 Burn this Treaty to Hell
- 12 Promoting the Abolition of Slavery
- 13 Strengthening Ties with the United States
- 14 Awarding a Peace Medal
- 15 History Lost and Found
- 16 I and My Household
- 17 Freedom Might be Too Great a Temptation

### Missing

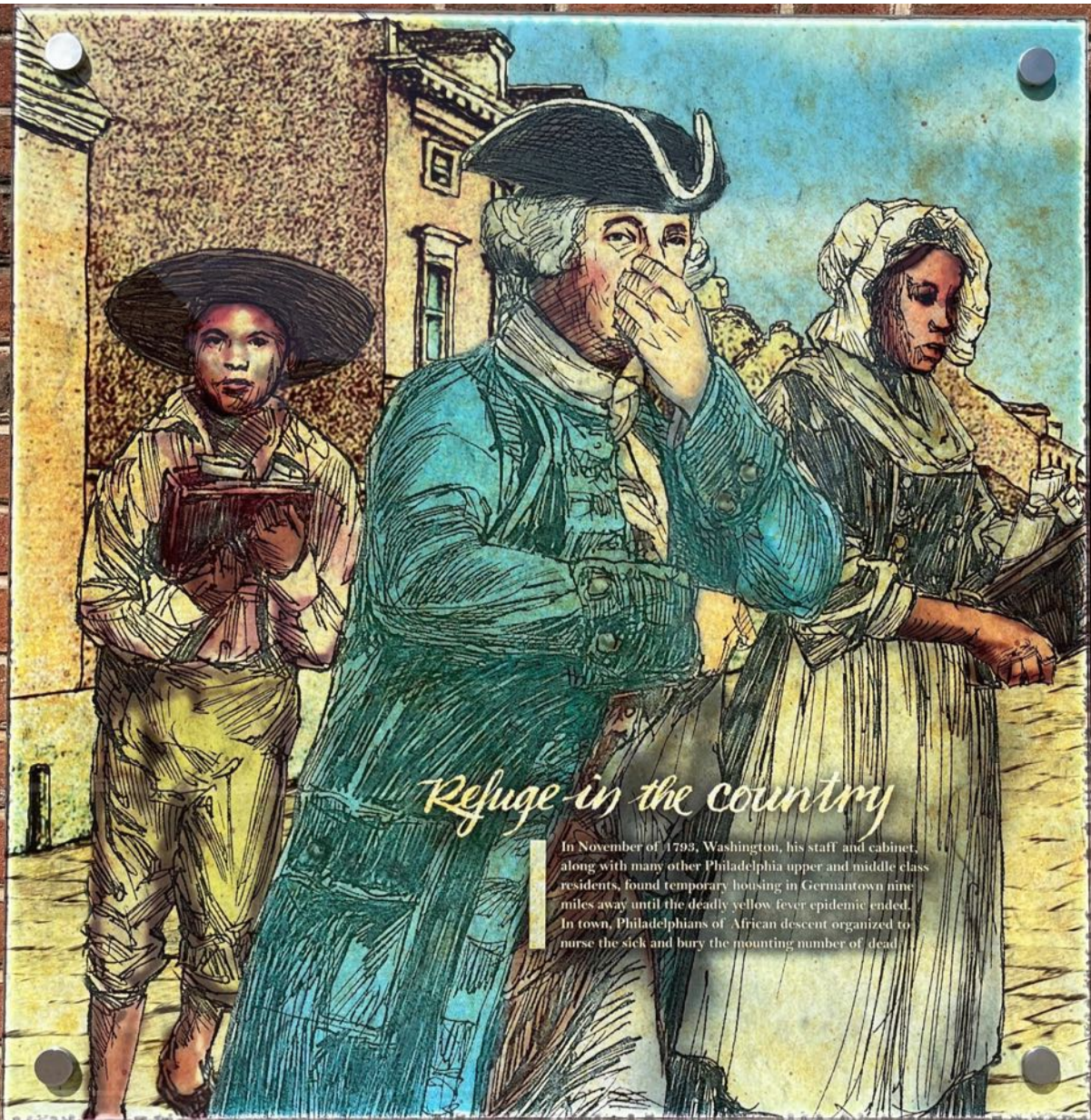
- A The Executive Branch-left
- B The Executive Branch-right
- C The House and the People Who Worked and Lived in It-left
- D The House and the People Who Worked and Lived in It-right
- E Oney Escapes
- F Contagion and Liberty
- G Is Hereby Empowered to Seize Such Fugitives
- H The Dirty Business of Slavery
- I Slavery in a Growing Nation
- J Mount Vernon to Philadelphia: A Path to Freedom
- K Chef Hercules
- L Life Under Slavery
- M The President's House Site



## Death Carts

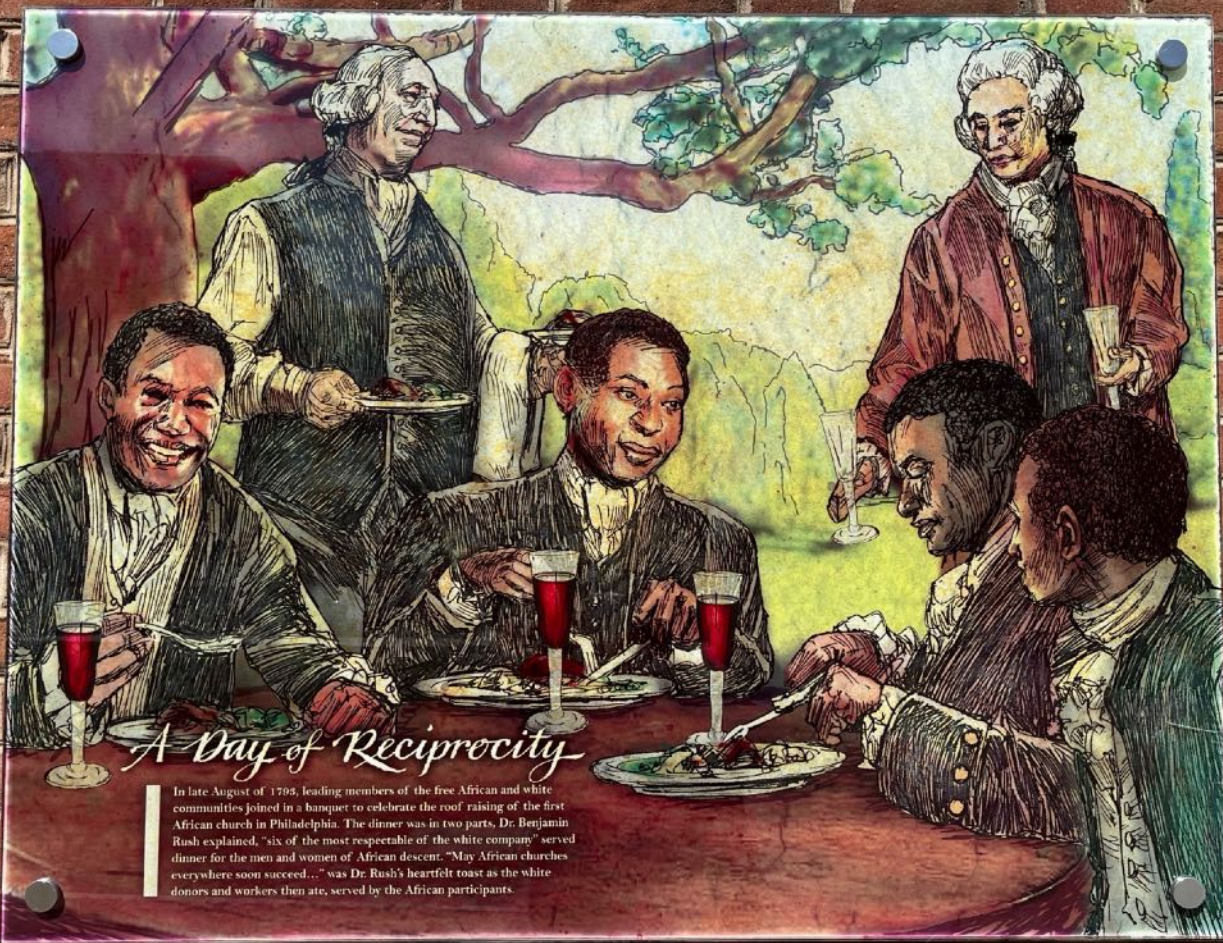
Clergymen Richard Allen and Absalom Jones organized their congregations and other free Africans who attended the sick and buried the dead during the raging yellow fever epidemic of 1793. Although misguided, the respected Dr. Benjamin Rush had encouraged their service under the belief that persons of African descent were immune to the deadly disease.

