

FREE AT LAST?



SLAVERY IN PITTSBURGH in the 18th and 19th Centuries

AN EXHIBITION BY THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
AT THE SENATOR JOHN HEINZ HISTORY CENTER
OCTOBER 25, 2008, TO APRIL 5, 2009

A MESSAGE ABOUT THE INSPIRATION FOR **FREE AT LAST?**

ROBERT HILL
VICE CHANCELLOR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH



I became aware of the slavery-related documents that form the basis of this *Free at Last?* exhibition by reading about them in a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* article. I was late, having read toward the end of 2007 about the discovery made earlier in 2007 of the documents in the Allegheny County Recorder of Deeds Office. Fortunately, I was not too late.

Free at Last? results from my desire to illuminate a little-known aspect of the establishment, growth, and development of Pittsburgh. The 55 records now on display in the Heinz History Center substantiate that, at least between 1792 and 1857, the region's Black children and youth, whose older relatives were slaves for life, were subject to a system—legal and otherwise—that in stages enslaved them, indentured them in a kind of de facto term slavery, and forced them to prove their free status.

These and other slavery-related documents, recorded earlier or at the same time as the 55 records, shouted out from their aged pages the need to be publicly inspected. And they suggested to me that the much bigger story must be told of how and why slavery came to Western Pennsylvania, the locus of the 55 records and the focus of the exhibition. And equally important were the means by which slavery in this region was legally ended and the extent to which Southern slavery and the effects of slavery persisted.

Free at Last? takes the visitor on a journey that begins with life as usual in Africa, stops over in the slave castles that lined the West African coast, travels across the gruesome Middle Passage onward to slavery in the Americas, and, as W.E.B. Du Bois characterized it, through a descent into hell.

Through the exhibition, the journey brings us to the American colonies, Pennsylvania, and the Pittsburgh region, where the core of the story dates to Pittsburgh's founding 250 years ago.

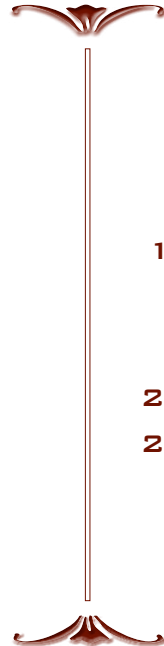
The Pittsburgh and broader Pennsylvania variety of slavery may not have been as punishing as the Southern version. Nonetheless, it *was* slavery, in turn accompanied by and followed by discrimination and segregation so seemingly intractable that their vestiges survive today. It is within this context of the 21st century that we encourage the visitor to experience *Free at Last? Slavery in Pittsburgh in the 18th and 19th Centuries*.

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Forty Dollars Reward.

RAN-AWAY a negro Man named WILL., and a negro Wench named SUE, about the 2d of October last; the negro man is about 27 years of age, 5 feet 1 or 2 inches high, a spare, thin fellow, he talks but bad English, the middle finger of the right hand is off at the tip end, occasioned by the frost; the wench about 22 years of age, 5 feet 2 or 3 inches high, has a large scar upon the back of one of her legs, just above her ankle, her cloathing linsy and many other things. Whoever secures the said negroes, so that their masters may get them again shall receive the above reward, paid by us,

SAMUEL MAGRUDER.
DANIEL DINGLE.

Frederick County, State of Maryland,
September 10, 1786.

150 Dollars Reward.

RAN away from the subscriber, living in Hampshire county, Virginia, on the 24th ult., a Black Man, named Lewis, of rather a light cast, about 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high, of slender visage, but stout and active. He is a good farmer, and very expert in mowing and cradling—chews tobacco, and is fond of drink. He has cuts on each knee, occasioned by a scythe. He had on when he left home, a cotton coat and pantaloons, of mixed color, and a black fur hat—he took with him, also, a pair of Pittsburgh cord pantaloons, and perhaps other clothing not recollected.



I will give the above reward for the apprehension of said run away, if delivered to me at home. He left home in company with three others.

DAVID PARSONS.

June 9, 1834.—3tw*

Advertisements in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, today the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, run in 1786, left, and 1834.

FREE AT LAST?

BY LAURENCE A. GLASCO, PHD

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Slavery has been called the “peculiar institution,” but there is nothing strange about an institution that is as old as the human record, and as widespread. Slavery has existed in Africa, in Asia, in Europe, in the Americas—and in Pennsylvania. Even in Western Pennsylvania, as the documents in this exhibition show, lifetime and term slavery both persisted well into the 19th century.

Visitors to this exhibition may find slavery’s presence here a bit surprising. We usually think of Pennsylvania as the land of the Quakers, who originally owned slaves but were among the first to renounce the practice. Indeed, Pennsylvania’s Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery, passed in 1780, gave the commonwealth pride of place in the struggle against slavery. As a leading authority notes, the 1780 act has drawn “effusive praise” because “never before had any polity, in America or elsewhere, abolished racial slavery by legislative act.”¹

Pennsylvania’s 1780 Legislation

The preface to the Act of 1780 reveals the patriotic fervor and religious bent that motivated Pennsylvania legislators, who were on the verge of enjoying freedom from English tyranny:

It is our duty ... to extend a portion of that freedom to others, which hath been extended to us ... It is not for us to enquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complexion. It is sufficient to know that all are the work of an Almighty Hand.

Given such enlightened, humane, and religious impulses behind the Act of 1780, the visitor might ask why this exhibition’s title ends with a question mark rather than an exclamation point. Why “Free at Last?” rather than “Free at Last!”

The reasons are simple, and a bit sad. First, Pennsylvania’s Gradual Abolition Act did not, in fact, free anyone. It applied only to children who were born after the date

¹ Gary Nash, *Freedom by Degrees: Emancipation in Pennsylvania and Its Aftermath* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 91, 111. Vermont abolished slavery in its constitution of 1777 and Massachusetts in its constitution of 1780—not technically legislative acts.

of the legislation, March 1, 1780, and left parents and older siblings condemned to a lifetime of slavery. Even those born after March 1 were not set free. They were placed in a form of term slavery known as indentured servitude, which lasted until they reached the age of 28. In an era when many were dead or decrepit by the age of 40, the act effectively robbed them of their most productive years. The Act of 1780, moreover, had several loopholes, which owners used to their advantage. Its provisions were not immediately enforced, particularly in Western Pennsylvania, where owners were granted an extension until 1782 to register their slaves and begin complying with the law. Many used that time to sell or transfer their slaves down South, where they and their children would remain lifetime bondsmen. Because the law applied only to children born in Pennsylvania, some owners temporarily transferred pregnant slaves to a Southern state. And some owners even developed the illegal practice of indenturing the children of their indentures. To Pennsylvania's credit, the state's Assembly passed supplementary legislation in 1788 closing these loopholes. The best news of the Act of 1780 is that after its passage the number of slaves declined rapidly, from 6,855 in 1780 to 795 in 1810. Thus, within a generation, slavery largely vanished from Pennsylvania, although, of course, it persisted in the form of indentures.

