

Resources for Building the African American Personal Family Narrative

National and New Jersey African American Genealogy Resources

In honor of Juneteenth, Legacy Roots has compiled a short list of national and local New Jersey genealogy websites that may be instrumental in telling the story of your family's journey as an African American. While some will provide access to sources which include names and dates, other sources are useful in telling the narrative.

What you will find here:

- I. **National and general resources relative to slavery, the Underground Railroad, and abolition.** These include links to the Freedman's Bureau; slave narratives compiled by the government; a 7-page PDF compiled by the government with numerous additional links, and a link to a page developed by Family Search with even more links to available sources.
- II. **New Jersey State Archives Resources.** This list includes chronologically listed documents housed at the New Jersey State Archives including legislative petitions for and against abolition and several slave holding family documents which provide the names of the enslaved.
- III. **New Jersey Resources Statewide and by County.** This list includes links for New Jersey in general and those held by each county. Some are direct to a searchable document, while others note where the resource can be located or provide an abstract of the document including names.

I. NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGY RESOURCES:

- **The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands** (Freedmen's Bureau)
<http://www.discoverfreedmen.org/>
 - Established by Congress of 3 March 1865
 - Disbanded in 1872

- **United States, Freedmen's Bureau Marriages, 1861-1872** (Family Search free search index)
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1414908>
 - May only provide documents for Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington

- **Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 to 1938**
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/about-this-collection/?&locl=reclnk>
 - Contains more than 2,300 first-person accounts of slavery and 500 black-and-white photographs of former slaves.

- **Federal Records that Help Identify Former Enslaved People and Slave Holders**
<https://www.archives.gov/files/calendar/genealogy-fair/2018/2-kluskens-handout.pdf>

- **Family Search African American Genealogy Resources**
https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/African_American_Genealogy
 - Includes a site for specific resources for each state

II. NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES RESOURCES

Below is a list of papers housed at the New Jersey State Archives, some of which list names of slaves, slave holders, and petitioners in the index. Slave names are **bolded**, while owners and petitioners are underlined.

[Unless otherwise stated, these documents are from the Department of Education, New Jersey State Library, Bureau of Archives and History Manuscript Collection, SEDSL006]

- 17 December 1747 — BOND - Surety bond of Henry Langstaff et. al., to pay £20 per annum to **Coffee**, manumitted slave of Samuel Borrowe [Box 1:30: 43]
- 30 March 1752 — Receipt of Daniel Hendrickson to Frederick Van Liew, for £52 in exchange for a Negro Boy named **Caesar** [Van Liew Family Papers, 1712-1796, Item 18]
- 11 August 1753 — Arbitration award of custody of a Negro girl, **Lydia**, to Minnie Voorhees [Van Liew Family Papers, 1712-1796, Item 20]
- 12 June 1758 — Receipt of John Van Buren to Reem Datmas, for 7s. for an elixer for Fredrick Van Liew's Negro **Paexkey** [Van Liew Family Papers, 1712-1796, Item 33] written in Dutch w/translation
- 1 April 1761 — Petition of Inhabitants of New Jersey to the Legislature opposing importation of slaves, April 1, 1761 [Box 1-13: 51]
- 1 June 1772 — Bill of sale of James Vansickle to Cornelius Van Liew, of one Negro man named **Frank** [Van Liew Family Papers, 1712-1796, Item 41]
- 12 January 1774 — Petition of Citizens of **Perth Amboy** to the General Assembly, opposing slave manumissions [Box 1-14:16]
- 2 February 1774 — Petition of Inhabitants of **Middletown, Monmouth County** to the Assembly, opposing slave manumissions [Box 1-14: 17]
- 2 February 1774 — Petition of Inhabitants of **Monmouth County** to the General Assembly, opposing slave manumissions [Box 1-14: 18]
- No date - A petition of Inhabitants of **Cumberland County** to the New Jersey Legislature, advocating slave manumission [Box 1-19: 20]
- ca. 1775 — Petition of Inhabitants of **Burlington County** to the New Jersey Legislature, advocating the manumission of slaves [Box 1-19: 3]
- ca. 1775 — A petition of Inhabitants of **Cumberland County** to the New Jersey Legislature, advocating slave manumission [Box 1-19: 7]