*"...the difficulty of getting a corpse taken away was such that few were willing to do it... We then offered our services in the public papers, by advertising that we would remove the dead and procure nurses." (Richard Allen and Absalom Jones)*



## *Refuge in the country*

In November of 1793, Washington, his staff and cabinet, along with many other Philadelphia upper and middle class residents, found temporary housing in Germantown nine miles away until the deadly yellow fever epidemic ended. In town, Philadelphians of African descent organized to nurse the sick and bury the mounting number of dead.



## *A Day of Reciprocity*

In late August of 1794, leading members of the free African and white communities joined in a banquet to celebrate the roof raising of the first African church in Philadelphia. The dinner was in two parts. Dr. Benjamin Rush explained, "six of the most respectable of the white company" served dinner for the men and women of African descent. "My African churches everywhere soon succeed..." was Dr. Rush's heartfelt toast as the white donors and workers then ate, served by the African participants.



## *The opener of the Way*

In 1793, Cap Français, the capital of St. Domingue (Haiti), nearly burned to the ground during a massive uprising of the enslaved. White and Creole plantation owners, with enslaved people in tow, fled to Philadelphia and other American port cities. As a result, the population of Philadelphia of African descent increased by about one-third.



*"I am free now"*

Oney Judge's strong desire for freedom drove the 22-year-old enslaved seamstress to flee the President's House on May 21, 1796. With the help of friends of African descent, she found passage to New Hampshire, where she married, raised a family, and lived to old age.

*Whilst they were packing up to go to Virginia, I was packing to go, I didn't know where, for I knew that if I went back to Virginia, I should never get my liberty. I had friends among the colored people of Philadelphia, had my things carried there beforehand, and left Washington's house while they were eating dinner."*

# "I will fear no Evil"

Many evenings, Oney Judge would sit on her pallet where she slept at the foot of Martha Washington's bed, sewing and listening to the First Lady read the Bible, sing hymns, and pray with her two granddaughters in the next room.

In the 1840s, after nearly fifty years of freedom in New Hampshire, Oney (then Ona) Judge told her story to the press. Oney fled the President's House because she overheard Martha Washington state her intention of giving the young woman to her granddaughter. Oney wanted to learn to read and know about religion. Oney recalled that she had "never received the least mental or moral instruction of any sort."





# The Keeper of the House

*"You have invariably through the most trying times maintained a constant friendship and attention to the cause of our country and its independence and freedom."*

(George Washington to Samuel Fraunces)

Jamaican-born Samuel "Black Sam" Fraunces, owner of the Fraunces Tavern in New York City, was so highly regarded for his hospitality and patriotism that President Washington hired him as his steward in Philadelphia. The relationship went back to the Revolution when Fraunces often hosted Washington and his officers at the tavern. Despite his nickname, some believe him to have been white.



## Suppressing the Opposition

On June 26, 1798, three weeks before Congress passed the Sedition Act, President Adams greeted dinner guests at the President's House. Two blocks away, Benjamin Franklin Bache, grandson of Benjamin Franklin and editor of the *Aurora*, was arrested for "libeling the President & Executive Government, in a manner tending to excite sedition..."





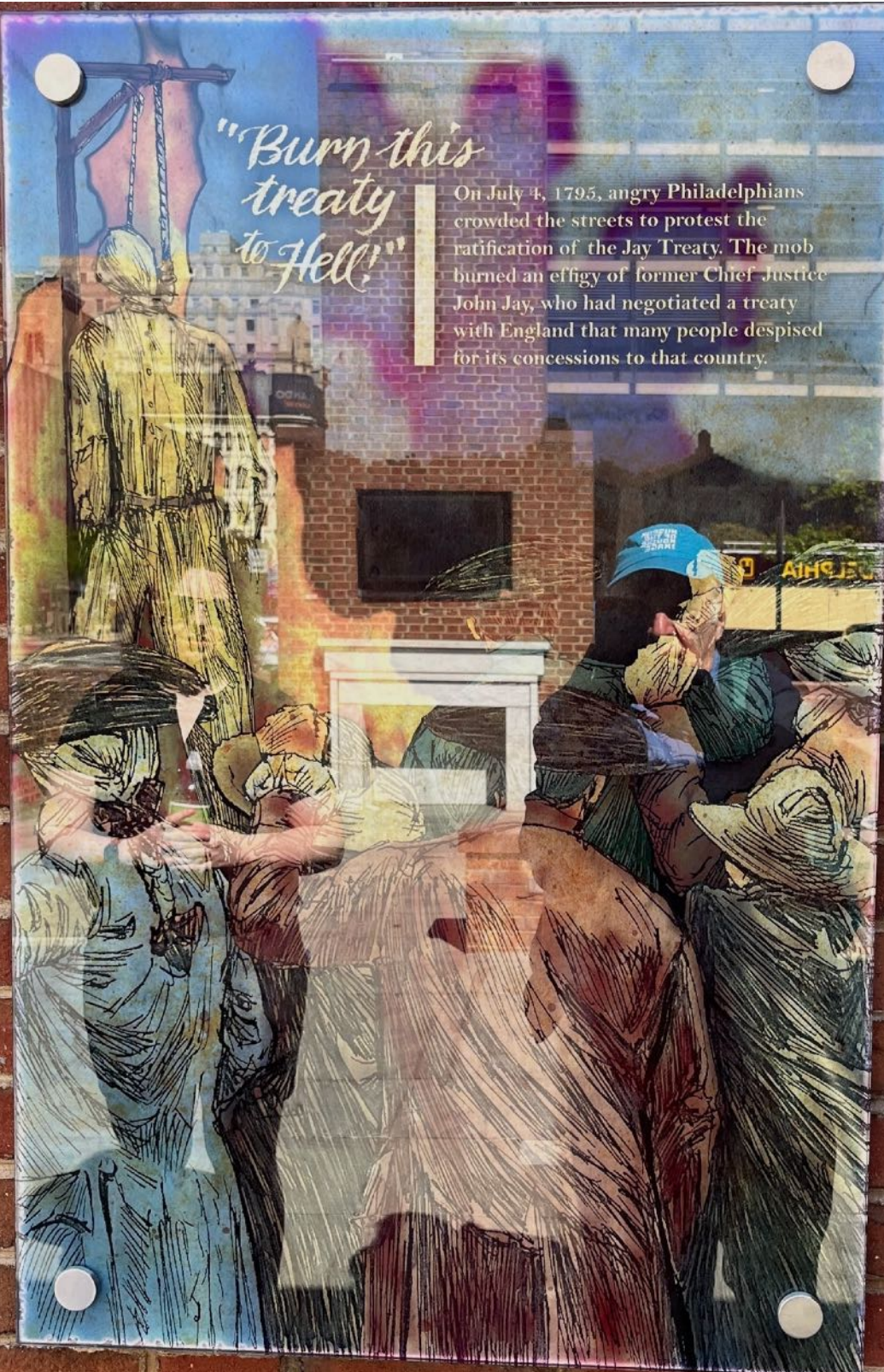


*"We shall come to a civil war"*

Abigail wrote to her sister in May of 1790 expressing her fears of the political debate heated up over President Adams' policies towards France. Her one thousand men marched in support of Adams on the streets outside her window, while rumors spread that men opposed to President Adams and perhaps foreign agents meant to cause public havoc. The mayor placed a guard in front of the President's House and "light horse" troops patrolled to intercept.