Slavery in Western Pennsylvania

Slaves first arrived here with General Braddock, General Forbes, Colonel George Washington, and other military officers who came in the 1750s to wrest Fort Duquesne from the French and Indians. Some came as body servants, some drove wagons or cattle, some worked as scouts, and some saw military action. Additional slaves, and free Blacks, came to this area during the Revolutionary War, helping win the military victories that opened Western Pennsylvania to settlers. Many of those settlers came from Virginia and Maryland, bringing slaves with them and occupying land originally inhabited by the Delaware, Mingo, Shawnee, and other Native Americans.

Slaves here worked in a wide range of occupations—as farm laborers, personal servants, shoemakers, blacksmith's helpers, valets, barbers, messengers, wool spinners and carders, and workers in tap rooms and stable yards. Their lives were harsh, but not as harsh as those of their counterparts working on Southern plantations. And they were not content, as evidenced by numerous advertisements for runaways that appeared in the local newspapers.

A second reason for the question mark in the exhibition's title is that indentured servitude was by no means a

form of freedom. It had been the fate of many, if not most, Whites who came to Pennsylvania—and indeed to the American colonies—in the Colonial era. White indentureship resembled slavery except that the term of service typically was limited to four years, and the indentured could seek redress in the courts if their owners abused them too severely. By the time the Act of 1780 was passed, White indentures were becoming rare and were increasingly replaced by Blacks, who served longer terms (28 years).²

Whether Black or White, indentured servants in effect were fixed-term slaves. They had to do their owner's bidding. They could be "disciplined" (whipped) at an owner's whim. Their unexpired contracts could be bought and sold. They could not marry or even move about without their master's permission, and they could be freely transferred from one master to another. The only compensation for Black indentures upon fulfilling their indenture was two sets of clothes, one of which was to be new.

The third reason for the question mark in the exhibition's title is that freedom for Blacks—even for those who completed their indentures—remained contested and uncertain. White indentures who completed their term became free Whites, with all the privileges accorded

"Whiteness." Black indentures who completed their terms became so-called free Blacks, with all the burdens associated with "Blackness." One such burden was enduring the presumption they were fugitive slaves. Pennsylvania shared a border with Virginia and Maryland, where slavery was the norm for Blacks, and where many considered free Blacks to be simply "slaves without masters," to be watched, feared, regulated—and pursued. Slave catchers scoured border states like Pennsylvania to locate and return runaways to their slaveholders. Free Blacks, especially in Southwestern Pennsylvania, lived in fear of these men, who had little interest in verifying the legal status of those they captured. For this reason, it was important for free Blacks, especially newcomers with few personal acquaintances, to file with the courts a certificate of freedom, such as portrayed in this exhibition, testifying to their status. This is why many of the documents in the exhibition refer to Blacks from outside the state. The Pennsylvania legislature, between 1820 and 1847, passed laws that sharply curtailed kidnapping, and, by the late 1840s, public indignation made it almost impossible for slave catchers to operate in the state. But it still was prudent for newly arrived free Blacks to file such papers.

² In Pennsylvania, many Germans came as "Redemptioners," a condition similar to indentured servitude but without a fixed term. Redemptioners worked until they could repay, or "redeem," the cost of their boat passage.

In summary, the question mark following “Free at Last?” is appropriate, because freedom never came to most of Pennsylvania’s slaves. It came to their children, and then only when they reached the age of 28. And, once obtained, freedom, to be sustained, required constant vigilance and legal papers.

The Question of Manumission: To Free or Not to Free?

Why didn’t Pennsylvania just free its slaves outright? The answer, in today’s terms, would be the issue of “reparations.” Today, that term often refers to demands by the descendants of slaves for compensation for unpaid labor. In 1780, it was slaveholders who sought compensation. They argued that raising slave children was a burden until they reached the age of 14, and the slaveholders demanded 14 additional years of unpaid labor as compensation—whence 28-year indentures. Of course, the commonwealth could simply have reimbursed owners from the public treasury, but, then as now, the public is not easily persuaded to be taxed, even for a noble cause. The children of Pennsylvania’s slaves, in effect, purchased their own freedom through a long period of uncompensated servitude.

Many owners could have afforded manumission without compensation. We know this because the law required them to register their slaves, and because afterwards the federal census listed them. These slave registries and federal censuses show that slaves were held by some of our region’s most prominent citizens, whose names today grace our streets. The list was led by General John Neville, the Revolutionary War officer, farmer, and owner of an early distillery, who lived like a Virginia planter on his “Bower Hill” estate with 18 slaves. (At one point, he held 21.) Neville’s son, Presley, another Revolutionary War officer, state legislator, and burgess, held nine slaves on his Woodville Plantation. Isaac Craig, Revolutionary War officer and cofounder of the city’s first glass factory, held eight slaves. Conrad Winebiddle, pioneer settler of East Liberty, prominent farmer, tanner, and real estate speculator, owned five. John McKee, soldier and real estate speculator who laid out McKeesport, held two. Other prominent slaveholders who, like Neville and Craig, have Pittsburgh streets named for them included William Amberson, Jacob Castleman, Abraham Kirkpatrick, and George Woods.³

The existence of slavery in Western Pennsylvania did not automatically exclude all Blacks from society. Free Blacks—not just slaves—had accompanied Braddock

³ Neville and Craig streets are located in Oakland, Amberson and Castleman streets in Shadyside, Kirkpatrick Street in the Hill District, and Wood Street is located Downtown.

and Forbes and Washington to this area. Some of them, and their immediate descendants, achieved a surprising degree of acceptance. Benjamin “Daddy Ben” Richards, a butcher, accumulated a fortune provisioning nearby military posts. Richards’ son, Charles, later operated one of the city’s leading taverns and worshipped in the prestigious Trinity Episcopal Church. Both men, along with two other free Blacks, signed the Petition of 1787 that led to the creation of Allegheny County.

Following the Colonial era, free Blacks continued trickling into Western Pennsylvania on their own. Some came from Eastern Pennsylvania, others from Virginia and Maryland. (Virginia at that time included what today is West Virginia). By 1850, Pittsburgh Blacks numbered nearly 2,000 residents, a few of whom prospered. John Vashon, for example, operated a fashionable bathhouse, John Peck was a prominent wigmaker, and Lewis Woodson owned a string of barbershops that catered to the local White elite. Vashon, Peck, and Woodson also constituted effective community leaders, along with the best-known member, Martin Delany, who published *The Mystery* newspaper in Pittsburgh and later coedited Frederick Douglass' *North Star* newspaper.

These leaders stressed education. Delany became one of the first Blacks to study medicine at Harvard

University; Vashon's son, George, became the first Black to graduate from Oberlin College; Peck's son became the nation's first Black to obtain a U.S. medical degree; and Lewis Woodson, in addition to pursuing his duties as minister of Bethel A.M.E. Church and a barber, taught in the community's own school.

Despite these efforts and achievements, Pittsburgh’s free Blacks were denied the full fruits of freedom. In 1834, they suffered a major setback when Pittsburgh excluded their children from the city's new public school system, and in 1838 they were devastated when the commonwealth’s new constitution stripped them, and all Pennsylvania Blacks, of the right to vote.

