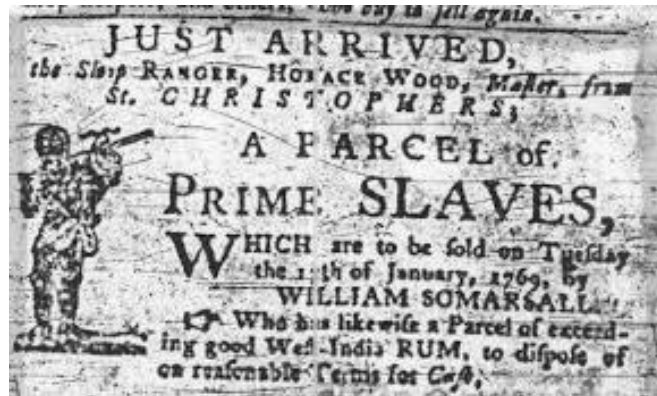


## Slavery and the Underground Railroad in New Jersey



**Lesson Creator:** New Jersey Center for Civic Education, Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ

**Grade level:** Secondary

**Objectives:** Students will be able to:

- Explain the existence of slavery in New Jersey during the colonial and antebellum periods
- Analyze efforts to abolish slavery in New Jersey during the colonial and antebellum periods
- Compare political and religious arguments made by NJ Quakers against slavery
- Explain why New Jersey provided an Underground Railroad route for slaves, describe the risks and routes taken and many sites in New Jersey
- Describe

### New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies (2020):

- 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political and economic expansion of the United States.
- 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals
- 6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a: Examine sources from a variety of perspectives to describe efforts to reform education, women's rights, slavery, and other issues during the Antebellum period.
- 6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.b: Explain the growing resistance to slavery and New Jersey's role in the Underground Railroad.
- 6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.b: Examine the roles of women, African Americans, and Native Americans in the Civil War.
- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.2.a: Using primary sources, describe the perspectives of African Americans, Native Americans, and women during the American Revolution and assess the contributions of each group on the outcome of the war.
- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.2.b: Analyze the impact and contributions of African American leaders and institutions in the development and activities of black communities in the North and South before and after the Civil War.

- 6.1.12.CivicsDP.3.a: Compare and contrast the successes and failures of political and social reform movements in New Jersey and the nation during the Antebellum period (i.e., the 1844 State Constitution, abolition, women's rights, and temperance).
- 6.1.12. CivicsDP.3.c: Examine the origins of the antislavery movement and the impact of particular events, such as the Amistad decision, on the movement.
- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.3.b: Examine a variety of sources from multiple perspectives on slavery and evaluate the claims used to justify the arguments
- 6.1.12.HistoryCA.3.a: Use evidence to demonstrate how states' rights (i.e., Nullification) and sectional interests influenced party politics and shaped national policies (i.e., the Missouri Compromise and the Compromise of 1850).
- 6.1.12.CivicsPR.4.a: Draw from multiple sources to explain the ways in which prevailing attitudes, socioeconomic factors, and government actions (i.e., the Fugitive Slave Act and Dred Scott Decision) in the North and South (i.e., Secession) led to the Civil War.
- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.4.b: Use primary sources to compare and contrast the experiences of African Americans who lived in Union and Confederate states before and during the Civil War.
- 6.1.12.CivicsDP.4.a: Compare and contrast historians' interpretations of the impact of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments on African American's ability to participate in influencing governmental policies.
- 6.1.12.HistoryCA.4.c: Analyze the debate about how to reunite the country and determine the extent to which enacted Reconstruction policies achieved their goals.

### **Common Core ELA Standards:**

- [RH.6-8.1](#) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- [RH.6-8.2](#) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- [RH.6-8.3](#) Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies
- [RH.6-8.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies
- [RH.6-8.7](#) Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- [RH.6-8.8](#) Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- [W.8.1.c](#) Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- [W.8.1.e](#) Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- [W.8.2](#) Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- [W.8.3](#) Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- [W.8.7](#) Conduct short research projects to answer a question...
- [W.8.8](#) Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- [RH.9-10.1](#) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- [RH.9-10.2](#) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

- [RH.9-10.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- [RH.9-10.6](#) Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- [RH.9-10.7](#) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text
- [RH.9-10.9](#) Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- [W.9-10.1](#) Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- [W.9-10.2](#) Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- [W.9-10.7](#) Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question
- [W.9-10.9](#) Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- [SL.9-10.1](#) Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners
- [SL.9-10.4](#) Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically

### **Focus questions:**

- Why did slavery exist in New Jersey during the colonial period and what was its impact?
- How and why did England encourage colonists to bring slaves to New Jersey?
- Where were most slaves working in New Jersey and why?
- What efforts were made in New Jersey to abolish slavery during the Antebellum period (1815-1860) and how successful were they?

## **1. Slavery in New Jersey during the colonial period**

### **Background:**

Although it became more pervasive in the southern colonies, the enslavement of Black Africans existed in all British North American colonies by 1690. There is some evidence of a Black slave presence in 1639 in Pavonia (near present-day Jersey City), part of the Dutch colony of New Netherland. Slavery spread as a response to the chronic shortage of free labor. Originally treated more like servants than slaves, the Black Africans initially had a few basic rights: families were usually kept intact; they were admitted to the Dutch Reformed church and married by ministers; they could testify in court and bring civil actions against white. Some were permitted to work after hours and could earn wages. But this would change under the British.

When the English proprietors established the New Jersey colony after the British took over in 1664, slavery was legalized and encouraged by offering settlers additional land for every slave ("servant") imported (See the excerpt from the 1664 Concessions and Agreement attached as Handout 1). In response to the growth of slavery in New Jersey, laws were passed regulating the treatment and behavior of those in bondage. A 1675 law forbade transporting or harboring a slave who had left his or her owner without permission. In 1682, East Jersey enacted a law requiring that slave masters provide sufficient food and clothing for their slaves.