*"Burn this  
treaty  
to Hell!"*

On July 4, 1795, angry Philadelphians crowded the streets to protest the ratification of the Jay Treaty. The mob burned an effigy of former Chief Justice John Jay, who had negotiated a treaty with England that many people despised for its concessions to that country.





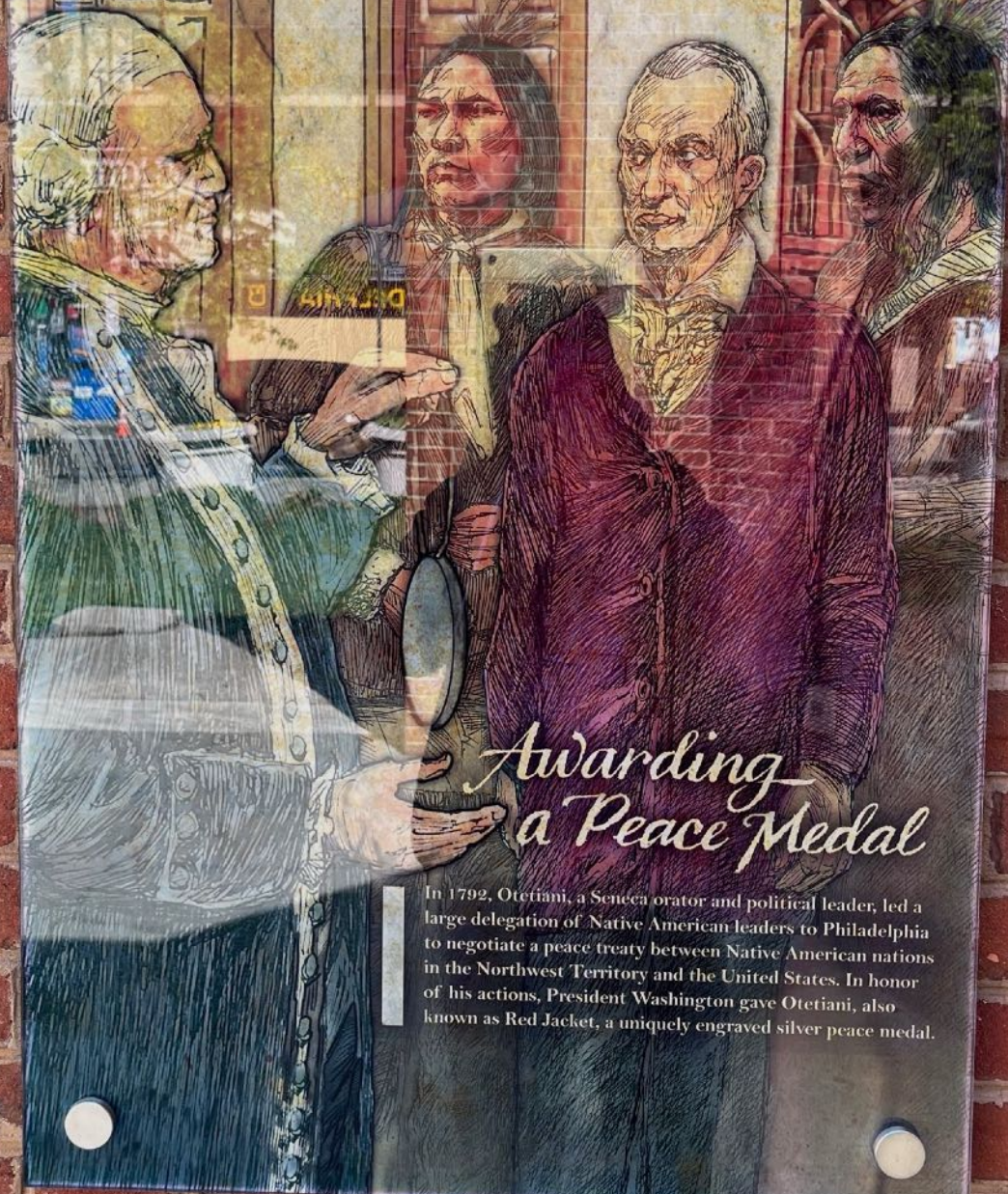
## *Promoting the Abolition of slavery*

On April 21, 1790, nearly 20,000 African and white Philadelphians lined the streets to view the funeral procession of Benjamin Franklin. Once a slave owner, Franklin was president of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society at the end of his life and sent a biting parody attacking slavery to the press as his last word on the subject.

## *Strengthening Ties with the United States*

In December of 1798, Toussaint L'Ouverture, leader of the revolutionary government in the French colony of San Domingue, sent Joseph Buel to Philadelphia to negotiate a trade agreement. Two months later, the Adams administration formally opened trade with a government led by African descendants. This marked the first and only time until after the Civil War that the United States traded with a government led by men of African descent.





## *Awarding a Peace Medal*

In 1792, Otetiani, a Seneca orator and political leader, led a large delegation of Native American leaders to Philadelphia to negotiate a peace treaty between Native American nations in the Northwest Territory and the United States. In honor of his actions, President Washington gave Otetiani, also known as Red Jacket, a uniquely engraved silver peace medal.

# History Lost & Found



President's House Site Archeological Excavation site key. Courtesy: Independence National Historical Park.

## ARCHEOLOGY

Archeologists not only dig in remote places to uncover ancient civilizations, but they also look for artifacts at urban sites such as this one. Look below for remnants of the President's House foundation using the diagram as a guide.



The historic ground plan for the President's House shows the area of the excavations and the relationship of the site to the present Liberty Bell Center.

Courtesy: Independence National Historical Park.



On July 11, 2007, a West African Yoruba and Pan-African libation ceremony concluded the closing of the archeological investigation.  
Courtesy: Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.