Nor could Blacks here escape the threat posed by an ascendant slave power. As slavery withered in Pennsylvania, it flourished just to the south, impinging on Pennsylvanians’ rights and stoking their fears. Many Pittsburgh Blacks, in fact, were fugitive slaves and especially frightened by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. The act was designed to help slave catchers apprehend runaways and made lawbreakers of anyone who aided a fugitive slave. Following its passage, terrified Blacks left the area in droves, some fleeing as far north as Canada. As a result, during the 1850s the number of Black residents of Allegheny County plummeted from 3,451 to 2,725. Those who did not flee

established an elaborate network to harass slave catchers and even “kidnap” slaves passing through the area with their owners in order to free them.

The Fugitive Slave Act, in addition to terrifying Blacks, outraged many Whites and caused increasing numbers to join the antislavery movement. Even before the act, a number of sympathetic Whites had fought against slavery and even helped local free Blacks. Joseph Gazzam and Julius LeMoynes, two prominent local physicians, trained Martin Delany and sponsored his entry into Harvard Medical School. Jane Gray Swisshelm, Pittsburgh’s famous publisher and feminist, advocated as actively on behalf of the rights of Blacks as for the rights of women. Charles Avery, a wealthy businessman and minister, established Allegheny Institute (later Avery College) for Blacks’ higher education and bequeathed \$25,000 to fund scholarships for them at Western University of Pennsylvania, later renamed the University of Pittsburgh. In 1856, Western Pennsylvania’s antislavery reputation was one of the reasons the newly formed party of antislavery, the Republican Party, chose Pittsburgh for its first national convention.⁴

Conclusion: From the Morally Acceptable to the Morally Abhorrent

Given this background, what are we to make of Western Pennsylvania’s relation to slavery? In particular, what are we to make of the involvement of some of its most prominent citizens? First, we need to note that many prominent Pittsburghers did not own slaves and that some leading residents, like Hugh Brackenridge, founder of the University of Pittsburgh, even parodied locals who “held and abused” slaves while, in their minds, were piously adhering to Christian teachings. Brackenridge, moreover, won the release of a free Black woman who had been kidnapped in Pittsburgh and returned to slavery in Kentucky.⁵

Of course, we may be surprised today to see that so many of Pittsburgh’s founding families—including some of its most prominent and respected members—owned slaves and Black indentured servants. Doing so did not reduce their standing, else their names would not grace so many of our streets today.

To make sense of this, we need to realize that slavery as an unmitigated evil was unknown before the concepts of liberty and equality emerged in Colonial America. Indeed, throughout slavery’s long and ignoble history, one looks in vain for condemnation from great moralists,

⁴ Michael Holt, *Forging a Majority: The Formation of the Republican Party in Pittsburgh, 1848-1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 176.

⁵ Brackenridge, *Modern Chivalry* (1792); John Boucher, *A Century and a Half of Pittsburg and Her People* (New York, 1908), p. 533.

whether Moses or Jesus, the Buddha or Confucius or Muhammad. At best, slavery was condemned when it affected one's own people. The Hebrew Bible rails against the Israelites' bondage in Egypt but prescribes how the Israelites were to treat their own slaves, including a proscription against returning fugitive slaves. Christians railed against holding Christians as slaves (a precept broken in the New World), and Muslims did the same against holding fellow Muslims (a precept they also have broken).

Although Quakers had been condemning slavery since 1688, and patriots throughout the North American colonies had joined in the condemnation by 1780, it took 85 more years and a bloody civil war to silence the powerful who vociferously defended the practice. After the war's end, no person of moral and ethical standing has ever defended it again. The documents, stories, images, and sounds in

this exhibition capture those years of transition from what at one point was morally acceptable to what at another was morally abhorrent.



The abolition of slavery did not, of course, end the struggle to make America the full embodiment of those lofty principles. After slavery's demise, racism surged, such that the struggle of the late 19th century—and all of the 20th century into the 21st—was to be the struggle against the color line, both in Western Pennsylvania and nationally. But that would be the topic for another exhibition.

This Indenture made the twenty fourth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Witnesseth
 Negro Suck who is not free by her Master, James Torrons, of Allegheny County and State of Pennsylvania the forenamed Suck doth of her own free will bind her daughter Kut unto John McKee of the County and State aforesaid during the full & complete term of twelve years and six months, which term she the said her master shall faithfully serve his lawful commands, cheerfully obey; she shall not contract matrimony &c &c, nor do anything detrimental to her said Master's interests; she shall not commit fornication nor frequent taverns, cards, dice nor any unlawful games. And her master for his part his heirs and assigns are bound to provide for said Kut sufficient meal drink, washing and lodging during said term and to learn her to read the holy scriptures and to give her when free two suits of clothes, one of which is to be new. In witness whereof both parties have set to their hands and seals the day and year above written.

Witness present
 Thomas Ochiltree }
 John Lawrence }

Negro Suck ^{her}
 John McKee _{mark} (Seal)

Indenture: Negro Suck, recorded in 1793; see pp.14-15 for a discussion of this record.

INDENTURE: NEGRO SUCK

Transcription: This Indenture made the twenty-fourth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Witnesseth Negro Suck who is not free by her Master James Torrons, of Allegheny County and State of Pennsylvania the forenamed Suck doth of her own free will bind her daughter Kut unto John McKee of the County and State aforesaid during the full & complete term of twelve years and Six months, which term she the said her master shall faithfully serve his lawful commands, cheerfully obey; she shall not contract matrimony &c &c, nor do anything detrimental to her said Master's interests; she shall not commit fornication nor frequent taverns, cards, dice nor any unlawful games. And her master for his part his heirs and assigns are bound to provide for said Kut sufficient meal drink, washing and lodging during said term and to learn her to read the holy scriptures and to give her when free two suits of clothes, one of which is to be new. In witness whereof both parties have set to their hands and seals the day and year above written.

Witness present	}		her	
Thomas Ochiltree		Negro Suck	∞	(Seal)
John Lawrence		John McKee	mark	(Seal)

ALLEGHENY COUNTY FREEDOM PAPERS, CERTIFICATES OF FREEDOM, AND INDENTURES

BY SAMUEL W. BLACK, AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLECTIONS CURATOR,
SENATOR JOHN HEINZ HISTORY CENTER

“Be it know [sic] to all men, that, I, John McKee, of Alleghny [sic] County and State of Pennsylvania, do by these presents let free my negro man Known by the name of Peter Cosco for the...sum of one hundred pounds....”

Too often, American slavery has been treated as an institution whose history was peculiar to the South. But the historical record reveals that slavery was also part of the development of the states in the North. By the time Peter Cosco paid John McKee to set him free in 1790, slavery had existed in Pennsylvania for more than a century and in Western Pennsylvania since the late 1750s.