Cooper's Ferry (Camden) served as the port of entry for bondspersons bound for South Jersey counties (Burlington, Gloucester, Salem and Cape May) and Perth Amboy was the main port of entry for the northern counties (Bergen, Essex, Middlesex and Monmouth). There were an estimated 2,600 slaves in New Jersey in 1726 and 4,700 in 1745, three-quarters of them in the northern counties which tended to be both more economically developed and to suffer from labor shortages. There were also a greater number of Quakers in the southern counties who objected to slavery.

Initially, both the Dutch and English colonists preferred to get their slaves from other New World colonies (primarily Jamaica and Barbados) rather than directly from Africa. Slaves imported directly from Africa were considered too dangerous and difficult. West Indies slaves were "seasoned". This changed by the mid-1700s when New Jersey began to import slaves directly from Africa. Most worked as farmhands. Some also labored in mining, lumbering, and skilled crafts such as blacksmiths, millers, carpenters, shoemakers, coopers, millwrights and tanners. Women worked as nannies, cooks, maids and washerwomen.

In 1702, when New Jersey became a crown colony, Queen Anne urged Lord Edward Cornbury, the first royal governor of the colony, to keep the settlers provided with "a constant and sufficient supply of merchantable Negroes at moderate prices" to meet the labor needs. She also advised him to take the necessary steps to ensure that proper payment for slaves be made to the Royal African Company, which had been granted a royal monopoly in the slave trade. In rejecting a proposed slave tariff in 1744, the Provincial Council declared that nothing would be permitted to interfere with the importation of Negroes. The council observed that slaves had become essential to the colonial economy, since many colonists could not afford to pay the high wages commanded by free workers.

During Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), any slave found more than five miles from home without a pass was to be flogged, and the master was required to pay a reward to the person who had reported the infraction. From 1713 (after a violent slave uprising in New York) to 1768, the colony operated a separate court system to deal with slave crimes (East Jersey had had a separate slave court since 1695). Special punishments for slaves remained on the books until 1788. The colony also had laws meant to discourage slave revolts. Slaves were forbidden to carry firearms when not in the company of their masters or to assemble on their own or to be in the streets at night. Controls were further tightened during times of crisis. Slaves guilty of arson were subject to punishments severe even by Northern standards. In 1735, a slave in Bergen County who attempted to set fire to a house was burned at the stake. In 1741, several slaves were burned at the stake for setting a fire to barns in Hackensack. Yet in spite of these precautions, New Jersey narrowly escaped a violent slave uprising in 1743.

**Activity:** Using the background information and Handouts 1 and 2, students explain how and why England encouraged colonists to bring slaves to New Jersey.

**Activity:** Using the background information provided along with some additional research, create a timeline of rights given to and limitations placed on slaves in New Jersey during the colonial period. Draw a conclusion: were slaves being given more or less rights and liberties over the period 1664 through 1750?

## **2. African Americans during the American Revolution**

It is estimated that the number of Blacks, almost all slaves, in New Jersey increased from 200 in 1680 to 8-12 percent of the colony's population at the start of the American Revolution in 1776. The 1790 census showed 11,423 slaves in New Jersey or 6.2% of its total population, although some historians

estimate that it was closer to 7.7 or 8%. New Jersey did not abolish, or even mention, slavery in its 1776 Constitution. The Revolutionary War, however, was responsible, directly or indirectly, for the freedom of many slaves in New Jersey. Some slaves escaped, while others earned their freedom by fighting for the Continental Army or the New Jersey Militia.

Responding to the November 1775 proclamation by Lord Dunmore, royal governor of Virginia, which promised freedom to any slave who fought for Britain, several thousand blacks cast their lot with the British. One of the most notable was a fugitive slave from Shrewsbury (Monmouth County), Titus Cornelius, later known as Colonel Tye. After participating in the Battle of Monmouth (1778), he led several successful raids on the farms of Americans in Monmouth County before being killed in 1780.

Lord Dunmore's declaration also resulted in the reversal of the American policy of excluding blacks from military service. As of December 31, 1775, free blacks could enlist, and one who did was Oliver Cromwell. Born free in Columbus (Burlington County) in 1752, he enlisted in a company attached to the Second New Jersey Regiment. Cromwell crossed the Delaware with Washington on December 24, 1776, and saw action at Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, and Yorktown.

Blacks were present at all the major battles in New Jersey, such as Trenton (1776), Princeton (1777), Fort Mercer (1777), Monmouth (1778), and Springfield (1780), as well as those elsewhere, such as Saratoga (1777), Savannah (1779), and Yorktown (1781). Most black soldiers were free and from the northern colonies, but some were slaves like Samuel Sutphen of Somerset County, a participant in battles in New York and New Jersey between 1776 and 1780.

Some African American slaves, who had remained loyalists during the war, left the country afterwards for Canada or Britain. Others had been given freedom for their participation in the fight for independence. Some slaves took advantage of the chaos of war to escape and pass as free Blacks. Others were manumitted by their owners or the state legislature because of service in the American forces or in keeping with the egalitarian spirit of the Revolution. The 1790 census showed 11,423 slaves remaining in New Jersey and 2,762 free Blacks.

**Activity:** Students identify the contributions of African American slaves during the American Revolution. Research the history of African-American slaves, such as a "Colonel Tye", from Monmouth County, NJ, who fought for the British. Compare their motivation, actions and the consequences with other African Americans in New Jersey, such as Oliver Cromwell or Samuel Sutphen, who fought for independence. For information and primary source documents regarding African Americans and the American Revolution go to <http://nj.gov/state/njhistorypartnership/americanRevolution/africanAmericans/lesson/africanAmericanLesson.pdf>.