- ca. 1775 — Petition of Inhabitants of **Middlesex County** to the Representatives of the Province of New Jersey in Assembly, advocating slave manumission [Box 1-19: 28]
- No date - Petition of residents of **Salem County** to the Legislative Council opposing the freedom of slaves [Box 1-19: 51]
- 9 November 1775 - Petition of Inhabitants of **Chesterfield Township, Burlington County** to the General Assembly, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery [Box 1-14: 19]
- 19 May 1785 - Petition of Moore Furman to the Legislature, concerning the custody of a slave [Box 1-15: 82]
- 1 May 1792 - Inhabitants of **Burlington and Hunterdon Counties** - Petition request legislation for the gradual abolition of slavery in New Jersey [Box 5-2: 361] 100 signatures 3pp.
- 29 May 1792 - Petition of Inhabitants of **Burlington County** to the Legislature, advocating a law to permit manumission of slaves [Box 1-16: 48]
- 11 November 1792 - Petition of Quakers in **New Jersey**, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland to the Legislature advocating the abolition of slavery [Box 1-16: 53]
- 1796 - Inhabitants of **Hunterdon County**. To Legislative Council and General Assembly. [Box 5-2: 382]
 - Abstract of Petition: *Impelled by strong sense of duty, call attention to "spectacle of human boadage"; thousands of men, women and children, for no crime, are doomed to life of captivity; a cruel degradation of man; pray representatives to pass a law which will at least lay a foundation for gradual extirpation of slavery.*
 - Signed by Andrew Reeder, Amos Reeder, John Howell, William S. Moore, Benjamin Johnson, Ebenezer Ross, Nathaniel Green, Daniel Slack, Amos Scudder, John Scudder, Richard Lott, Nathaniel Burrows, John Reeder, Henry Burrows, Joseph Palmer, Arthur Henarie, Elias Scudder and Philip Burrows
- 1796 - Petition of Inhabitants of **Burlington County** to the Legislature, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery [Box 1-16: 102] Six items
- 1796? - Petition of Inhabitants of **Windsor Township, Middlesex County**, to the Legislature, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery [Box 1-16: 104]
- 1796? - Petition of the Inhabitants of **Middlesex County** to the Legislature, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery [Box 1-16: 105] 2 items
- 1796? - Petition of the Inhabitants of **Monmouth County** to the Legislature, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery [Box 1-16: 106]
- October 1796 - Inhabitants of **Burlington County**. To Legislative Council and General Assembly of New Jersey. [Box 5-2: 383]

- Abstract of Petition: *Impelled by duty to pray representatives to pass law to lay foundation for gradual abolition of slavery.*
 - 204 signatures, indexed
- 17 October 1796 - Petition of the Inhabitants of **Gloucester County** to the Legislature, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery [Box 1-16: 112] 4 items
- 1 February 1804 - New Jersey Society for the Abolition of Slavery, Trenton, To Legislative Council and General Assembly. [Box 5-2: 411] 5pp.
 - Abstract of Petition: *Principle of hereditary bondage can no longer be defended in a land of freedom; it can be no violation of private rights to give freedom to children born of slaves; all born after passage of law should be free at age of twenty one; pray the passing of such law.*
 - Signed by William Griffith, President, Richard Hartshorne, Thomas Redman, William Newbold, G. Craft, David Wright, Samuel Clement, committee
- 6 February 1804 - Philip CASE, Amwell. To Members of General Assembly. [Box 5-2: 412]
 - Abstract of Petition: *Owned two slaves: **James**, with ten more months to serve, **Bram** for life; in October Bram murdered James; Bram delivered up and executed; worth about \$900; no law to compensate owners in such cases; prays Legislature to give consideration to matter, and recompense petitioner.*
 - Certified and approved by George Maxwell, A. F. Hunter, Alex Bonnell, Nathaniel Saxton, Benjamin Dean, John Suydam, William George, Derrick Waldron, Henry Bailie, Jacob Sydam, Joseph Lambert, Cornelius Hoppock, Nathan Price, Michael Shirts, Jr., William Field, David Bishop, Eze Cole, Richard Opdycke, Benjamin Egbert, Andrew Rearder, John Smith, John Wilson and A. Van Syckel.
- 1 January 1806 - Subscribers, Freeholders and Citizens of **Morris County**. To Council and General Assembly. [Box 5-2: 417 & 418] 4 pp.
 - Abstract of Petition: *Have seen with sorrow and concern law passed February 15, 1804 for gradual abolition of slavery; law is unconstitutional; imposes tax on individual property; declares future children of slaves free at birth, yet claims their service for twenty-one years; tax for support of these ex-slaves will be a great burden; ask repeal of law.*
 - 117 signatures. Names of signers in index.
- 4 January 1806 - Inhabitants and Freeholders of **Bergen County**. To Legislative Council and General Assembly.