Historians have reasoned that because the plantation system was absent in Western Pennsylvania, slavery was not significant here. This narrow interpretation of slavery assumes that large plantation systems were

the only ones calling for the use of slave labor. As Larry Glasco states in his essay, slaves in Western Pennsylvania worked in a wide range of occupations, from farm laborers and personal servants to blacksmith’s helpers and barbers. The Allegheny County documents call attention to an almost forgotten chapter of this region’s history.

The documents are the result of diligence on the part of then-County Recorder of Deeds Valerie McDonald Roberts. In October 2007, McDonald Roberts contacted me on the advice of local genealogist Emily Davis. McDonald Roberts’ staff had uncovered various filings in her office’s deed books describing freedom papers, certificates of freedom, indentures, and manumission documents. As a member of the African American Advisory Committee of the Heinz History Center, Davis knew that I was busy working on a new installation about the Underground Railroad, slavery, and freedom

in Western Pennsylvania. After meeting with McDonald Roberts in November 2007 and reviewing the original records from the deed books, I knew that these records were invaluable to understanding the African American experience in antebellum Pittsburgh.

McDonald Roberts decided to have her staff comb through the books, from the earliest records in the 1790s through the 1850s. After isolating the antebellum records relating to Blacks, McDonald Roberts decided to transfer the documents to the Heinz History Center Library & Archives division for preservation. Because slaves were considered property, just like land, furniture, and livestock, transactions involving them had been

11 recorded in the deed books. The foresight of McDonald Roberts in isolating these records adds greatly to our understanding of Western Pennsylvania's history in the late-18th and early-19th centuries.

The records date to 1792, a decade after the year when slaveholders in Western Pennsylvania were required to register their slaves or file notices of their manumission owing to Pennsylvania's Gradual Abolition Act of March 1780 and subsequent April 1782 legislation, which gave local slaveholders additional time for slave registration.

By passing the 1780 legislation, Pennsylvania became the first of the former British colonies to initiate an

act to abolish slavery. The act provided that African Americans born in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of an enslaved mother after March 1, 1780, were to be manumitted and indentured until the age of 28. This meant, of course, that those already enslaved would remain so for the rest of their lives. Because of noncompliance and territorial issues in the western counties, the act was amended in 1782 and 1788. And the commonwealth's 1790 constitution implicitly gave free Blacks the right to vote, a right that would be revoked in the new state constitution of 1838. According to the 1790 census, there were 3,737 enslaved Blacks in Pennsylvania, with 878 in the five western counties.

McDonald Roberts transferred to the Heinz History Center 55 records related to slavery in Westmoreland and Allegheny counties. These records can be classified as either freedom papers, certificates of freedom, or indentures. The papers reveal to us, for instance, a bill of sale in which a husband purchased his wife, 36 Blacks who were transported to freedom in Pittsburgh from Louisiana, and a free Black who was unjustly imprisoned. This exhibition writes a new chapter in the early history of race relations in Pennsylvania.

As we read at the outset of this essay, Peter Cosco's emancipation was obtained via self-purchase, by his having paid slaveholder John McKee 100 pounds "by

sundrey [sic] obligations in writing for the same.” This 1790 agreement was recorded in the Allegheny County deed books in 1792. The McKees founded McKeesport, Pa., and John built the first stone house in that area. He raised cattle and horses and used slave labor on his farm. His father, David, started a business that ran ferries across the Monongahela and Youghiogheny rivers. The deed records reveal an active participation in slavery on the part of John McKee.

Arguably the greatest example of emancipation by the numbers found in these records was that of Louisiana enslaver Arther Andrews. In May 1820, Andrews, of Concordia Parish, La., provided in his will that all his slaves be set free and sent to Pittsburgh after his debts were paid and enough money was made to ensure their safe transport to Pennsylvania. There were two men appointed executors of Andrews’ estate, John Taylor and John D. Smith. The will was filed in probate court in New Orleans in 1823. It took eight years before surviving executor Smith could raise the funds to pay for sending Andrews’ slaves to Pennsylvania, according to the document recorded in the Allegheny County deeds office 20 years later. Smith hired agent John Robb to “take said Negroes to the State of Pennasylvania [sic] and there Emancipate them.” In all, there were 37 Blacks listed as slaves conveyed for emancipation

in Pittsburgh. Some of Andrews’ liberated Blacks later were listed in various censuses for Pennsylvania and Indiana. Among Andrews’ enslaved were adults as well as small children, families as well as single persons.

Freedom Papers and Certificates of Freedom

Freedom papers and certificates of freedom were documents declaring the free status of Blacks. These papers were important because “free people of color” lived with the constant fear of being kidnapped and sold into slavery. Freedom Papers proved the free status of a person and served as a legal affidavit. Manumissions and emancipations were legal documents that made official the act of setting a Black person free from slavery by a living or deceased slaveholder.

It was prudent for Blacks to file papers attesting to their free status with the county deeds office in order to protect them from slave catchers and kidnappers. Antebellum America, including Western Pennsylvania, was hostile territory for a person of African descent. There are records of Blacks being held in local jails because they were suspected of being fugitive slaves. As was stated earlier, Black slaves were perceived as

property that, just like other goods, could be bought and sold, stolen or lost.

Filing with the deeds office protected African Americans from the loss, theft, or destruction of original documents, as in all-too-frequent situations where slave catchers confiscated or destroyed freedom papers to force free men and women into lives of bondage. Some free men had to have an affidavit that testified to their free status. If they lacked an affidavit, their friends would have to file such an affidavit after the free men in question had been confined. One such affidavit was sworn on behalf of James Cooper on Nov. 29, 1803. At that time, Cooper was confined in the “Common Jail of Allegheny on Suspicion of being a Slave from Canady” (Canada), placed there by John Wilkins, chief burgess of Pittsburgh. Three witnesses testified on Cooper’s behalf, and two of them “offered to bring forward four or five Others to prove that the said Cooper committed (upon God knows what ground) by Justice Wilkins is a free man.” It is not known whether the affidavit was reason enough to free James Cooper from the jail of Judge Wilkins. But this affidavit does seem to indicate that there were not only personal friends, but also a sympathetic network, perhaps an abolitionist group, willing to support the freedom of at least that Black man.

Amos Sisco of Washington County was a free Black man who, as the certificate of freedom says, was “about descending the Ohio river on a Steamboat in the Capacity of a Cook.” Sisco needed his certificate to protect his movements because in 1837, the year the certificate was signed and recorded, the Underground Railroad movement was active, and the waterways and rivers were used often as transport for fugitive slaves.

Jesse Turner of Southampton County, Va., was registered in that county’s court on Aug. 18, 1829, as a free man of color. A record of the filing was made in the Allegheny County deed books on Sept. 6, 1848. Turner probably moved to Allegheny County in 1848 and needed to file his certificate attesting to his free status. Given the harsh reprisals against African Americans that followed Nat Turner’s 1831 revolt in Southampton County, Jesse Turner would probably have had a difficult time obtaining his certificate there after the revolt. It is even possible that Jesse Turner had been enslaved by the same Southampton County slaveholders, Benjamin Turner and his son Samuel, who had enslaved Nat Turner and his mother.