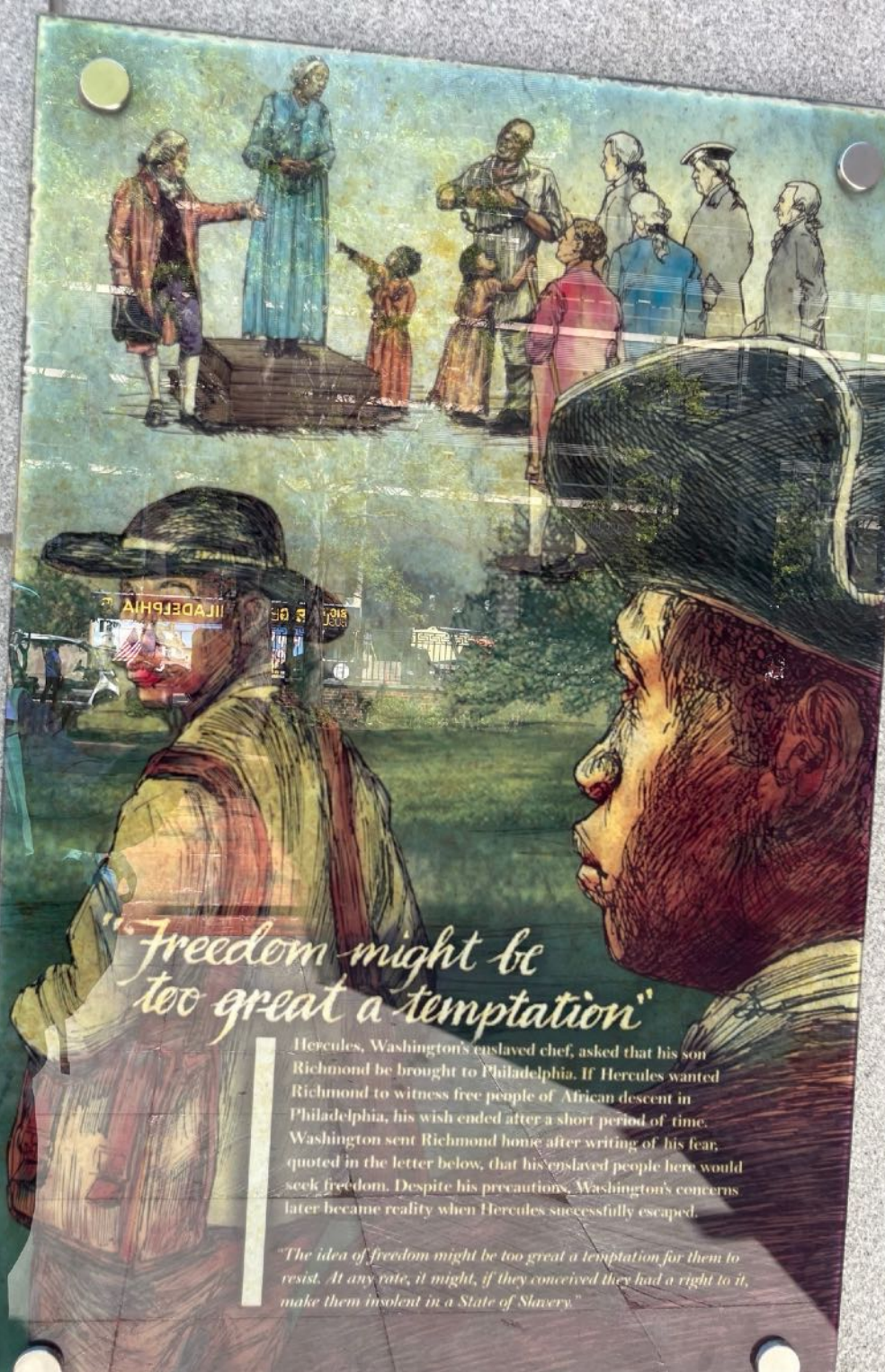
Archeologists at work in the cold cellar area of the kitchen.  
Courtesy: Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.



## "I and my household"

On November 22, 1790, President Washington arrived at the President's House to establish his home and office. With him were eight enslaved African descendants, ordered by Washington himself to be rotated back to Mount Vernon to evade Pennsylvania's gradual abolition law that would have allowed them to petition for their freedom after six months residence.

The enslaved were Hercules, his son Richmond, Oney Judge, Oney's brother Austin, Moll, Christopher, Giles, Paris, and later Joe.



*"Freedom might be too great a temptation"*

Hercules, Washington's enslaved chef, asked that his son Richmond be brought to Philadelphia. If Hercules wanted Richmond to witness free people of African descent in Philadelphia, his wish ended after a short period of time. Washington sent Richmond home after writing of his fear, quoted in the letter below, that his enslaved people here would seek freedom. Despite his precautions, Washington's concerns later became reality when Hercules successfully escaped.

*"The idea of freedom might be too great a temptation for them to resist. At any rate, it might, if they conceived they had a right to it, make them insolent in a State of Slavery."*

# The Executive Branch

## EXECUTIVE DECISIONS



1791 The British Act of 1791 (1791) was the first law passed by the new Congress. It was signed by George Washington, the first President of the United States.



1791 George Washington, the first President of the United States, is shown in a portrait by Gilbert Stuart.



1795 John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States, is shown in a portrait by Gilbert Stuart.

## A NEW NATION: A NEW FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The federal government moved from New York City to Philadelphia in 1790. Years of contentious debate over where to locate the nation's capital contributed to the divide between North and South. Southern delegates favored a site along the Potomac River between Maryland and Virginia, both slave states. Northern delegates favored New York or Philadelphia. Alexander Hamilton was eager to have Congress pass a bill that would allow the federal government to assume the states' huge financial debt from the Revolutionary War. A compromise was reached. In exchange for southern support of his debt relief bill, Hamilton and his supporters voted in favor of designating Philadelphia as the temporary capital for a period of ten years when the seat of government would move to Washington, D.C.

While in Philadelphia, Presidents Washington and Adams had to make decisions regarding states' rights, executive power, citizenship, diplomacy, Native American territories, and slavery. Many of their initiatives, treaties, actions, and decisions determined the course of the nation for generations and contributed to establishing a national identity.

Both favored the strong central government supported by the Federalists, whose members included John Marshall and Alexander Hamilton. Republicans, such as Thomas Jefferson, were those who wanted more powers reserved for the states. Their bitter disputes led to the creation of the two-party system of government that still prevails.

### INTERNATIONAL

Both Washington and Adams faced shifting alliances with France and England, as well as issues regarding international trade. When war between France and Great Britain threatened to expand to the United States in 1793, Washington sent Chief Justice John Jay to conclude a treaty with Great Britain to settle all outstanding issues between the two countries and establish peace.

The terms of the Jay Treaty incensed many who felt that it conceded too much to England. Thomas Jefferson called the treaty an act "against the legislature and people of the United States." On July 4, 1795, Jay was hanged in effigy, and on July 25, a crowd gathered, screaming, "Kick this damn treaty to Hell!" Congress ratified the treaty, but it embittered relations with France, itself in the midst of a lengthy and bloody revolution.

### NATURALIZATION ACT OF 1790

Race was fundamental in determining citizenship in the new nation. In 1790, Congress debated a bill about the requirements to become a naturalized American citizen. While disagreement arose about religious and political affiliation, moral character, and length of residency, all agreed on the most fundamental point: future citizens must be "free white persons of good moral character."



1790 The Naturalization Act of 1790 was the first law passed by the new Congress. It was signed by George Washington, the first President of the United States.

### NATIONAL

#### RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS AND STATES

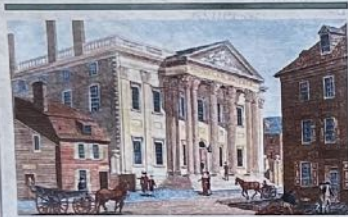
The Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution, was ratified in 1791 during Washington's presidency. The Bill of Rights protects basic civil liberties and rights of individuals. It also reserves all powers that are not explicitly granted to the federal government to the citizens or states. It addresses the separation of individual, state, and federal rights. These rights, however, did not apply to enslaved persons, who were considered only property.



#### RACE, ETHNICITY, & COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

In the 1700s, indigenous peoples occupied much of the land of this continent. Though chiefs of the Iroquois and other Indian nations received peace treaties from President Washington, beneath this façade of friendship simmered a struggle to define the relationship of land, sovereignty, and citizenship on the North American continent. While many European immigrants were becoming American citizens, citizenship did not apply to most Native Americans because they belonged to their own sovereign nations.