### 3. Efforts to Abolition Slavery in New Jersey

Anti-slavery sentiments began long before the American Revolution. In 1688, the first anti-slavery tract written in the American colonies was read at the annual meeting of the Delaware Valley Quakers in Burlington. One of American's earliest foes of slavery was John Woolman (1720-1772), a Quaker leader, clerk and tailor born in Burlington County. Woolman believed that slaves should be freed by the personal action of their masters rather than by political measures and traveled extensively championing the cause of Manumission. His 1754 tract, "Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes," (Handout 3) was one of the earliest anti-slavery statements in the country. His opposition contributed to the 1776 decision by Quakers to excommunicate any co-religionist who was a slaveholder.

During and after the Revolutionary War, opponents of slavery formed abolition societies in all the northern states, led by local elites such as John Jay, Gouverneur Morris and Alexander Hamilton in New York and Benjamin Rush and Benjamin Franklin in Pennsylvania. In 1778, New Jersey's first state Governor William Livingston asked the state legislature to provide gradual abolition, but the State Assembly persuaded him to withdraw the message because the country was in "too critical a situation to enter on the consideration of it at that time." Unlike many other Northern states, abolition was strongly opposed by New Jersey's legislature, often with racist arguments that would later be remembered only when used in the American South.

In 1789, abolitionist John Cooper (1729-1785) advocated for emancipation both for religious and civic reasons. Cooper was an influential Quaker from Gloucester County, New Jersey, who had served on several local revolutionary committees, the Provincial Congress, the Continental Congress and the committee that drafted the state's first constitution in 1776. He was concerned that the continuation of slavery was inconsistent with a republican government as well as contrary to moral principles, and urged the immediate end to slavery. See his article in the New-Jersey Gazette from Sept. 20, 1780 attached as Handout 4. His essay was unusual in rejection gradual manumission in favor of an immediate end to slavery.

The anti-slavery efforts of New Jersey Quakers and the Society for Promoting the Abolition of slavery led in 1786 to a ban on the importation of slaves into the state. It encouraged manumission by eliminating the requirement that a slaveowner financially support a slave who was to be emancipated. The New Jersey Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, created in 1793, kept up agitation on the issue. However, in spite of early and persistent protests by Quakers, New Jersey came late and rather unwillingly to abolition.

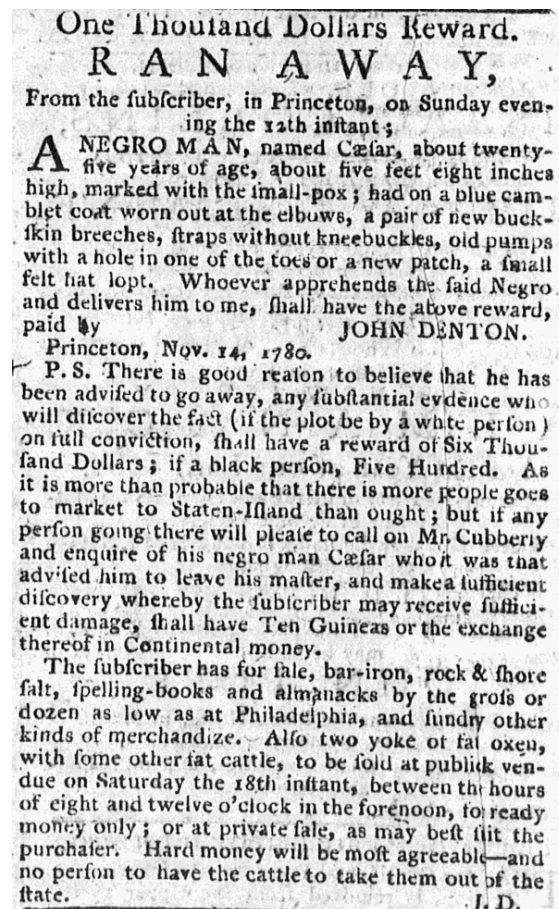
In 1804 the New Jersey Legislature passed "An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery" (Handout 5) that provided for females born of slave parents after July 4, 1804 to be free upon reaching 21 years of age, and males upon reaching 25. A hidden subsidy for slaveowners was included: A provision allowed slaveowners to free their slave children, who would then be turned over to the care of the local overseers of the poor (the state's social welfare agency in those days). The bill provided \$3 a month for the support of such children. A slaveowner could then agree to have the children "placed" in his household and collect the \$3 monthly subsidy on them. The evidence suggests this practice was widespread, and the cost for "abandoned blacks" rose to be 40 percent of the New Jersey budget by 1809. It was a tax on the entire state paid into the pockets of a few to maintain what were still, essentially, slaves. New Jersey slaveowners also had the option to sell their human property into states that still allowed slaveholding, or into long indentures in Pennsylvania, until an 1818 law that forbid "the exportation of slaves or servants of color." The Legislature ultimately repealed the entire payment system for the maintenance and support of abandoned slave children in 1811.

By 1820, free Blacks in New Jersey outnumbered those still held in bondage (See Handout 7). The Legislature reacted to the growing movement to colonize free Blacks and slaves in Africa, by adopting a Resolution in 1824 favoring colonization, provided that the rights of slaveholders were not infringed (Handout 6). Only after the concerted efforts of New Jersey's second major abolitionist organization, the New Jersey Anti-Slavery Society, was slavery fully abolished in New Jersey. Failing to get the New Jersey Supreme Court to agree that the Bill of Rights in the 1844 New Jersey Constitution (See Handout 8) outlawed slavery, the Anti-Slavery Society campaigned for a permanent abolition of slavery, which was enacted in 1846. The 1846 law abolished slavery, but did not actually free any existing slaves. It freed all Black children born after its passage; however, it left the state's few remaining slaves as "apprentices for life". At the start of the Civil War, New Jersey citizens owned 18 "apprentices for life" (the federal census listed them as "slaves"—see Handout 8) -- legal slaves by any name.