In some cases, African Americans participated in the benign purchase and sale of family members. In this regard, the freedom papers of Julia Mason recorded by the County on Oct. 1, 1851, constitute an illuminating

record. Mason was freed by her husband, Robert Mason, who purchased her from G. W. Baker of Winchester, Va., for the sum of \$600. Julia was 35 years old at the time, and, as it was just a year after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, Robert Mason was careful to record the manumission of his wife with the deeds office. Since Robert Mason was a free African American, this document records a Black person participating in the slave economy, but for the honorable purpose of freeing his wife from bondage.

Indentures

The documents titled Indentures referred to that clause of the Gradual Abolition Act that called for those born of slave mothers after March 1, 1780, to serve 28 years as indentured servants. One such indenture that raises a number of questions is that of the 6-year-old slave girl Sally. Sally was a slave for life to Thomas Woods of Ohio County, Va., who manumitted her in 1825 to serve until age 28 as an indentured servant to Pittsburgh attorney John McKee (not to be confused with McKeesport founder John McKee). Sally, “having no parents living in the State of Pennsylvania,” arrived in the Commonwealth to serve a term of 22 years as an indentured servant. We don’t know whether Sally served the full term of this contract. The peculiar thing is that

a 6-year-old was contracting herself as an indenture, apprenticed “to learn the Art and mystery of a house Servant and Cook.” Two members of the Pittsburgh Bar approved this transaction, Pittsburgh aldermen Thomas Enochs and Magnus Murray, the man who would later serve two terms as the city’s mayor.

In 1793, the same John McKee who had founded McKeesport and freed Peter Cosco indentured a young woman named Kut, the daughter of an enslaved woman named Negro Suck(see p.9). The indenture was for 12.5 years and states that Kut “shall faithfully serve his [McKee’s] lawful commands, cheerfully obey; she shall not contract matrimony &c &c, nor do anything detrimental to her said Master’s interests; she shall not commit fornication nor frequent taverns, cards, dice nor any unlawful games.” It appears by the statements made in this document that some perception of the surrounding community made a Black girl prey to the vices of society. This record also suggests Blacks’ preservation of their African roots through their choice of names. Taking another look at the indenture of Kut and her mother Suck, we see a name with West African cultural connections: Suck appears to be derived from the Wolof female name Sukey. The Wolof were native to West Africa’s Guinea and Senegambia region. Sukey

was a common name among Creole slaves in Louisiana, as was the common Creole name Kut, sometimes spelled Quite.

Notable Pittsburgh Citizens And Slavery

Among other prominent residents involved in slavery in Allegheny County was the Neville family. Presley Neville and his father, Revolutionary War general John Neville, were among the largest slaveholders in the region. Two records in the deed books of 1806 and 1807, respectively, document Presley Neville's activities.

15 Neville states that Jack Walls "was born in my family of parents that were slaves." He was manumitted at the age of 26 for good conduct on Nov. 1, 1806. Another record, dated June 25, 1807, documents 19- or 20-year-old Henry Holt, a free African American born of free parents in the Neville "family."

These records document other Pittsburghers with familiar names owning slaves. The indenture of 13-year-old Mary Smith was sold by slaveholder Horatio Berry of Baltimore, Md., to Pittsburgher George Poe Jr., the son of Baltimore attorney George Poe Sr., on Aug. 4, 1814. Poe purchased the indenture for the sum of \$500 directly following Berry's manumission from

slavery of Mary Smith; Poe bound her as his indentured servant until she reached the age of 28. Berry was a wealthy real estate investor who owned many slaves in Baltimore and was said to be a descendant of Frankish King Charlemagne, while Poe was a cousin of American author Edgar Allan Poe.

One way that slaveholders were able to keep their slaves or capitalize on their investment in them was to indenture them. William Croghan Jr. of Louisville, Ky., a slaveholding state, moved to Pittsburgh and married the daughter of Revolutionary War veteran James O'Hara, after whom O'Hara Street in Oakland and O'Hara Township were named. In order to keep his slaves after he moved to Pennsylvania, Croghan Jr. manumitted, and then indentured, 13-year-old Matilda Richardson and 48-year-old Charles Gouldman in 1828. Croghan's daughter was Mary Elizabeth Schenley, after whom Schenley Park was named. The papers also show that more than three decades earlier, in 1795, James O'Hara had purchased the indenture of a 15-year-old slave girl named Comfort Tunnel from slaveholder Reuben West.

Conclusion

The exhibition documents recorded in the Allegheny County Recorder of Deeds Office between 1792 and 1857 reveal a surprising amount of information about African Americans in the antebellum Pittsburgh region. Not only do we get a glimpse of the number of Blacks coming into and passing through the area, but also insight into a heretofore little-known but significant part of Western Pennsylvania's history of slavery and Black indentures.

These records shed much light on just how Blacks were perceived in the larger society, with a number of documents alluding to Blacks as objects, reflecting their status as chattel. This notion of ownership led to many abuses, including slaveholder sexual abuse of slaves and indentures, some of them children. The papers also document the participation of some of Pittsburgh's most-noted early settlers in the enslavement of Blacks. They show us how dominant a role the legal system played, even at that early stage in the nation's history, in the lives, enslavement, and freedom of Blacks. They help explain the impetus behind abolitionists' calls for absolute emancipation in the years preceding the Civil War. In short, they provide captivating and concrete evidence about the relationship

between Blacks and Whites in Western Pennsylvania in ways that we may not have clearly considered before.

Although the 1780 Gradual Abolition Act was still in effect, slavery for Blacks in the form of indentured servitude persisted well into the 19th century. It definitely existed during the height of Allegheny County abolitionist activism. As John Peck, Lewis Woodson, Martin Delany, and John and George Vashon organized and worked to free so many from bondage, in their midst were those still being held in involuntary servitude.

Taken as a whole, the documents show the lengths to which portions of White America went to maintain slavery and perpetuate a lifestyle that would have grave consequences for the future. And for African Americans, the records provide tangible evidence of so many souls lost to time and displaced by a once legally sanctioned and now universally condemned institution. Thanks to a thoughtful public servant, the names and plight of these historical figures have been recovered for us so that they can now be known to descendants, Pittsburghers, and the world.

RECLAIMED FROM HISTORY: A GUIDE TO ALLEGHENY COUNTY'S 55 SLAVERY-RELATED RECORDS

Compiled by Emily Karam

“That every Negro and Mulatto child born within this state after the passing of this act as aforesaid (who would, in case this act had not been made, have been born a servant for years, or life, or a slave) shall be deemed to be and shall be by virtue of this act the servant of such person or his or her assigns, who would in such case have been entitled to the service of such child, until such child shall attain unto the age of twenty eight years.”