- Abstract of Petition: *Seriously alarmed by dangerous consequences which will result to community from oppressive operation of Act for gradual abolition of slavery; law unconstitutional and unjustly severe; those who have no slaves find it easy to talk, having no property at stake; no provision in law for maintenance of slaves' children before they are twenty-one; taxes will be increased to care for such; ask for repeal of law.*
- 94 signatures. Names of signers in index. [Box 5-2: 419] 4 pp.
- 63 signatures. Names of signers in index. [Box 5-2: 420] 3 pp.
- 115 signatures. Names of signers in index. [Box 5-2: 421 & 425] 3 pp.
- 70 signatures. Names of signers in index. [Box 5-2: 422] 3 pp.
- 72 signatures. Names of signers in index. [Box 5-2: 424] 3 pp.
- 115 signatures. Names of signers in index. [Box 5-2: 425] 3pp.
- 134 signatures. Names of signers in index. [Box 5-2: 427] 4pp.
- 4 January 1806 - Inhabitants, Freeholders of **Bergen County**. To Legislature. [Box 5-2: 423] 4 pp.
 - Abstract of Petition: *Seriously alarmed by dangerous consequences which will result to community from oppressive operation of Act for gradual abolition of slavery; law unconstitutional and unjustly severe; those who have no slaves find it easy to talk, having no property at stake; no provision in law for maintenance of slaves' children before they are twenty-one; taxes will be increased to care for such; ask for repeal of law.*
 - 51 signatures. Abraham Forshee, Samuel Taylor, Roliff Campbell, James (his mark) Debaw, Harmanis (his mark) Vazile, Peter Debaun, John Row, Jane Debaun, Wm. Sutton, John Debaun, John (his mark) Horn, Josop Debaun, Margaret Maysinger, John Pardamon, Michael Maysinger, Mikel Winter, George Laurence, Henry Brown, Abraham Daveson, John Christopher, Coonrad (his mark) Maysinger, James Brooks, Jacob Hopper, Henry Valentine, John Peterson, Jacob Christopher, Peter Ramsey, Aaron Day, Thomas Van Buskirk, Jacob Forshee, Albert Wilson, Menry Foster, James H. Pulis, Jacob Miller, David Van Blaricum, William Sisco, Albert D. Terhune, William Day, Thomas Wanamaker, Peter Allen, Peter Reilly, William Valentine, David Folly, William Folly, Peter Swin, John A. Hopper, John I. Hopper, John G. Hopper, Elisha Hopper, Elijah Rossvant, Lodiwich Maseker.
- 13 January 1806 - Inhabitants of Pracaness, **Bergen County**. To House of Assembly. [Box 5-2: 428] 2pp.