**Activity:** Students read Handout 3: Excerpts from John Woolman's "Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes"; and Handout 4: John Cooper's Anti-Slavery article in the New-Jersey Gazette and compare and contrast their major arguments against slavery. Explain which argument you find most persuasive and why.

**Activity:** Using Handout 7: Population of New Jersey Counties 1820, students identify where most slaves worked in New Jersey and why. Which counties had the largest populations? Which counties had the largest slave populations? Which counties had the largest free colored populations? What economic, cultural and religious differences between the northeastern and southwestern parts of the state might explain this? Compare free and slave population in 1820 (Handout 7) with the free and slave population in 1850 (Handout 8).

#### 4. The Underground Railroad in New Jersey



One Thousand Dollars Reward.  
R A N A W A Y,  
From the subscriber, in Princeton, on Sunday evening the 12th instant;  
A NEGRO MAN, named Caesar, about twenty-five years of age, about five feet eight inches high, marked with the small-pox; had on a blue camblet coat worn out at the elbows, a pair of new buckskin breeches, straps without knee buckles, old pumps with a hole in one of the toes or a new patch, a small felt hat lopt. Whoever apprehends the said Negro and delivers him to me, shall have the above reward, paid by JOHN DENTON.  
Princeton, Nov. 14, 1780.  
P. S. There is good reason to believe that he has been advised to go away, any substantial evidence who will discover the fact (if the plot be by a white person) on full conviction, shall have a reward of Six Thousand Dollars; if a black person, Five Hundred. As it is more than probable that there is more people goes to market to Staten-Island than ought; but if any person going there will please to call on Mr. Cubberly and enquire of his negro man Caesar who it was that advised him to leave his master, and make a sufficient discovery whereby the subscriber may receive sufficient damage, shall have Ten Guineas or the exchange thereof in Continental money.  
The subscriber has for sale, bar-iron, rock & shore salt, spelling-books and almanacks by the gross or dozen as low as at Philadelphia, and sundry other kinds of merchandize. Also two yoke of fat oxen, with some other fat cattle, to be sold at publick vendue on Saturday the 18th instant, between the hours of eight and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, for ready money only; or at private sale, as may best suit the purchaser. Hard money will be most agreeable—and no person to have the cattle to take them out of the state.  
J. D.

*New Jersey Gazette*, Nov. 15, 1780 at <https://slavery.princeton.edu/sources/caesar-1>

Although Quakers started this anti-slavery movement in the 1780s, the Underground Railroad became legendary after the 1830s, when abolitionists and other sympathizers began helping slaves escape to freedom. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 was enacted by Congress to allow slave hunters to capture an escaped slave in any territory or state with only oral proof that the person was a runaway, making an escape from slavery more difficult, and imposed penalties on anyone who aided in their flight. Refusing to be complicit in the institution of slavery, most Northern states intentionally neglected to enforce the law. Several even passed so-called "Personal Liberty Laws" that gave accused runaways the right to a



jury trial and also protected free blacks, many of whom had been abducted by bounty hunters and sold into slavery.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, New Jersey was plagued by the kidnapping and sale of New Jersey slaves to the South. In an effort to combat these abuses, the Legislature enacted a series of laws that imposed significant penalties upon slave traders.

Following increased pressure from Southern politicians, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 as part of the Compromise of 1850, a group of bills designed to quiet calls for Southern secession. The 1850 Act made it easier to retake fugitive slaves. It also denied slaves the right to a jury trial, increased the penalty for helping fugitives to escape to \$1000 (a lot of money in the 1850s!) and six months in jail, and resulted in the retrieval of many free Blacks who had been living in the North for years. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was met with even more impassioned criticism and resistance than the earlier measure. Unlike many states in the North, New Jersey failed to enact legislation to circumvent the Fugitive Slave Act. In fact, New Jersey was the only state in the North to actively enforce the federal law.

The Underground Railroad reached its peak in the 1850s. New Jersey was close to the two most active Underground Railroad cities--New York and Philadelphia--and to the upper southern states of Virginia, Maryland and Delaware. Also there were a large number of all-black communities in NJ that served as sanctuaries for fugitive slaves. For example, in the mid 1800's Salem County, NJ had a population of 2,075 free blacks and a large number of Quakers, all who aided them in their escape. No other northern state exceeded New Jersey in the number of all-black communities that served as Underground Railroad sanctuaries for southern fugitive slaves. Fugitive slaves crossed the Delaware Bay to New Jersey, travelled across at various safe houses to Jersey City and at the Morris Canal basin fled by boat across the Hudson River (called the "River Jordan") to go to Canada, New England or New York City.

New Jersey had several Underground Railroad conductors and many Underground Railroad sites. The most famous conductor is Harriet Tubman. William Still, a free black man from Burlington County, NJ, assisted Harriet Tubman's rescue efforts and established a network of safe houses and contacts stretching from the upper South to Canada. Abigail Goodwin, the daughter of a Quaker farmer who had freed his slaves during the American Revolution, and her sister, Elizabeth, were fervent abolitionists. In the 1830s, Abigail emerged as an active figure in the Underground Railroad movement and the Goodwin home in Salem, NJ became a station on the Underground Railroad.

No other northern state exceeded New Jersey in the number of all-black communities that served as Underground Railroad sanctuaries for southern fugitive slaves. Springtown (Cumberland County), Marshalltown (Salem County), Snow Hill (present-day Lawnside, Camden County), and Timbuctoo (Burlington County) were among such places, located mainly in rural South Jersey, in which fugitive slaves also settled.