– From *An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery* (Pennsylvania, 1780)

Title	Year Recorded	Summary
Freedom Papers: Peter Cosco	1792	Peter Cosco buys his freedom from John McKee for 100 pounds, paid through “sundrey [sic] obligations.”
Indenture: Negro Suck	1793	Negro Suck, a slave of James Torrons, indentures her daughter to John McKee for the term of 12 years and six months.
Indenture: Deemer	1794	Deemer is indentured to Melcher Beltzhoover to serve for six years.
Freedom Papers: Jacob Moore	1804	Catherine Thompson frees Jacob Moore, her “mulatto slave.”
Freedom Papers: Caleb Mills	1804	Benjamin Mills frees Caleb Mills.
Freedom Papers: Jack Walls	1806	Presley Nevill frees 26-year-old Jack Walls. Walls was born of slaves and had been registered to serve until he was 28 years old.
Certificate of Freedom: Henry Holt	1807	Presley Nevill certifies that Henry Holt “was born in my family of free parents.”
Certificate of Freedom: James Cooper	1810	James Cooper is imprisoned in the Common Jail of Allegheny by John Wilkins. Wilkins suspects that Cooper is a runaway slave from “Canady.” Several men testify that Cooper is in fact a free man.
Indenture: Comfort Tunnel	1810	This indenture includes several transactions. Fifteen-year-old Comfort Tunnel is indentured to James O’Hara in 1795. O’Hara sells Tunnel to Steele Semple for the sum of \$80 in June 1802. Semple then sells Tunnel for \$80 to Thomas Dobbins in July 1802. Within three weeks, Dobbins sells Comfort to William Gazzam for the sum of \$62. Gazzam frees Tunnel upon the completion of her indenture.
Freedom Papers: Samuel Johnston	1815	Samuel Johnston was freed by the will of the late Robert Carter in 1791. A true copy of this record is made in 1812.
Indenture: Frankey	1815	The will of the late James McCary dictates that the Negro girl Frankey should be taken from Mississippi to Pennsylvania, where she is to be freed.

Title	Year Recorded	Summary
Freedom Papers: Frankey	1815	Frankey, having arrived in Pennsylvania from Mississippi, is set free by the attorney John Cary, according to the will of the late James McCary.
Freedom Papers: Mary	1815	Mary was bought out of slavery in 1812 for \$350.
Indenture: Lucy	1816	In 1816, 14-year-old Lucy is indentured to Hanson Catlett to serve until she is 28 years old. Hanson has granted her conditional freedom. While he legally has set her free from slavery “from motives of benevolence and humanity,” he in effect has kept her as his slave, because she only is set free if she “faithfully bind herself to serve” him through this indenture.
Indenture: Mary Smith	1825	Thirteen-year-old Mary Smith of Baltimore County is set free from slavery by Horatio Berry. However, Berry in effect sells her back into servitude for \$500, by indenturing Mary to George Poe Jr. of Pittsburgh. The transaction is completed by Poe’s father and attorney, George Poe Sr.
Indenture: Sally	1825	Sally, a 6-year-old slave girl in Virginia, is set free by Thomas Woods. Sally is immediately bound by indenture to serve John McKee of Pittsburgh.
Certificate of Freedom: David Lewis	1826	David Lewis is proven to have been born free.
Freedom Papers: Amery Joiner	1827	The document certifies that 8-year-old Amery Joiner has been recorded “as a free person of colour.”
Freedom Papers: Mary Joiner	1827	This document certifies that 11-year-old Mary Joiner has been recorded “as a free person of colour.”
Freedom Papers: Charles Gouldman	1828	Forty-eight-year-old Charles Gouldman is set free by William Croghan, who has recently moved from Jefferson County, Ky.
Indenture: Charles Gouldman	1828	Charles Gouldman, a 48-year-old slave from Kentucky who has been set free this same day by William Croghan, is indentured to Croghan to serve for seven years in Pennsylvania.

Title	Year Recorded	Summary
Freedom Papers: Matilda Richardson	1828	William Croghan, who recently has moved from Kentucky to Pennsylvania, sets free 13-year-old Matilda Richardson on the condition that she “bind herself by indenture” to him.
Indenture: Matilda Richardson	1828	Matilda Richardson, a 13-year-old slave from Kentucky who has been set free this same day by William Croghan, is indentured to Croghan to serve for 15 years in Pennsylvania.
Certificate of Freedom: McCoy	1834	McCoy is certified as a “Free Man of Color.” This certificate includes a copy of the original deed of emancipation by Stephen Cleaver, who freed McCoy for the sum of \$300.
Certificate of Freedom: George Martin	1835	Perry Travis testifies that George Martin was born a free man. Travis has been acquainted with Martin since he was “not more than one year old.”
Certificate of Freedom: Gabriel Klingman	1836	Thomas B. King of Kentucky sets free 35-year-old Gabriel Klingman.
Freedom Papers: James Bayly	1837	In the freedom papers is the 1808 indenture of 10-year-old James Bayly—by his father, Levin—as an apprentice to William Graham of Philadelphia to be instructed in the “Trade or mystery of Domestic Work.” Then, there is documentation that James Bayly has completed his indenture at age 21 and is on his way to visit his father in Baltimore. And finally, while in Baltimore, James Bayly is certified as a “free black,” “an American seamen [sic],” and “of free coloured parents.”
Certificate of Freedom: Henry Williams	1837	Henry Williams is certified as “a Freeman,” born of free parents, according to the testimony of John Bowman.
Freedom Papers: Stephen	1837	John and Mary Brady have been willed the “negro man Stephen,” 22 years old, by Mary’s father, the late John Buckey. The Bradys emancipate Stephen.
Freedom Papers: Jacob	1837	Jacob, about 35 years old, bought by the late William Hamilton in 1834 in Tennessee, is set free by Hamilton’s heirs in 1837.
Certificate of Freedom: Henry Stevens	1837	Deposition is offered to prove that Henry E. Stevens is a free “American Seamen [sic] of Colour,” from Newport, R.I.
Certificate of Freedom: Amos Sisco	1837	Amos Sisco is certified as a free man who is “about descending the Ohio river on a Steamboat in the Capacity of a Cook.”

Title	Year Recorded	Summary
Certificate of Freedom: Joseph Miller	1838	Joseph Miller, a 22-year-old “mulatto man,” is certified as “trustworthy and honest.”
Freedom Papers: Daniel Robinson	1839	Rev. Elisha McCurdy testifies that 19-year-old Daniel Robinson is a free man, and, further, “requests all steamboat captains or owners or any other person or persons to consider this as evidence.”
Freedom Papers: William Johnson	1839	Prindowell M. Dorsey and Ransom Akin certify that 22-year-old William Johnson is a “free man of colour.”
Freedom Papers: Crayton Warrick	1840	This document certifies that Crayton Warrick is free born.
Freedom Papers: Johnston Howard	1841	Johnston Howard is registered by the court as having been born free.
Freedom Papers: Emanuel Jackson Jr.	1841	Emanuel Jackson Sr. purchases his son, 21-year-old Emanuel Jackson Jr., from the heirs of the late Isaac Hite of Virginia for the sum of \$800. In Allegheny County, Jackson Sr. frees his son.
Freedom Papers: Armsted	1841	Andrew Miller of Kentucky frees his slave Armsted for “divers good causes” and the sum of one dollar.
Freedom Papers: Milly	1841	Andrew Miller of Kentucky frees his 45-year-old slave Milly and her children.
Freedom Papers: Oscar Wright	1841	Oscar Wright, who was emancipated at age 26 by the will of the late John Brims, is registered as free.
Freedom Papers: Matilda Hall	1842	An attorney certifies that Matilda Hall (late Ridout) is a free woman.
Freedom Papers: Edward Robinson	1842	Edward Robinson is certified as a free man. He was born of free parents in Kentucky, formerly indentured to the late Benjamin Page of Pittsburgh and currently “a free Citizen of the State of Pennsylvania.”
Freedom Papers: William Ridout	1842	James Buchanan certifies that William Ridout is a free man. This document is recorded out of place.