- Abstract of Petition: *Sensible of inconvenience already arisen since passing of law for abolition of slavery, dreading intolerable burden of taxes which will accrue, pray for repeal of Act for gradual abolition of slavery.*
 - 64 signatures. Names of signers in index.
- 22 January 1807 - Circular letter and resolution from Maryland concerning prohibition on the importation of slaves, January 22, 1807 [printed letter, box 1-2: 16]
- 15 October 1807 - Bill of Sale of one slave from William Dayton to Thomas Morrell [Morrell Family Papers, 1772-1922, Folder 12]
- 4 November 1815 - Manumission of **William Field**, slave of Robert Finley, Bernards Township, **Somerset County** [Box 1-39: 31] 2 items
- 30 April 1817 - Certificate of Removal of London, slave of George Anderson, Jr. [Secretary of State's Office, Letters and Miscellaneous Records, SSTSE024, Box 1: 37]
- 22 December 1817 - Bill of Sale of one slave from Aaron Woodruff to Thomas Morrell [Morrell Family Papers, 1772-1922, Folder 15]
- 10 March 1818 - Memorandum concerning the removal of slaves from **Perth Amboy** [Box 1-39:34]
- 10 March 1818 - Indictment of Charles Morgan for exporting slaves, Court of Oyer & Terminer, **Middlesex County** [Box 1-22: 81]
- 10 March 1818 - Indictment of James Edgar for exporting a slave, Court of Common Pleas, **Middlesex County** [Box 1-26: 47]
- 25 May 1818 - Indictment of Peter F. Hendry for exporting a slave, Court of Common Pleas, **Middlesex County** [Box 1-26: 48]
- June 1818 - Indictments for exporting slaves, Court of Common Pleas, **Middlesex County** [Box 1-26: 49] 2 items
- 1 June 1818 - Bill of Sale of one slave from Job Clarke to Thomas Morrell [Morrell Family Papers, 1772-1922, Folder 16]
- 28 October 1818 - Petition of the Inhabitants of **Middlesex County** to the New Jersey Legislature, opposing the transportation of slaves from New Jersey [Box 1-18: 33] 2 items
- 17 March 1819 - Bill of sale of slave, **Robert Shaw** to Benjamin Davids, **Sussex County** [Box 1-39: 36]
- 27 October 1829 - Petition of the Inhabitants of **Middlesex County** to the New Jersey Legislature, opposing the transportation of slaves from New Jersey [Box 1-18: 66]
- 30 January 1837 & 1 February 1837 - Petition of Inhabitants of **New Jersey** to the Legislature, opposing the harboring of escaped slaves [Box 1-18: 67] 2 items

III. NEW JERSEY AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCES BY COUNTY

County clerks were required to keep records of slave manumissions beginning in 1786. While some records have been digitized and are available online, others are at the state archives or at the county clerk's office of the individual counties. Below is a short list of what can be found online or at the New Jersey State Archives.

- Statewide Resources
 - Additional New Jersey resources
https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/African_American_Resources_for_New_Jersey
 - **1850 New Jersey Slave Schedule** for Atlantic, Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, and Warren counties. (55 pages list several slaves' given name and surname, age, listing the township where they are living).
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-XXN7-JKL?i=4&cat=744490>
 - **New Jersey Chapter of the Afro American Historical & Genealogical Society Inc.**
<https://aahgsnj2018.weebly.com/>
 - **Afro-Americans in New Jersey**: a short history (NJ State Library)
https://www.njstatelib.org/research_library/new_jersey_resources/highlights/afro-americans/

- Bergen County
 - *Manumission of slaves, 1804-1841* (images 381-662 only) Index beginning at image 381.
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939Z-1ZSD-JR?mode=g&cc=1803976&cat=37021>

- Burlington County
 - Available at the New Jersey State Archives:
 - Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1804-1826 (The names of 15 certificates are given at this link <https://www.nj.gov/state/archives/guides/cbucl001.pdf>)
 - Manumissions of Slaves - Book B, 1820-1853 (Finding Aid - <https://www.nj.gov/state/archives/guides/cbucl002.pdf>)

- Camden County
 - No information was found at the Camden County clerk's office
 - Camden County Historical Society opened an African American History Room in 2018. Further information may be found at: <https://www.cchsnj.org/home>

- Cape May County
 - The Cape May County Clerk's office has one birth record (1810) posted on their site found here
<http://www.capemaycountyarchives.com/prodoprslite/CustomSearch/SearchInput.aspx?id=1> (To view, select the year and then 'search.' Four options are shown. Select all. This will show the cover page, the written birth record, a typed version of the birth, and a back page)

- Essex County
 - Certificates and deeds of manumissions, 1805-1856 (457 images)
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS42-R9Y1-Y?mode=g&i=89&cc=3460246&cat=382465>
 - Certificate of Birth of Black Children (1804-1843) (image 6-62)
 - index (image 46-62)
 - Loose Birth Certificates (image 63-89)
 - 'Book A of Certificates and Deeds of Manumissions' (Covers 25 May 1805 to 5 September 1817) (image 90-194)
 - Index (image 90-98)
 - Certificates and Deeds of Manumissions (image 99-194)
 - 'Book B' Certificates and Deeds of Manumissions' (Covers 26 August 1817 to 26 July 1827) (image 195-339)
 - Index at image (image 195-205)
 - Certificates and Deeds of Manumissions (image 207-339)
 - 1827 to 1853 (340-405)
 - No index
 - Certificates begin at image 342
 - Slave Receipts (image 406-414)
 - No index
 - Receipts begin at image 407

- Hunterdon County
 - Available at the New Jersey State Archives:
 - Manumissions of Slaves, 1788-1836
 - The documents, which were originally copied into two books are held by the Hunterdon County Historical Society in Flemington. There were over 500 acts of manumissions 1787-1856, but 56 are available online here: <https://www.nj.gov/state/archives/catchncl003.html>
 - Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1804-1835
 - Held in 4 boxes, the guide includes various name indexes including the given and surname of the child, given name of the mother, and additional information.