**Activity: Learn about the famous underground railroad "conductors": Harriet Tubman, Abigail Goodman and William Still**

- Have students read a biography of Harriet Tubman, such as *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led her People to Freedom* or *Harriet Tubman: The Moses of her People* and/or watch the PBS video at <http://video.pbs.org/video/2181724307/>
- Watch the video about Abigail Goodwin at <http://7stepstofreedom.wordpress.com/2011/07/28/abigail-goodwin/>
- Have students read and compare the stories of fugitive slaves that William Still collected and published as *The Underground Railroad: Authentic Narratives and First-Hand Accounts in 1872*.



- Explain why Harriet Tubman, William Still and/or Abigail Goodwin risked their lives and property to help fugitive slaves to escape to freedom.

**Map Activity:** Look at Handout 10: Underground Railroad routes in NJ. Plot the route from to Jersey City, How long would it take a fugitive slave to travel from the south (select a location in Virginia or Maryland) to Jersey City? For example, it is 328 miles from Richmond, Virginia, to Jersey City, New Jersey. How fast do you walk? How many hours can you walk, primarily in the dark, each day? How many days would it take to walk 328 miles? Students should calculate that even if they walked 10-12 hours a day, it would take 27-33 days to walk 328 miles (about 12 miles a day). Students can plot on a map how far they could go each day.

**Activity:** How did the fugitive slaves know what route to follow? *Follow the Drinking Gourd* (Winter, 1988) was a song with lyrics that hid directions for following the Underground Railroad. The “drinking gourd” is the Big Dipper in the sky which points to the North Star. “When the sun comes back and the first quail calls” meant spring. The river that “ends between two hills” was the Tombigbee River. The second was the Tennessee River and the “great big river” was the Ohio River, where fugitives could be ferried across to the free states. The lyrics are listed as Handout 11. Students list the signs and explain what they mean.

**Activity:** There are many myths about the Underground Railroad. Tales of secret tunnels, trapdoors and secret compartments abound. Many places claim to be sites of the risky operation of moving fugitive slaves from the South to freedom. Since the location of Underground Railroad Stations needed to be kept secret for the operation to be successful, how do we know that certain buildings were secretly used for the Underground Railroad? The existence of certain buildings in New Jersey as sites for the Underground Railroad are often based on oral history, personal letters and the known existence of members of church congregations, primarily AME Churches, as being operators for the Underground Railroad. Divide into groups and have groups identify and research one or more of the Underground Railroad sites and/or conductors and justify why they were an important part of the Underground Railroad. Go to [http://www.nj.gov/nj/about/history/underground\\_railroad.html](http://www.nj.gov/nj/about/history/underground_railroad.html) and <https://dspace.njstatelib.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10929/24563/h6732002.pdf?sequence=1> for background information.

## 5. The end of slavery in New Jersey.



White officers of 4th United States Colored Infantry at leisure, Fort Slocum, District of Columbia, Library of Congress at <https://www.nps.gov/articles/the-united-states-colored-troops-and-the-defenses-of-washington.htm>

In the 1860 census, free colored persons in New Jersey numbered 25,318, or about 4% of the state's population of 672,035, and 18 "apprentices for life" remained. During the Civil War, 2,900 Colored Troops from New Jersey served in the Union Army. The courage displayed by colored troops during the Civil War played an important role in African Americans gaining new rights. As the abolitionist Frederick Douglass wrote:

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

However, New Jersey was the last northern state to have slaves. It was not until the ratification of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1865 that all New Jerseyans were finally free. The State of New Jersey did not ratify the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment. However, once they were ratified by 3/4<sup>th</sup> of the states, New Jersey was forced to abide by them and held a Constitutional Convention in 1875 to conform the state constitution with the Civil War Amendments.

On March 31, 1870, Thomas Mundy Peterson became the first African American to vote in an election under the newly-enacted provisions of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. See the 90-second video at <http://youtu.be/nlC3fsW3rRs>

Although the last northern state to abolish slavery, New Jersey was the first northern state to officially apologize for slavery on January 8, 2008:

"The Legislature of the State of New Jersey expressed its profound regret for the State's role in slavery and apologizes for the wrong inflicted by slavery and its after effects in the United States of America; expresses its deepest sympathies and solemn regrets to those who were enslaved and the descendants of those slaves, who were deprived of life, human dignity, and the constitutional protections accorded all citizens of the United States; and we encourage all citizens to remember and teach their children about the history of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and modern day slavery, to ensure that these tragedies will neither be forgotten nor repeated."

**Activity:** Students conduct a mock legislative debate on the issue of whether New Jersey should pay reparations to descendants of former slaves.

### Assessment

Students write an essay comparing and contrasting New Jersey's 1804 gradual emancipation law (Handout 5) and the Colonization resolution of 1824 (Handout 6) with the 13, 14 and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the U.S. Constitution (Handout 12) to explain why the Civil War amendments were necessary for New Jersey as well as the southern states.

### Extension

Visit one or more Underground Railroad sites in New Jersey. The following websites might help identify nearby sites:

- VIDEO: [Jersey City, The Last "Station" on New Jersey's Underground Railroad](#)

- “Pathways to Freedom: A Tour of Underground Railroad Sites in Camden County, NJ”  
[www.pathwaystofreedomtour.com](http://www.pathwaystofreedomtour.com)
- Salem County Cultural & Heritage Commission  
[www.visitsalemcountynj.com/](http://www.visitsalemcountynj.com/)
- The Historic City of Burlington Underground Railroad Tour  
<https://www.co.burlington.nj.us/1415/Underground-Railroad-Museum>
- State of New Jersey  
[www.visitnj.org/new-jerseys-underground-railroad](http://www.visitnj.org/new-jerseys-underground-railroad)

## Resources:

Douglas Harper, *Slavery in the North* (2003) at <http://www.slavenorth.com/newjersey.htm>

Giles R. Wright, “The History of Slavery in New Jersey” (*Social Science Docket*, vol. 1, no. 2) at <http://americaninstituteforhistory.org/presenters/Singer/Slavery.pdf>.