Title	Year Recorded	Summary
Certificate of Freedom: William Harris	1844	James Wilson testifies that William Harris is a free man. Harris had lived with Wilson in Pittsburgh and served as a waiter.
Freedom Papers: Caroline McAlfrey	1844	Benjamin Hassell of Alabama, “for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar,” frees Caroline McAlfrey and releases all claims to her two sons.
Freedom Papers: William Johnston	1845	William Johnston is certified as a free man who is “about to descend the Ohio River in the capacity of a fireman on a Steamboat.”
Freedom Papers: Isaac Craig	1845	Isaac Craig, “a light colored man,” is certified as a free man who was born of free parents.
Freedom Papers: Allen Norton	1846	More than 10 witnesses testify that Allen Norton, who is described as “a light yellow boy about 21 or 22 years old,” is free. [Note: Yellow, as used in this exhibition, refers to the complexion of a mulatto or a person descended from a mulatto.]
Certificate of Freedom: Jesse Turner	1848	Jesse Turner is certified as being “born free.”
Freedom Papers: Thomas Mahorney [so spelled in the underlined title of the original record]	1850	Katy Mahoney’s children, including Thomas Mahoney, are certified as “free born” in Virginia. Then, Katy Mahoney, now Katy Gibson, is registered in another county in Virginia, where Stephen Gibson, who appears to be Katy’s spouse and who was freed through the will of the late Martha James, also is registered.
Freedom Papers: Archibald Brant et al	1851	In his will, the late Arther [so spelled throughout the record] Andrews freed his slaves. But, before they could be freed, the estate’s debts had to be paid and enough money earned to ensure their safe transport to Pennsylvania, all of which had happened by 1831.
Freedom Papers: Julia Mason	1851	Robert Mason of Pittsburgh buys his wife Julia’s freedom for the sum of \$600.
Freedom Papers: Edwin	1854	Albert Wallace of Kentucky sets free his “Mulatto Negro Boy” Edwin, who is 15 years old.
Freedom Papers: Nancy Rollings	1857	Nancy Rollings buys her freedom from slavery for \$500.



FIVE GREAT SLAVE ESCAPES

The desire for personal freedom and the need to shape one's own life fueled slave escapes, some highly ingenious, all desperate and dangerous. Five are presented in the *Free at Last?* exhibition.

Frederick Douglass (left), a powerful speaker for the abolitionist cause, was dressed as a sailor and carried a friend's "protection papers" certifying that he was a free American sailor when he escaped from servitude in 1838 on a train and steamboat bound for Philadelphia. Determined to make his story public, he wrote *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* in 1845. Later, Douglass founded his own abolitionist newspaper, *The North Star*. After Reconstruction, he served as U.S. Marshal for Washington, D.C., then was that city's recorder of deeds, and still later spent two years as American consul general to Haiti.

This exhibition brings to light several other spectacular escapes.

- **Henry Highland Garnet**, born in Kent County, Md., was led from slavery to safety by his father, George Trusty. With permission to attend a family funeral, in 1824, the family of 10 traveled by wagon and foot until reaching Pennsylvania. The family settled in New York State, adopting the name of Garnet. Henry pursued every opportunity for formal education. In 1843, while he was a Presbyterian minister in Troy, N.Y., he gained fame for an address to the Negro

National Convention in Buffalo in which he called for a massive slave uprising. In 1865, he became the first Black to deliver a sermon to the U.S. House of Representatives, and from 1868 to 1870 he was president of Pittsburgh's Avery College, also founding Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church, the city's first Black Presbyterian church. Appointed U.S. ambassador to Liberia in 1881, he died in that country in early 1882.

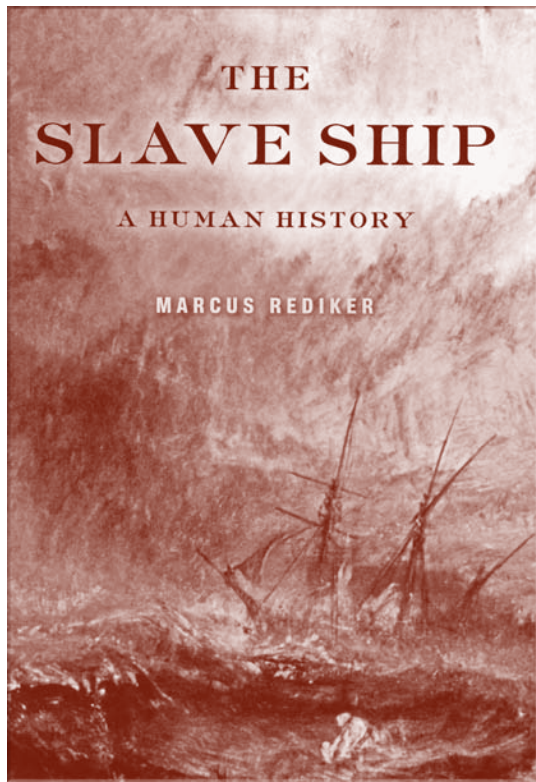
- **Ellen and William Craft**, a married couple, used a complex disguise to journey by train and steamer in 1848 from Macon, Ga., to Philadelphia. William’s successfully executed plan was to dress the light-complexioned Ellen as a sickly white gentleman traveling with his manservant (William). It took them eight days to reach the safety of Philadelphia. They settled in Boston and took to the antislavery lecture circuit. Following the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, they fled to England, where they raised five children and where William chronicled their harrowing escape in the 1860 memoir *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom*. The couple returned to the United States with two of their children in 1868, only to have their plantation and industrial school for Black children in Georgia sabotaged by neighboring Whites. Years later, William and Ellen’s great-granddaughter, Ellen Craft, lived in Pittsburgh and married Donald Dammond, a University of Pittsburgh graduate and nephew of William Hunter Dammond, the first Black graduate of the University, then called the Western University of Pennsylvania.
- **Henry “Box” Brown** had himself packed into a dry goods crate by a White storekeeper and shipped to Pennsylvania from Richmond, Va., in late March 1849. Although the box was marked “This side up

with care,” Brown experienced rough handling and was turned upside down as his crate was subjected to transfers between three trains, a steamboat, and two delivery wagons during the 350 miles en route. Nevertheless, he was able to say he was “all right” when reaching Philadelphia, his destination, after his 27-hour ordeal. Two versions of his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Henry Box Brown*, were published, in Boston in 1849 and in England in 1851. A popular speaker for the Anti-Slavery Society, he, like the Crafts, fled to England in 1850, starting a new family and working for 25 years as an entertainer there. In 1875, he brought his family magic act to the United States, where he died some four years later.