### FIRST BANK OF THE UNITED STATES

The First Bank of the United States was chartered at the urging of President Washington's Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton. Established on February 23, 1791, the Bank unified and standardized the many currencies in use. The Bank served as the national depository for government revenue and a vehicle for paying the foreign debt.

The original bank building still stands at 140 South Third Street, within Independence National Historical Park.



### WHISKEY REBELLION

In 1793 Congress imposed a tax on distilled whiskey to help reduce the national debt. Several thousand armed men gathered near Pittsburgh to protest. In 1794 President Washington agreed to Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton's request to lead a multi-state militia west to quell the resistance. The military action demonstrated the new government's power to enforce federal law. Resentment of this action helped elect Thomas Jefferson, a Democratic-Republican, in 1800.



### DRIVING THE INDIAN NATIONS OUT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY

Presidents Washington and Adams proclaimed respect for the sovereignty of the Indian nations, but they could not control white settlers on the frontier who frequently violated, with no consequences, the tribal boundary treaties. In the Ohio Territory, the chiefs of the Shawnee and Miami refused to leave their ancestral lands. The Battle of Fallen Timbers (1794) and the Treaty of Greenville (1795) resolved the conflict. Most of Ohio was no longer Native American territory.

### CLOSING THE DOORS AGAINST "DANGEROUS ALIENS"

Amid an undeclared war with revolutionary France in 1798 and fearing foreign interference in American politics, Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts. Congress, with President Adams' support, also passed a new Naturalization Act that required an immigrant to be in residence for 14 years, rather than five, before they could become a citizen.

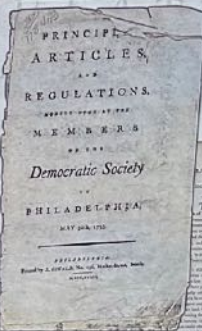
The Alien Act of 1798 authorized the President to deport aliens considered "dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States" during peacetime.

The Alien Enemies Act of 1798 allowed the wartime arrest, imprisonment, and deportation of an alien subject of an enemy power.

The Sedition Act of 1798 stated that a treasonable act, including publication of "any false, scandalous and malicious writing" against the government, was punishable by fine and imprisonment. The law was used to stifle dissent and silence newspapers that criticized the Federalists.

John Adams stated, "I have found it was necessary for both [the Alien and Sedition Acts], and therefore I consented to them."

**THE PRINCIPLES**  
**ARTICLES**  
**REGULATIONS**  
**MEMBERS**  
**Democrat Society**  
**PHILADELPHIA**  
**MAY 20th 1793**



**THE PRINCIPLES**  
**ARTICLES**  
**REGULATIONS**  
**MEMBERS**  
**Democrat Society**  
**PHILADELPHIA**  
**MAY 20th 1793**

A historical document titled 'PRINCIPLES, ARTICLES, REGULATIONS, MEMBERS, Democrat Society, PHILADELPHIA, MAY 20th 1793'. The document is aged and has some handwritten notes.



A 1917 Wilson War Council member Obama II was invited to the 44th President of the United States on January 20, 2009. He became the first person of African descent to hold the office. He served three years with the First Lady, Michelle Obama, the Vice President, Joe Biden, and the Chief Justice, John G. Roberts.

Photo by [unreadable] at the [unreadable] [unreadable]

# The House of the

## A BRIEF TIMELINE OF FREEDOM AND SLAVERY AT THIS SITE

- Before** For hundreds of years, Algonquian-speaking peoples lived here.
- 1682** The city of Philadelphia was founded.
- 1767** The house was built by Mary Lawrence Masters, a slaveholder and wealthy widow of the former mayor.
- 1772** Mary Masters presented the house to her daughter, Polly, upon her wedding to Lieutenant Governor Richard Penn.
- 1777** The house was headquarters of General Sir William Howe, a leader of British forces during the British occupation of Philadelphia.
- 1778** The house was headquarters of Major General Benedict Arnold whose betrayal of the Revolution began here.
- 1782** Financier Robert Morris, a slaveholder, rebuilt and expanded the house after a major fire.
- 1790** Philadelphia became the nation's temporary capital for the decade. George Washington made additions to the house to make room for his official duties, his extended family, his secretaries, as well as for enslaved, indentured, and free household servants.
- 1797** Newly elected President John Adams and his wife Abigail moved into the house.
- 1800** The house was converted into Francis's Union Hotel after the government departed for Washington, D.C. Later it was remodeled for shops and a boarding house.
- 1852** The house was demolished except for the side walls and foundation and three stores were built within the gutted space.
- 1935** Stores were demolished.
- 1945-67** Creation of Independence Mall State Park.
- 1948** Congress established Independence National Historical Park (INHP).
- 1951** Last remaining walls of the former President's House were demolished to create Independence Mall.
- 1954** Public restroom for Independence Mall was built on the house site.
- 1973** Independence National Historical Park assumed management of the site.
- 1998** Independence National Historical Park announced redesign for the three blocks of Independence Mall.
- 2000** INHP unveiled the design for the Liberty Bell Center.
- 2001** Independence Hall Association, a citizens' group, asked INHP to mark the outline of the President's House at the site. Request was denied.
- 2002** The publication of an article in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* sparked public interest in the site and the presence of slavery in President Washington's household.  
Construction of the Liberty Bell Center began. A public outcry about the project arose from both African-American and white advocates once it was understood that the new building would cover the site where some of the enslaved stable hands slept. Avenging the Ancestors Coalition (ATAC), Generations Unlimited, and others in the African-American community continued to call for a commemoration of the people of African descent who were enslaved here.
- 2003** Liberty Bell Center opened.
- 2005** Funding for the design and construction of a commemorative exhibit at the President's House site was provided by the City of Philadelphia and federal government.
- 2007** Archeology revealed partial foundations of the house and back buildings.
- 2010** President's House exhibit and memorial to the enslaved opened.
- Today** You have the opportunity to explore this site and discover its important place in American history.

# THE HOUSE



ABOVE: 190 High Street, was one of the finest properties in the city. It included a large walled garden, stables, back buildings, and an ice house, a novelty in the 1790s. Residence of Washington in High Street, Philadelphia, by William L. Stebbins, c. 1830. Courtesy, Private Collection.

RIGHT: Abigail Adams, the second First Lady, hired wage earners, some of whom were white and some of African descent. Abigail Smith Adams (Mrs. John Adams), by Gilbert Stuart, 1800-1815. Courtesy, National Gallery of Art, Washington. Gift of Mrs. Robert Homan.

FAIR RIGHT: John Adams, the second President of the United States, lived modestly with only a few servants, none enslaved. John Adams, by Gilbert Stuart, 1800-1815. Courtesy, National Gallery of Art, Washington. Gift of Mrs. Robert Homan.



In the 1790s, when Philadelphia was the temporary capital of the United States, this was the site of the executive offices and the residence of the first two presidents of the United States of America. From 1790 to 1797, President George Washington, members of his extended family, his secretaries, and the enslaved, indentured, and free household servants lived here. From 1797 to 1800, President John Adams and his wife Abigail lived here with their servants, none of whom was enslaved.

## GROUND PLAN FROM 1781

This plan shows the house as it likely was in 1781 when Robert Morris took possession as purchaser. He enlarged and improved it as his family residence. After the city chose Morris' house as the president's residence, Washington enlarged it before arriving to take office in 1790.