<http://academic.udayton.edu/race/02rights/slave08.htm>

[http://www.njstatelib.org/research\\_library/new\\_jersey\\_resources/digital\\_collection/unit\\_4\\_revolutionary\\_era\\_blacks/](http://www.njstatelib.org/research_library/new_jersey_resources/digital_collection/unit_4_revolutionary_era_blacks/)

[http://www.nj.gov/nj/about/history/underground\\_railroad.html](http://www.nj.gov/nj/about/history/underground_railroad.html)

“Steal Away, Steal Away...” A guide to the Underground Railroad in New Jersey at <https://dspace.njstatelib.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10929/24563/h6732002.pdf?sequence=1>

**The Concession and Agreement of the Lords Proprietors  
of the Province of New Caesarea, or New Jersey,  
1664**

AND THAT THE PLANTING OF THE SAID PROVINCE MAY BE THE MORE SPEEDILY PROMOTED

I. We do hereby grant unto all persons who have already adventured to the said Province of New Caesarea or New Jersey, or shall transport themselves, or servants, before the first day of January, which shall be in the year of our Lord one thousand six-hundred sixty-five, these following proportions, viz: To every freeman that shall go with the first Governor, from the port where he imbarques, or shall meet him at the rendezvous he appoints, for the settlement of a plantation there, arm'd with a good musket, bore twelve bullets to the pound, with ten pounds of powder, and twenty pounds of bullets, with bandiliers and match convenient, and with six months provision for his own person arriving there, one hundred and fifty acres of land English measure; and for every able servant that he shall carry with him, arm'd and provided as aforesaid, and arriving there, the like quantity of one hundred and fifty acres English measure: And whosoever shall send servants at that time, shall have for every man servant he or she shall send, armed and provided as aforesaid, and arrive there, the like quantity of one hundred and fifty acres: And for every weaker servant. or slave, male or female, exceeding the age of fourteen years, which any one shall send or carry, arriving there, seventy-five acres of land: And for every Christian servant, exceeding the age aforesaid, after the expiration of their time of service, seventy-five acres of land for their own use.

(Full document may be found at The Avalon Project: The Duke of York's Release to John Ford Berkeley, and Sir George Carteret, 24th of June, 1664 at  
[https://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th\\_century/nj02.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/nj02.asp))

**To the Speediest Improvement of the Province  
Queen Anne's Instruction to Lord Cornbury, 1702**

..And in order to the better consolidating and incorporating of the two of East and West New Jersey into and under one government

...

You shall give all due encouragement and invitation to merchants and others who shall bring trade unto our said province or any way contribute to the advantage thereof and, in particular, the Royal African Company of England...

And whereas we are willing to recommend unto the said company that the said province may have a constant and sufficient supply of merchantable Negroes at moderate rate in money or commodities so you are to take especial care that payment be duly made and within competent time

### Handout 3

Excerpts from  
**“Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes”**  
John Woolman, 1754

...When we remember that all nations are of one blood (Gen. 3:20); that in this world we are but sojourners; that we are subject to the like afflictions and infirmities of the body, the like disorders and frailties in mind, the like temptations, the same death and the same judgment; and that the All-wise Being is judge and Lord over us all, it seems to raise an idea of a general brotherhood and a disposition easy to be touched with feeling of each other's afflictions. But when we forget those things and look chiefly at our outward circumstances, in this and some ages past, constantly retaining in our minds the distinction betwixt us and them with respect to our knowledge and improvement in things divine, natural, and artificial, our breasts being apt to be filled with fond notions of superiority, there is danger of erring in our conduct toward them.

. . . To consider mankind otherwise than brethren, to think favours are peculiar to one nation and exclude others, plainly supposes a darkness in the understanding. For as God's love is universal, so where the mind is sufficiently influenced by it, it begets a likeness of itself and the heart is enlarged towards all men. Again, to conclude a people forward, perverse, and worse by nature than others (who ungratefully receive favours and apply them to bad ends), this will excite a behavior toward them unbecoming the excellence of true religion.

To prevent such error let us calmly consider their circumstances, and, the better to do it, make their case ours. Suppose, then, that our ancestors and we have been exposed to constant servitude in the more servile and inferior employments of life; that we had been destitute of the help of reading and good company; that amongst ourselves we had had few wise and pious instructors; that the religious amongst our superiors seldom took notice of us; that while others in ease have plentifully heaped up the fruit of our labour, we had received barely enough to relieve nature, and being wholly at the command of others had generally been treated as a contemptible, ignorant part of mankind. Should we, in that case, be less abject than they are now? Again, if oppression be so hard to bear that a wise man is made mad by it (Eccles. 7:7), then a series of those things altering the behavior and manners of a people is what may reasonably be expected.

When our property is taken contrary to our mind by means appearing to us unjust, it is only through divine influence and the enlargement of heart from thence proceeding that we can love our reputed oppressors. If the Negroes fall short in this, an uneasy, if not disconsolate, disposition will be awakened and remain like seeds in their minds, producing sloth and many other habits appearing odious to us, with which being free men they perhaps had not been chargeable. These and other circumstances, rightly considered, will lessen that too great disparity which some make between us and them.

...It may be objected there is cost of purchase and risk of their lives to them who possess 'em, and therefore needful that they make the best use of their time. In a practice just and

reasonable such objections may have weight; but if the work be wrong from the beginning, there's little or no force in them. If I purchase a man who hath never forfeited his liberty, the natural right of freedom is in him. And shall I keep him and his posterity in servitude and ignorance? How should I approve of this conduct were I in his circumstances and he is mine?...

We may further consider that they are now amongst us, and those of our nation the cause of their being here, that whatsoever difficulty accrues thereon we are justly chargeable with, and to bear all inconveniences attending it with a serious and weighty concern of mind to do our duty by them is the best we can do. To seek a remedy by continuing the oppression because we have power to do it and see others do it, will, I apprehend, not be doing as we would be done by.