- **The Drennen slave**, a 14-year old girl, arrived at the Monongahela House, Pittsburgh’s most elegant hotel, in 1850 with the slaveholding Drennen family, from western Arkansas. After emptying the Drennens’ trunk and filling it with dirty, damaged clothing, she escaped, not to be seen again. “Rescue squads,” also known as hotel vigilantes, helped slaves passing through the city escape from their slaveholders, which is probably what happened with this teenager.

HISTORY IN CONTEXT:

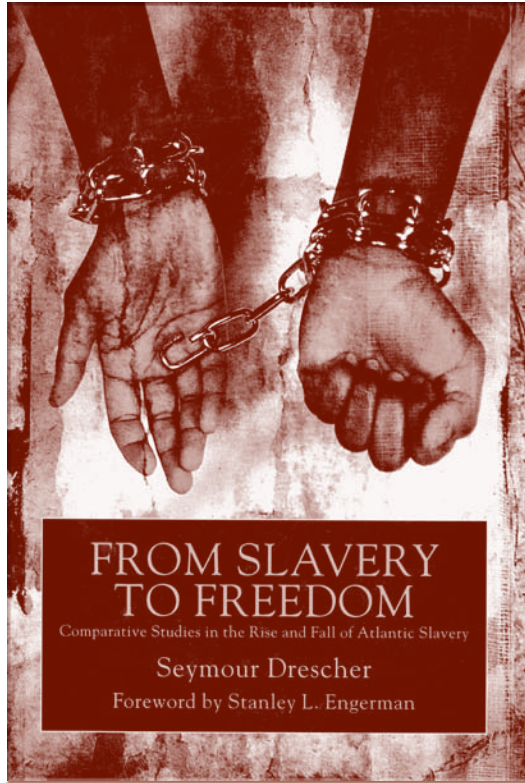
BOOKS BY UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH FACULTY FEATURED
IN THE *FREE AT LAST?* EXHIBITION
BY CINDY GILL



The Slave Ship: A Human History

A haunting portrait of the brutal dynamics of the maritime slave trade that shows the convergence of labor, power, economics, and race into a global slave industry. This work, published by Viking in 2007, gives flesh and soul to the horrid enterprise of slave ships.

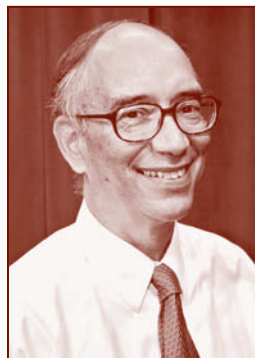
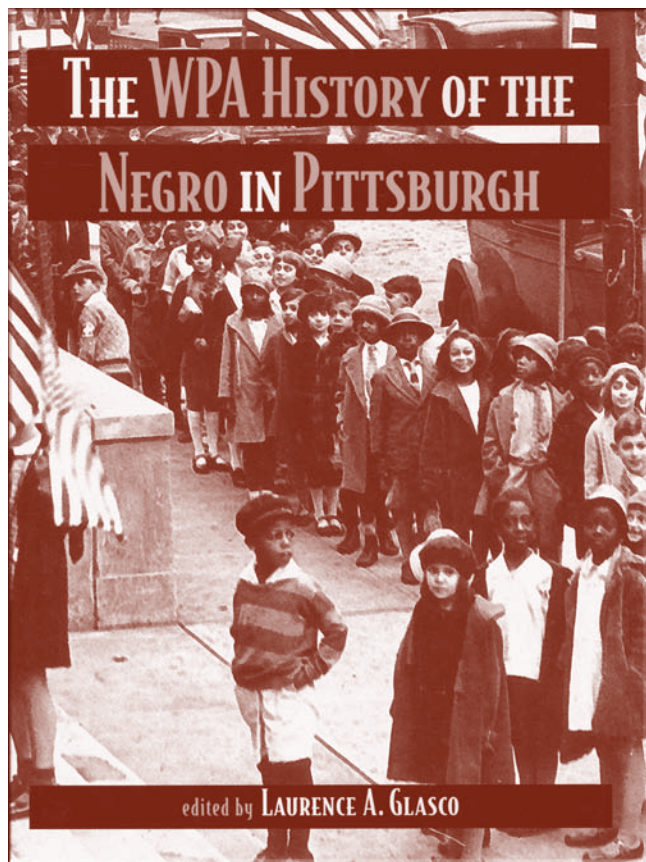
*Professor and chair in the Department of History at the University of Pittsburgh, **Marcus Rediker** won the \$50,000 George Washington Book Prize in 2008 for this work. Annually, the prize honors the most important new book about America's founding era. Rediker, a social-justice activist, is the renowned author or coauthor of five books of history, as well as many other publications. Among his honors and awards are a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship, a Guggenheim fellowship, and a John Hope Franklin Book Prize.*



From Slavery to Freedom

An in-depth comparative analysis of the transatlantic slave trade and abolition movements in 19th-century Europe and the Americas that also explores the ongoing impact of these historic forces on politics and race. It was published by New York University Press in 1999.

Seymour Drescher, University Professor of History and Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh, is an eminent historian and author of several books and many other publications on the interplay of slavery and economics. His honors and awards include recognition as a Fulbright Scholar, a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, a Guggenheim Fellow, and winner of a Frederick Douglass Book Prize from Yale University's Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition.



The WPA History of the Negro in Pittsburgh

This collection of historical essays on the African American experience in Pittsburgh from the Colonial era through the 1930s was derived from original materials compiled in 1940 by University of Pittsburgh English professor J. Ernest Wright as one of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Writers' Projects. It was edited by Laurence A. Glasco and published in 2004 by the University of Pittsburgh Press.

*Scholar and author **Laurence A. Glasco**, winner of the 2008 Pitt African American Alumni Council Sankofa Award, is a University of Pittsburgh history professor who focuses on race, ethnicity, and urban history. His distinguished work continues to illuminate the significant accomplishments of African Americans from Pittsburgh and elsewhere. His role in the publication of the WPA history exceeded that of editor: He continued the work of the late Clarence Rollo Turner, a Pitt professor of Black studies, in bringing this largely forgotten and neglected text to light for the benefit of all.*

FREE AT LAST? SLAVERY IN PITTSBURGH IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

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<i>Writer/researchers</i>	Laurence A. Glasco, Samuel W. Black, Barbara Paull, Diane Hernon Chavis, John Harvith, Ervin Dyer, Cara Hayden, Morgan Kelly, Robert Hill, Patricia Lomando White, Amanda Leff, Sharon Blake, Anthony Moore, John Fedele, Madelyn Ross, Stephanie C. Lilavois, Linda Schmitmeyer, Cindy Gill, and Patricia Pugh Mitchell		
<i>Editors</i>	Charles Staresenic, Joe Miksch, Kelly Kaufman, Laurence A. Glasco, Robert Hill, John Harvith, Madelyn Ross, and Cindy Gill		
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