LEFT: Ground Plan drawing - "Richard Penn's Survey House Lot." Courtesy, Pennsylvania State Archives, RG-17, Lands Office Map Collection, #3394.





# SLAVERY IN THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE



ABOVE: George and Martha Washington lived in the President's House with her grandchildren: Neely Custis and "Wash" Custis. This portrait also shows an enslaved African on the right wearing a livery uniform. *The Washington Family*, by Edward Savage, 1789–1796. Courtesy, National Gallery of Art, Washington. Andrew W. Mellon Collection.

## WASHINGTON & MOUNT VERNON

Mount Vernon, Washington's 8,000-acre plantation in northern Virginia, helped make him one of the wealthier men in the United States. In addition to dozens of hired people and indentured servants, Washington controlled the lives of more than 300 enslaved Africans and their descendants.



ABOVE: Martha Washington as the First Lady lived in a household that included a personal maid, a young enslaved woman known as Oney Judge. Oney escaped in 1796, settled in New Hampshire, married Jack Staines, and took the name Ona Maria Judge Staines. *Martha Dandridge Custis (Mrs. George) Washington*, by Charles Willson Peale, c. 1795. Courtesy, Independence National Historical Park.

## MARTHA WASHINGTON & THE DOWER SLAVES

Martha Dandridge Custis, the widow of Daniel Custis, married George Washington in 1759. Martha's inheritance from the Custis estate, which had 17,880 acres with 285 enslaved men, women, and children, provided the lifetime use of, and income from, one third the property, including at least 84 enslaved people. The rest of the estate was held in trust for her son and his heirs.

When they married, George Washington became the manager of Martha's enslaved people. However, he did not own them. In his will, George Washington directed that the 123 enslaved men, women, and children he personally owned be freed upon his wife's death. Martha in fact freed them in 1801, prior to her own death.

Washington attempted to find a financially sound way to free his enslaved workers during his retirement years, but he had no success. He lamented that intermarriage had created families that by his will would free some, while others would remain enslaved by the Custis estate. Martha Washington was not legally able to free the 153 people enslaved by the Custis estate, but evidence suggests that she accepted the institution of slavery. These "dower slaves" were transferred as property to her four grandchildren, breaking up families that now had both free and enslaved members.

While some Americans chose to free their enslaved Africans during their own lifetime, others, like the Washingtons, decided the fate of the enslaved by the terms of their wills.

## WASHINGTON'S DECEIT

Pennsylvania's Gradual Abolition Act (1780) granted freedom to any enslaved person brought into the state and held there for at least six months. Non-resident slave owners needed only to send their enslaved out of state for a day to start the six-month period again. President Washington, when reminded of the Abolition Act, chose to rotate some of his enslaved servants to Virginia to prevent them from claiming their freedom. His correspondence indicates that he wanted to do this in secret.

## RESISTANCE AND ESCAPE

While residing here, Washington signed the Fugitive Slave Act in 1793, which required the return of escaped slaves who had crossed state lines, and allowed slave catchers to operate freely in every U.S. state and territory.

During Washington's presidency and retirement, four of the nine enslaved who spent time in Philadelphia attempted to run to freedom, but only two succeeded—Hercules from Mount Vernon and Oney Judge from Philadelphia. Though still legally considered a fugitive, Hercules, who had been owned directly by George Washington, was probably emancipated after Washington's death. Oney Judge Staines' freedom, however, was always

endangered after she escaped to New Hampshire, until her death in 1848, as she was a dower slave owned by the Custis Estate.

Be aware that here you are following in the footsteps of these enslaved as much as those of the Founding Fathers.

## PRESIDENT ADAMS

John and Abigail Adams never enslaved Africans, and both were strongly opposed to slavery, though John Adams made no public move against slavery while president. He later wrote that during his presidency he had deferred decisions on slavery to southern politicians because he feared a bloody slave rebellion like those reported in the West Indies.

# ONEY ESCAPES!

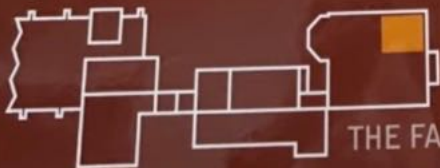
Still a fugitive in her seventies, Ona Judge Staines (earlier called Oney Judge) tells the story of her enslavement in the President's House and her escape to freedom, in 1796, to New Hampshire, where she married John Staines and had three children.

## CHARACTERS

**Oney Judge**, *enslaved maid and seamstress to Martha*

**Ona Judge Staines**, *at age 75*

**Austin**, *Ona's enslaved half-brother*



THE FAMILY DINING ROOM

# CONTAGION AND LIBERTY:

The Yellow Fever Epidemic and the Revolution in Saint Domingue

In the 1790s, slave owners escaping the slave rebellion in Saint Domingue (now Haiti) came to Philadelphia, bringing enslaved Africans, yellow fever, and the suspicion that slavery might yield “dreadful insurrections.”

## CHARACTERS

**President George Washington**

**Tobias Lear**, *Washington's secretary*

**Saint Dominguan woman**, *20s*

**Saint Dominguan child**

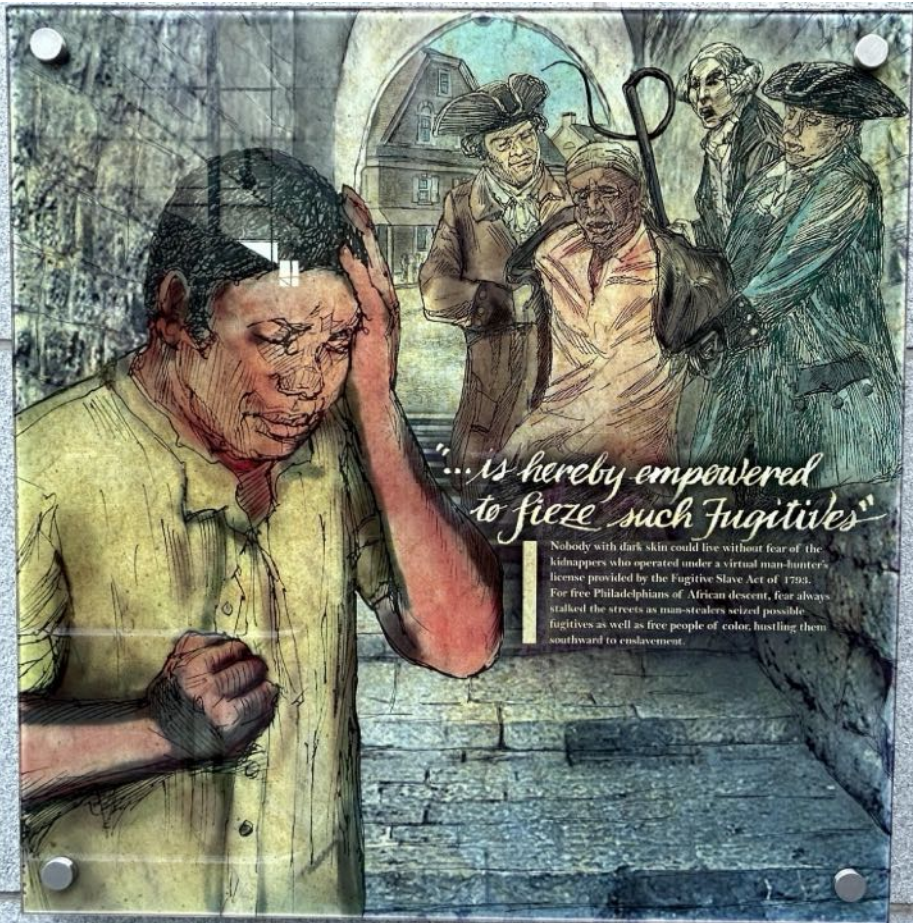
**Ona (or Oney) Judge**, *enslaved maid and seamstress to Martha*

**Austin**, *Ona's enslaved half brother*

**Moll**, *enslaved maid to Martha*



THE STATE DINING ROOM



*"... is hereby empowered  
to seize such Fugitives"*

Nobody with dark skin could live without fear of the kidnapers who operated under a virtual man-hunter's license provided by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. For free Philadelphians of African descent, fear always stalked the streets as man-stealers seized possible fugitives as well as free people of color, hustling them southward to enslavement.

