Passing on the Story: African-Americans in New Castle

New Castle Historical Society

Cover Photo: The Prichett family ca. 1940. (L-R) Adrien, Alberta, Alma and Nathan Prichett riding bicycles and tricycles in the Buttonwood neighborhood.

Courtesy of Alberta Prichett Ponzo

Passing on the Story: African-Americans in New Castle

Text by Bruce and Peter Dalleo, Heidi Harendza, & Catherine Hoffman Kaser

Based on an exhibit presented by the New Castle Historical Society

October—December 2001
March—October 2002

Old Library Museum,
40 E. Third Street,
New Castle, Delaware

FORWARD

The New Castle Historical Society is very pleased to publish this book in conjunction with its current exhibit, *Passing on the Story: African-Americans in New Castle*. The historical research that culminated in the exhibit, and now this book, is the New Castle Historical Society's first meaningful attempt to document the important role of African-Americans in New Castle's history.

The first African-Americans arrived in New Castle in the 1660s and have been an integral part of the town's history and fabric since that time. The exhibit and this book set forth documentary information about nineteenth and twentieth-century African-Americans in New Castle and demonstrate the establishment and vitality of African-American churches, neighborhoods, and community organizations. The exhibit and this book have brought together, for the first time, historical photographs and artifacts from the private collections of town residents.

The Society is indebted to the many individuals who have lent objects, photographs and family histories, and who have provided interviews about the lives of African-Americans in New Castle. The preparation of the exhibit and this book was guided by a hard-working steering committee made up of African-Americans in the New Castle community, University of Delaware staff and students, and members of the New Castle Historical Society.

The mission of the New Castle Historical Society is, broadly, "to interpret the history of New Castle and its environs." The experience of a visitor to the exhibit in sitting on the same wooden bench thought to have been used by African-Americans passing through New Castle on the Underground Railroad, is most certainly an interpretation of New Castle's history not soon to be forgotten. The Society hopes that this exhibit and this book help paint a better and more complete picture of life in New Castle.

Richard Rodney Cooch
President, New Castle Historical Society

January, 2002

Miss Bungy

Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Eugene C. Petty

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TIMELINES: U.S. events appear above the line; New Castle events appear below the line.