From *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, Phillips P. Moulton (ed.) (New York 1971)



## **John Cooper Advocated the Abolition of Slavery**

(From the New-Jersey Gazette, Sept. 20, 1780)

Whilst we are spilling our blood and exhausting our treasure in defence of our own liberty, it would not perhaps be amiss to turn our eyes towards those of our fellow-men who are now groaning in bondage under us. We say “all men are equally entitled to liberty and the pursuit of happiness;” but are we willing to grant this liberty to all men? The sentiment no doubt is just as well as generous; and must ever be read to our praise, provided our actions correspond therewith. But if after we have made such a declaration to the world, we continue to hold our fellow creatures in slavery, our words must rise up in judgement against us, and by the breath of our own mouths we shall stand condemned.

...And if we keep our present slaves in bondage, and only enact laws that their posterity shall be free, we save that part of our tyranny and gain of oppression, which to us, the present generation, is of the most value.

**An act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery**, Feb. 15, 1804

From <http://njlegallib.rutgers.edu/slavery/acts/A78.html>

SEC. 1. *BE it enacted by the Council and General Assembly of this State, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same*, That every child born of a slave within this state, after the fourth day of July next, shall be free; but shall remain the servant of the owner of his or her mother, and the executors, administrators or assigns of such owner, in the same manner as if such child had been bound to service by the trustees or overseers of the poor, and shall continue in such service, if a male, until the age of twenty five years; and if a female until the age of twenty one years.

2. *And be it enacted*, That every person being an inhabitant of this state, who shall be entitled to the service of a child born as aforesaid, after the said fourth day of July next, shall within nine months after the birth of such child, cause to be delivered to the clerk of the county whereof such person shall be an inhabitant, a certificate in writing, containing the name and addition of such person, and the name, age, and sex of the child so born; which certificate, whether the same be delivered before or after the said nine months; shall be by the said clerk recorded in a book to be by him provided for that purpose; and such record thereof shall be good evidence of the age of such child; and the clerk of such county shall receive from said person twelve cents for every child so registered: and if any person shall neglect to deliver such certificate to the said clerk within the said nine months, such person shall forfeit and pay for every such offence, five dollars, and the further sum of one dollar for every month such person shall neglect to deliver the same, to be sued for and recovered by any person who will sue for the same, the one half to the use of such prosecutor, and the residue to the use of the poor of the township in which such delinquent shall reside.

3. *And be it enacted*, That the person entitled to the service of any child born as aforesaid, may, nevertheless within one year after the birth of such child, elect to abandon such right; in which case a notification of such abandonment, under the hand of such person, shall be filed with the clerk of the township, or where there may be a county poorhouse established, then with the clerk of the board of trustees of said poor-house of the county in which such person shall reside; but every child so abandoned shall be maintained by such person until such child arrives to the age of one year, and thereafter shall be considered as a pauper of such township or county, and liable to be bound out by the trustees or overseers of the poor in the same manner as other poor children are directed to be bound out, until, if a male, the age of twenty five, and if a female, the age of twenty one; and such child, while such pauper, until it shall be bound out, shall be maintained by the trustees or overseers of the poor of such county or township, as the case may be, at the expence of this state; and for that purpose the director of the board of chosen freeholders of the county, is hereby required, from time to time, to draw his warrant on the treasurer in favor of such trustees or overseers for the amount of such expence, not exceeding the rate of three dollars per month; provided the accounts for the same be first certified and approved by such board of trustees, or the town committee of such township; and every person who shall omit to notify such abandonment as aforesaid, shall be considered as having to retain the service of such child, and be liable for its maintenance until the period to which its servitude is limited as aforesaid.

**NJ State Legislature Resolution supporting colonization of slaves, 1824**

RESOLVED that in the opinion of this Legislature, a system of foreign colonization, with correspondent measures might be adopted, that would in due time effect the entire emancipation of the slaves in our country, and furnish an asylum for the free blacks without any violation of the national compact or infringement of the rights of individuals; and that such a system should be predicated upon the principle that the evils of slavery is a national one, and that the people and the states of the Union ought mutually to participate in the duties and the burdens in removing it.

Handout 7

**Slaves and Freed Colored Persons by County 1820**

(There were only 13 counties in New Jersey in 1820)

<b>County</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Slave Population</b>	<b>Free Colored Population</b>
Bergen	18,178	1,683	1,059
Burlington	28,822	82	1,261
Cape May	426	28	205
Cumberland	12,668	18	605
Essex	30,793	659	1,390
Gloucester	23,089	39	1,064
Hunterdon	28,604	616	1,443
Middlesex	21,470	1,012	1,033
Monmouth	25,038	1,248	982
Morris	21,368	657	457
Salem	14,022	15	1,001
Somerset	16,506	1,122	1,487
Sussex	32,752	378	473
Total State	273,736	7,557	12,460

From: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/census>

Handout 8  
**Slaves and Freed Colored Persons in NJ by county, 1850**

<b>County</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Total No. Slaves</b>	<b>Total No. Free Colored Persons</b>
Atlantic	8,961	1	217
Bergen	14,725	41	1,624
Burlington	43,203	0	2,109
Camden	25,422	0	2,230
Cape May	6,433	0	247
Cumberland	17,189	0	1,130
Essex	73,950	6	2,328
Gloucester	14,655	0	620
Hudson	21,822	3	500
Hunterdon	28,990	9	808
Mercer	27,992	6	2,036
Middlesex	28,635	11	1,369
Monmouth	30,313	75	2,323
Morris	30,158	19	1,008
Ocean	10,032	0	140
Passaic	22,569	31	615
Salem	19,467	0	2,075
Somerset	19,989	31	1,711
Sussex	22,989	1	340
Warren	22,358	2	380
NJ State	489,555	236	23,810