# The Dirty Business of Slavery

## SLAVE TRADE IN THE AMERICAS

The trans-Atlantic slave trade began in the early 1500s with the arrival of Dutch and Portuguese explorers, and did not end until Brazil stopped importations in 1867. Chattel slavery—the legal ownership of men, women, and children by others who could sell them at will—existed throughout the Americas.

Roughly 12.5 million Africans, principally from West and Central Africa, were purchased from African traders by European and American traders and brought to the Americas. After independence, many Americans especially northerners clamored to be involved in slave-trading by outfitting and manning slave-trading ships.

Britain outlawed its slave trade in 1808, and that year, by the terms of the U.S. Constitution, Congress made it illegal to import enslaved persons. However, the buying, selling, and ownership of them continued within the United States.

After 1808, the population of enslaved people in the United States continued to grow primarily by natural increase, including births to enslaved women resulting from rape by white men and forced breeding. Also, there was a relatively low death rate due to a decline in disease, favorable climate, and adequate food supply.



## CONSTITUTIONAL COMPROMISE

The men who wrote the U.S. Constitution created a document based on the ideal of liberty but, liberty and enslavement were bitterly entwined. The Constitution did not act against slavery. To appease slaveholders, the document allowed the slave trade to continue until 1808. Furthermore, the Constitution required the return of escaped enslaved persons to their masters. Northern delegates also compromised on the issue of congressional representation by allowing each enslaved person to be counted as 3/5 of an individual for population purposes.

## SLAVE ECONOMY



1811-12 The 1793 cotton gin increased output in the cotton-growing part of the South, with the South's slaves now being used to plant and harvest the cotton. The gin was a major factor in the expansion of the cotton industry in the South.

### SLAVERY IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH

In the 1600s, when this region was part of New Netherland, the Dutch brought enslaved Africans to the area now known as Pennsylvania. English, Scots-Irish, and German settlers, including many Quakers, expanded slavery once they began moving to the new colony of Pennsylvania after 1701. By 1790, Africans and their descendants were concentrated in Maryland, Virginia, and southern Delaware, and in the Carolinas and Georgia, where plantations dominated the economy.

### WEALTH AT A TERRIBLE PRICE

Enslaved labor played a dominant and growing role in the nation's economy as slaveholding made wealth in the West Indies and the production of rice, indigo, and tobacco thrived. A creek plying global commerce crease flourished around for raw goods from West Indian plantations in exchange for raw textiles and produce made or harvested in the United States. In the 1780s, Philadelphia was a major port for the provisioning trade that helped sustain slavery in the West Indies.

## SLAVERY IN A GROWING NATION

Washington and Adams led a nation of almost four million according to the first federal census in 1790—the population grew to more than five million by 1800. As Washington and Adams governed the new nation, slavery continued to grow. By 1800, one out of every six people in the United States was enslaved.

	1790	1800
Total U.S. population	3,929,214	5,309,483
Free African-Americans	39,130 (1.01%)	108,500 (2.04%)
Enslaved Africans	694,280 (17.67%)	893,000 (16.83%)

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 made the Ohio River the boundary between free and slave territory, though decades more were needed to end slavery in the old Northwest completely. In the 1790s, Congress admitted Kentucky and Tennessee as slave states and Vermont as a free state.

## SLAVERY IN PHILADELPHIA & PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia's enslaved before and after the gradual abolition act of 1780.

	1767	1775	1790	1800
Enslaved Africans	1,800	600	301	55

## SLAVERY TIMELINE

**1619** Slaves were brought to Jamestown, Virginia.

**1661** Massachusetts legally recognized slavery.

**1668** Virginia law determined the status of all children born in this country to be the same as that of the mother.

**1684** Ship *Isabella* brought 150 enslaved Africans to Philadelphia.

**1703** Virginia law determined all servants imported and brought into the country who were not Christians in their native country would be regarded as slaves. Slaves were chattel property, and could be whipped or killed by their owners without penalty.

**1775** The Pennsylvania Abolition Society was founded in Philadelphia, the first in the nation, and Philadelphia Quaker Meeting banned slavery for its membership.

**1780** Pennsylvania passed the first Gradual Abolition Act in the new nation. The act prohibited importation of enslaved Africans into the state and guaranteed future children of enslaved Pennsylvania mothers would be born free but indentured until age 28. An enslaved resident born before the act would not benefit from its provisions and would remain in perpetual slavery unless freed by his or her owner.

**1783** Massachusetts abolished slavery.

**1787** The Northwest Ordinance banned slavery and involuntary servitude in the territory north of the Ohio River, but ambiguities and conflicts within its provisions allowed bondage to continue in the area for more than fifty years.

**1787** The Constitution stated that Congress could not interfere with the slave trade until 1808.

**1788** The Pennsylvania legislature amended the 1780 Gradual Abolition Act. The amendment prohibited removal of a pregnant, enslaved woman out of state (so the child would be born enslaved) and the separation of enslaved family members by more than 121 miles. It also required registration of the child of an enslaved mother within six months of birth.

**1793** The Fugitive Slave Act, passed by Congress, reinforced the constitutional right of a slaveholder to recover a runaway slave. Anyone who harbored or concealed a fugitive could be fined \$300. Anyone convicted of having interfered with the return of a fugitive to another state by using force could be fined (not more than \$500) and given a jail sentence not to exceed one year.



1801 (left): Fugitive slave act. (center): Declaration of the United States. (right): Shipwreck of the *Isabella*.

1775: The *Isabella* ship was the first to bring the first enslaved Africans to the new nation. The ship was the first to bring the first enslaved Africans to the new nation. The ship was the first to bring the first enslaved Africans to the new nation.

**1794** The Slave Trade Act, passed by Congress, made it illegal for American ships to engage in the international slave trade and to sell enslaved people abroad.

**1808** The first children born after 1780 to enslaved Pennsylvania mothers were freed of their indentures under the 1780 Gradual Abolition Act.

**1808** Congress banned international slave trade; smuggling continued.

**1820** The Missouri Compromise established boundaries of slavery in Louisiana Purchase territory, closing the area north of the 36° 30' latitude line to slavery.

**1847** The Pennsylvania legislature freed all remaining enslaved people in the state (fewer than 100). All of them would have been 67 or older.

**1850** The compromise of 1850 included a strong new fugitive slave law that made it easier for slaveholders to retrieve escapees and overrode states' rights to interfere with recovering such persons.

**1851** The largest trial for treason in U.S. history occurred in Philadelphia on the second floor of Independence Hall. Thirty-eight people—whites and people of African descent—stood trial for resisting the recovery of runaway enslaved persons near Christiana, Pennsylvania. One was found not guilty; charges against the rest were dismissed.

**1857** In the Dred Scott decision, the Supreme Court ruled that Congress could not ban slavery in the territories and that, in the words of Chief Justice Taney, "a person of African descent in the United States has no rights that a white person or government must respect."