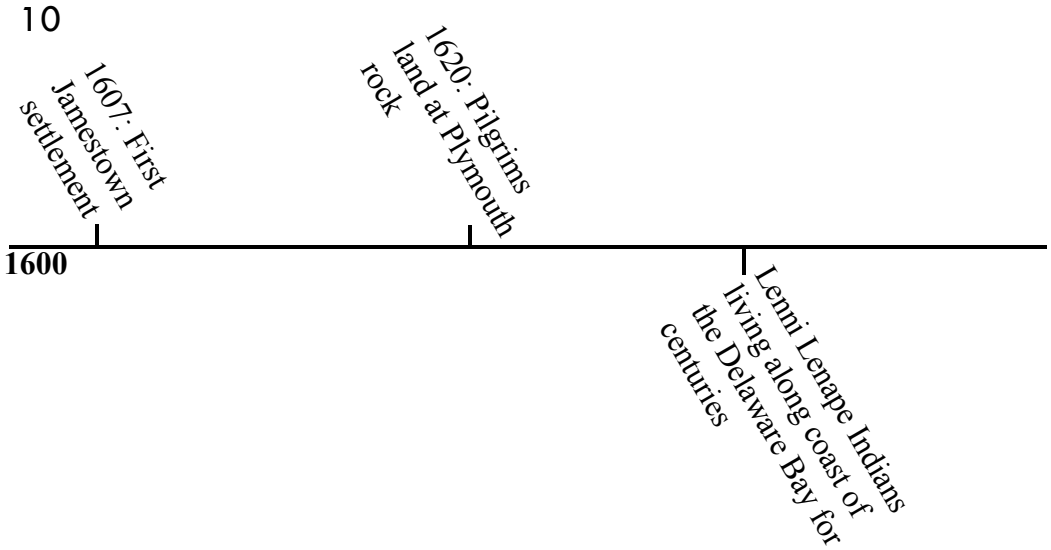
INTRODUCTION

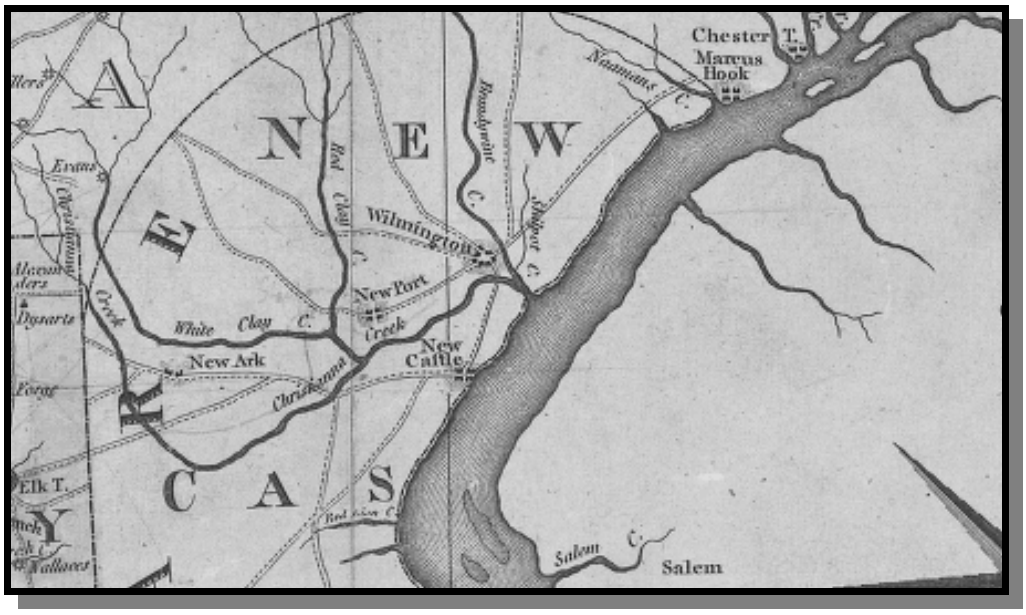
In her Pulitzer-prize winning book *Beloved*, a fictional narrative chronicling the tragic events in the life of an enslaved woman, noted author Toni Morrison concludes with the haunting refrain, "This is not a story to pass on." This phrase is laden with meaning for African-Americans, for whom the institution of slavery and the practice of racism has shaped three hundred years of life in America. For Morrison's character and the millions whom she represents, oral history—passing on a story—was the only method of memory, since they were forbidden basic skills like reading and writing. An untold story represents the loss of history, of memory, and of culture.

While any examination of African-American history in the United States must include a discussion of slavery and its cultural impact on the population, both black and white, the topic is not limited to a discussion of the horrors of slavery and racism. It encompasses a rich heritage grounded in family, religion and community. The exhibit upon which this book is based focuses on the history of African-Americans in New Castle and examines a variety of themes, including slavery and freedom, employment and occupations, housing and neighborhoods, religion, education, and community life. Although the themes reflect nation-wide trends and attitudes, African-Americans in New Castle have fashioned a unique and distinct history for themselves.

Through pictures, objects, documents, and most importantly, reminiscence, we seek to "pass on" the story, to chronicle the lives and histories of African-Americans in the town of New Castle. The story is alternately disturbing and uplifting, sad and triumphant. We believe that this chronicling of the African-American experience in New Castle is a worthy cause for remembrance in the celebration of the 350th anniversary of New Castle's founding in 1651.

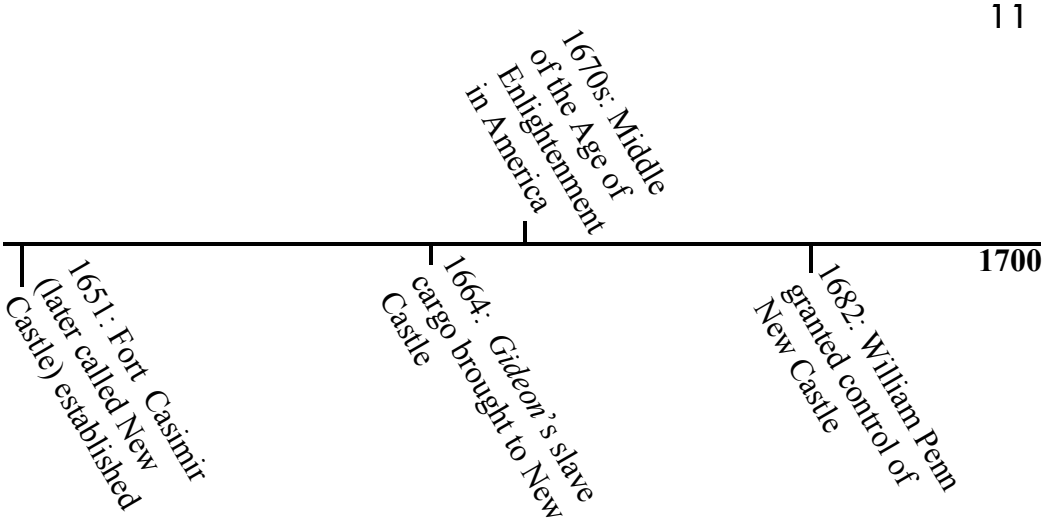
Research for the exhibit focused on documenting and preserving the life stories of African-Americans who have shaped the town of New Castle, both past and present. While the research is by no means exhaustive, it does provide a beginning framework for understanding the role that African-Americans played, which we hope will be developed further by future researchers. We hope that by knitting these stories, documents, and artifacts together, it is possible to uncover a lively history, shaped by issues of black and white, which vividly represents a community defined by far more than color.





Map of the State of Maryland laid down from an actual survey of all the principal waters, public roads, and divisions of the counties therein; describing the situation of the cities, towns, villages, houses of worship and other public buildings, furnaces, forges, mills, and other remarkable places; and of the Federal Territory; as also a sketch of the State of Delaware shewing the probable connexion of the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. June 20th, 1794. Engraved by J. Thackara & J. Vallance.