- Middlesex County
 - Birth of Slaves 1804-1844, and Manumissions 1800-1825
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSGD-7SNY-P?mode=g&cat=241983>
 - Birth of Slaves 1804-1844 (image 244-
 - Index (image 246-257)
 - Birth records (image 258-307)
 - Manumissions, 1800-1825 (image 309-
 - Index (image 312-323)
 - Manumissions (image 324-552)

- Monmouth County
 - Manumission book of Monmouth County, New Jersey, 1791-1844 (available at Rutgers University Library, Mercer County Library, and New York Public Library)
 - The African American Experience in Monmouth County, 1700-1865 web site
<http://zorak.monmouth.edu/~afam/index.html>

- Salem County
 - Manumissions, 1800-1841
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/703141?availability=Family%20History%20Library>

- Somerset County
 - Available at the New Jersey State Archives: Somerset County Clerk
 - Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1805-1830 [CSOCL003]
 - Manumissions of Slaves, 1823-1862 [CSOCL017]
 - Register of Black Children, 1804-1824 [CSOCL018]
 - Montgomery Township
 - Indenture making **Caesar**, a poor black boy age 9 (son of Prince, a slave), ...an apprentice to William M. Griggs, farmer in Montgomery Township, 30 January 1823 [Montgomery Township Overseers of the Poor 1809-1906, Folder 20: 3]
 - Manumition of **Jack**, a negro slave age 22, by Christopher Voorhees. Original and a copy with added affidavits, 22 February 1826. [Montgomery Township Overseers of the Poor 1809-1906, Folder 20: 5]
 - Sale by Garret Terhune of a Negro slave boy named **Hare** to Stephen Terhune for £18, 16 December 1760. [Terhune Family Papers, 1726-1919, PTERH001, Box 1: 39]
 - Account of articles taken by Matje Nevios (from estate of William Cornell?) including 1 Negro [slave] bed and 1 Negro man Tom, ca. May 1777. [Terhune Family Papers, 1726-1919, PTERH001, Box 1: 87]
 - Affidavit of Mary Cortelyou, widow of Jaques Cortelyou, daughter of Garret Terhune, dec., – regarding her Negro slave wench **Lane**, sworn before Ernestus Van Harlingen, Justice of the Peace, 8 April 1783. [Terhune Family Papers, 1726-1919, PTERH001, Box 1: 121]
 - Sale by Bergun Brokaw, Sr., of a Negro slave **Sam**, some 30 years of age, to Stephen Terhune for £95, 11 November 1794. [Terhune Family Papers, 1726-1919, PTERH001, Box 1: 172]
 - Sale of a slave by Rulef Hagaman to Stephen Terhune, Jr., a Negro Man named **Tobe**, for £72 - 10s, April 1795. [Terhune Family Papers, 1726-1919, PTERH001, Box 1: 173]
 - Articles of the Vendue [a small book] held at the Widow Nevius, Stephen Terhune & Peter Wyckoff, executors --including 2 slaves, Negro man **York** for £92 - 10s and Negro woman **Dina** for £15, 1 April 1795. [Terhune Family Papers, 1726-1919, PTERH001, Box 1: 174]

- Sale by Ten Eyck Wyckoff of his slave Negro boy **Sam**, aged 10 years, to Washington Skillman for \$23, 21 February 1831 [Terhune Family Papers, 1726-1919, PTERH001, Box 1: 296]

- Sussex County
 - <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939Z-1Z9G-6D?mode=g&cc=1803976&cat=20744>
 - 9 The records are also indexed at <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/207449?availability=Family%20History%20Library>
 - and are available at the New Jersey State Archives
 - Manumissions of Slaves ca. 1802-1838 (image 224-348) [NJSA CSUCL004]
 - Birth of slaves ca. 1801-1835 (image 349-603) [NJSA CSUCL003]