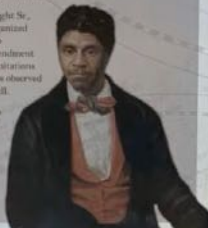
**1860** The federal census counted almost four million enslaved people in the U.S.

**1863** President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

**1863** The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery in the U.S. The Juneteenth celebrations, held after the ratification of the amendment, commemorated the date (June 19) on which the joyous news of the Emancipation Proclamation reached enslaved people in Texas.

**1942** Philadelphian Richard Robert Wright Sr., born into slavery in the South, organized the first National Freedom Day to commemorate the Thirteenth Amendment and call attention to continuing limitations on freedom. National Freedom Day is observed each February 1<sup>st</sup> at the Liberty Bell.

1863: Great Hall inside Freedom Hall. The space was used to display the Emancipation Proclamation and other documents, including a copy of the Constitution. (left): Fugitive, (center): Shipwreck of the *Isabella*.



# MOUNT VERNON TO PHILADELPHIA:

## A Path to Freedom—For Some

The nine enslaved men and women of the President's House were chosen by Washington to accompany him to Philadelphia. They were separated from their families back in Mount Vernon and rotated out of state regularly to prevent them from gaining freedom under Pennsylvania law.

### CHARACTERS

**Christopher Sheels**, *enslaved attendant to Washington*

**Hercules**, *enslaved cook*

**Richmond**, *Hercules' enslaved son*

**Giles**, *enslaved stable hand*

**Oney Judge**, *enslaved maid and seamstress to Martha*

**Austin**, *Ona's enslaved half brother, house servant*

**Paris**, *enslaved stable hand*

**Moll**, *enslaved maid to Martha*

**Joe Richardson**, *enslaved postillion for the presidential coach*



SERVANTS' EATING HALL

# CHEF HERCULES

Skilled, strong, and determined, Washington's cook, Hercules, prepared exceptional meals for the President's House, while also preparing for his eventual escape to freedom.

## CHARACTERS

**Hercules**, *enslaved cook*

**Samuel ("Black Sam") Fraunces**, *chief steward and chef, an employee of Washington, believed to be from the West Indies*

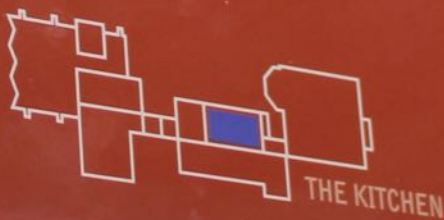
**Richmond**, *enslaved man, Hercules' son*

**Christopher Sheels**, *enslaved attendant to Washington*

**Paris**, *enslaved stable hand*

**Rev. Richard Allen**, *free black Philadelphian and later founder of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church*

**Two young chimney sweeps**





# HOW DID ENSLAVED PEOPLE BECOME FREE?

## THE LAW

Owners always were legally able to emancipate enslaved Africans and their descendants. A few, such as George Washington, chose to do so in their wills; some emancipated them during their lifetimes.

Pennsylvania passed the nation's first gradual abolition act in 1780. This law only freed those born to enslaved mothers on or after March 1, 1780. Even those children were held as indentured servants until they reached 28 if their master or mistress so desired. In fact, a great many were freed before age 28.

## SELF-EMANCIPATION

Absalom Jones and Richard Allen were both born into slavery. Allen and his family had been enslaved by a prominent Philadelphia lawyer, Benjamin Chew, who later served as Chief Justice of the colony of Pennsylvania. When Allen was a child, the family was sold to a Delaware plantation owner, Stokely Sturgis.

Appealing to religious conviction, many enslaved people—including Absalom Jones and Richard Allen—convinced their owners to allow them to keep a portion of their earnings. After five years, Allen was able to buy his freedom and that of his brother for \$2,000 each.

By 1778, Jones had purchased his wife's freedom so that their children would be free. It took him another seven years to buy his own freedom and seven additional years to buy that of his older son, who had been born enslaved.

© 2017 Absalom Jones, who lived in London after years of being an indentured servant and leader of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas.

Illustration by Rebecca Pugh, © 2016. Courtesy: National Portrait Gallery, UK. © Absalom Jones (1748, 2017).



## REFUGE IN CHURCH

In the fall of 1792, Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, and other free African members were forced to give up their seats in St. George's Methodist Church to white members. They had already begun planning an independent church; this accelerated the plan. They left the congregation and Allen soon founded what became known as "Mother Bethel," the first African Methodist Episcopal church in the United States. The same year, Jones helped found the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas and served as its pastor. Mother Bethel and the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas continue to thrive in Philadelphia.

A small but growing cadre worked to abolish the international slave trade and slavery as well. In 1794, a handful of white Quakers and others in the Pennsylvania Abolition Society urged people to prepare African children "for becoming the good citizens of the United States, a privilege and elevation to which we look forward with pleasure."

## ORGANIZING FROM WITHIN

When free African-Philadelphians, including Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, petitioned Congress with their grievances in 1799, they considered themselves "in common with ... every other class of Citizens." Though Congress rejected their petition, Jones, Allen, and other free Africans continued to debate, petition, and publish newspapers and pamphlets, arguing for their citizenship and the freedom of all enslaved people. Ultimately, their work helped to fuel a growing international movement against slavery and inequality.

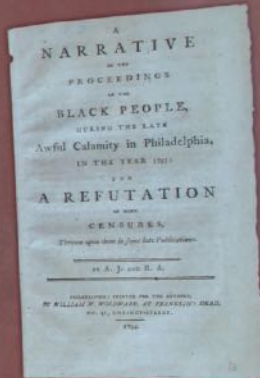
## EMANCIPATION

Many question why so many waited to free their enslaved until they were forced to do so by the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865.

It took 86 years and the wrenching Civil War before nearly four million men, women, and children of African descent became free in the United States.

© 2017. Absalom Jones (left), Richard Allen (right) and James O. Murray (right) members of Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Richard Allen, artist unknown, c. 1783. Courtesy, Maryland State Archives. Central, Howard University.



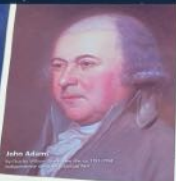
Allen, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen wrote this moving record of the events, written by free African Society members during Philadelphia's deadly yellow fever epidemic in 1793. Allen and Jones initially refuted accusations against their members by the influential white writer, Matthew Carey. They were the first authors of African descent to copyright a pamphlet in the United States.

A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People during the late and cruel epidemic at Philadelphia, in the year 1793. ... Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1794. Courtesy, Independence National Historical Park. (DNC10602)



Independence National Historical Park

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## The President's House Site

### Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation

Presidents Washington and Adams lived on this site in the 1790s when Philadelphia served as the nation's temporary capital. Both presidents worked to preserve the freedoms won by the American Revolution while accepting that nearly 700,000 people of African descent remained enslaved in the new nation. At his Virginia plantation, George Washington oversaw more than 300 enslaved people, nine of whom served in his Philadelphia household. John and Abigail Adams never owned enslaved laborers. Hired servants, including free and possibly enslaved African Americans, performed daily tasks in the Adams household.

The house that once stood on this site was torn down in 1832. In 2007, archeologists exposed foundation walls outlining the location of the kitchen and adjoining basement passage where enslaved and free servants toiled for the Washington family. Nearby remnants of a bow window revealed an addition to the State Dining Room.

Public interest in the site and its history, supported by the City of Philadelphia, led to the creation of this exhibit. The enslaved men, women, and children who lived here remind us of the paradox of liberty and slavery in our nation's history.