From <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/census/cen.pl>

**Excerpts from**

**The New Jersey State Constitution, 1844**

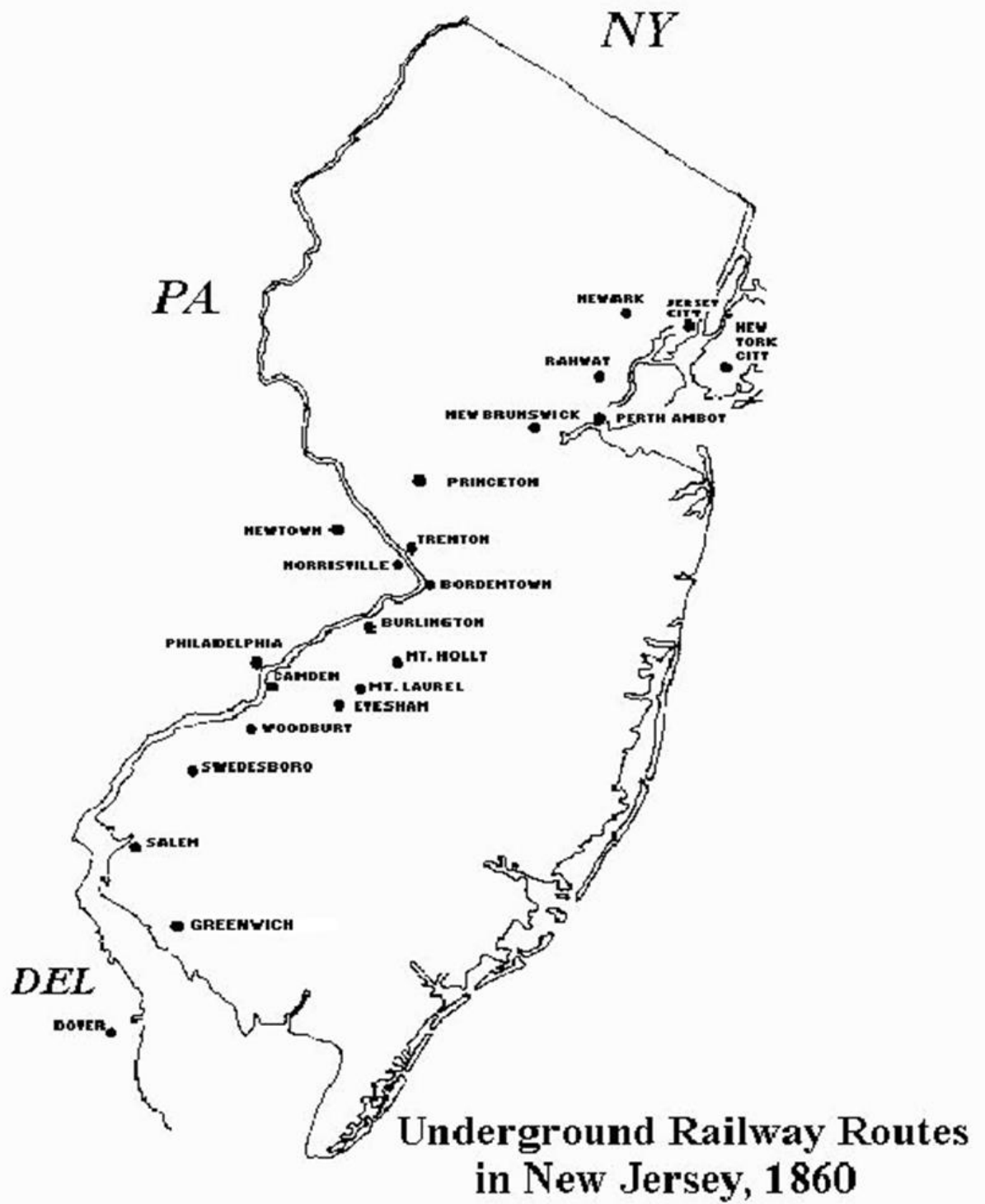
**Article I. Rights and Privileges.**

1. All men are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

**Article II. Right of Suffrage.**

1. Every white male citizen of the United States, of the age of twenty-one years, who shall have been a resident of this State one year, and of the county, in which he claims his vote five months, next before the election, shall be entitled to vote for all officers that now are, or hereafter may be elective by the people; provided, that no person in the military, naval, or marine service of the United States shall be considered a resident in this State, by being stationed in any garrison, barrack, or military or naval place or station within this State, and no pauper idiot, insane person, or persons convicted of a crime which now excludes him from being a witness unless pardoned or restored by law to the right of suffrage, shall enjoy the right of an elector.

From <http://www.nj.gov/state/archives/docconst44.html#art1>





## **Follow the Drinking Gourd**

### *Chorus*

Follow the drinking gourd!  
Follow the drinking gourd!  
For the old man is a waiting for to carry you to freedom  
if you follow the drinking gourd.  
When the sun comes back and the first quail calls,  
Follow the drinking gourd.  
For the old man is a waiting for to carry you to freedom  
if you follow the drining gourd.

The riverbank makes a very good road,  
The dead trees will show you the way.  
Left foot, peg foot, traveling on.  
Following the drinking gourd.

### *Chorus*

The river ends between two hills,  
Follow the drinking gourd.  
There's another river on the other side,  
Follow the drinking gourd.

### *Chorus*

When the great big river meets the little river,  
Follow the drinking gourd.  
For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom  
If you follow the drinking gourd.

### *Chorus*

## **Civil War Amendments to the United States Constitution**

### **13<sup>th</sup> Amendment (ratified 1865)**

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

### **14<sup>th</sup> Amendment (ratified 1868)**

All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States, and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law or abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

### **15<sup>th</sup> Amendment (ratified 1870)**

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.