Courtesy of Library of Congress Map Collection



SLAVERY, FREEDOM, AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Swedish, Dutch, English, and African immigrants formed the earliest settler populations in Delaware. In contrast to European immigration to America, the institution of slavery forced emigration from Africa to the New World. Trading companies such as the Dutch West India Company profited both by the transportation and sale of slaves, as well as by trading the agricultural products that slave labor produced.

Slavery in the Dutch Period

In the 17th century, the Dutch played a central role in the forced emigration of enslaved Africans to North and South America. They purchased slaves in West Africa and shipped them to Curacao in the Caribbean. When the Dutch colony at New Amstel, later renamed New Castle, needed a steady stream of labor, it turned to enslaved African labor. Events in 1662 indicate that slaves were imported into New Amstel at least from that date. There is an early Dutch reference to activities of the City of Amsterdam's Director and Commissary Alexander D'Hinoyossa, then the administrator of the colony. D'Hinoyossa, who desired to conduct trade with the farmers of the English colony of Maryland across the peninsula, traded two

items at that time: Dutch beer made in New Amstel and slaves imported through the New Amstel port. In exchange, the colony acquired tobacco for sale in Holland. In 1663 he urgently requested, "50 negroes who are particularly adaptable to the preparation of the valleys…[and] for the advancement of agriculture." The earliest record of slave cargo arriving in New Amstel is the cargo from the *Gideon* in 1664; 38 males and 34 females from Africa arrived in that year. At this early point historians have estimated that New Amstel and its immediate environs contained 125 slaves or about twenty percent of the population of the Dutch colony here.

Slavery & Freedom in New Castle

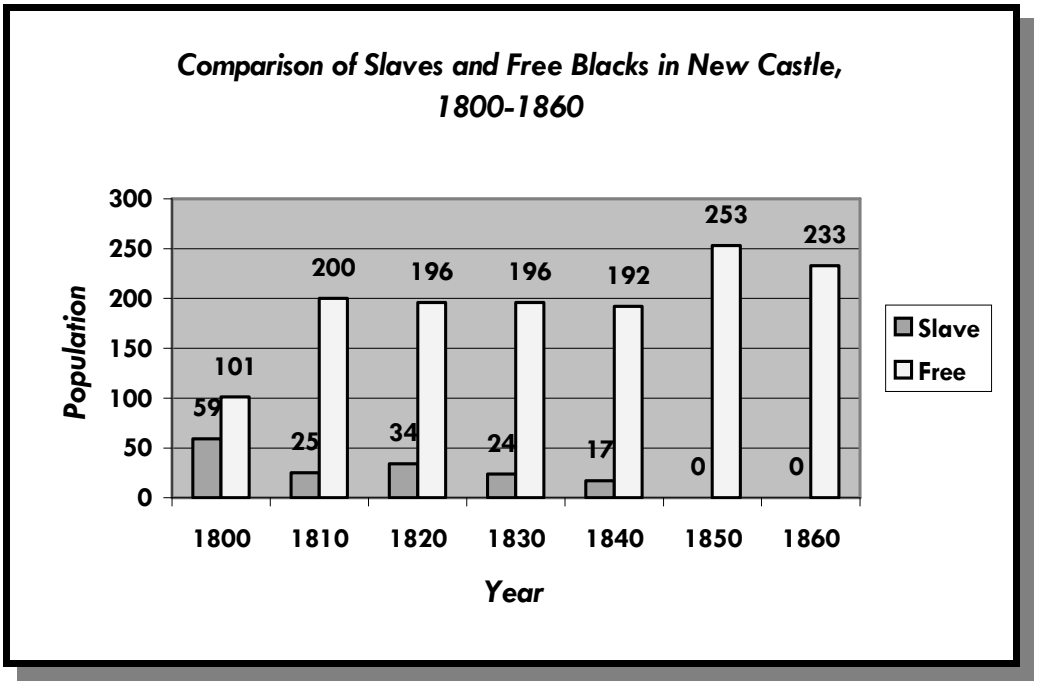
From its earliest history, Delaware developed a unique amalgam of cultural traditions due to geography and economics. For example, Delaware's early major agricultural cash crops, tobacco and wheat, fostered an economic system conducive to slave labor; however, Delaware was also heavily influenced by the religious principles of the Quakers, whose moral opposition to slavery grew throughout the 18th century. New Castle's geographic locale along the Delaware River and Bay placed it on the major shipping route into Pennsylvania and western New Jersey, and in proximity with Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay. The town therefore gained from exposure to economic and social influences from both its northern and southern neighbors.

In 1664 England took control of Delaware away from the Dutch. The recurring slave shortage continued under English rule, and fourteen years later New Castle's townsmen petitioned that "the liberty of trade may be granted us with neighbouring colony of Maryland for supply us with negroes, servants, and utensils, without which we cannot subsist."

Although during the 17th and early 18th centuries most slaves in Delaware did not come directly from Africa, by the middle of the

18th century, 50 percent of Delaware's black population was African-born, a figure that declined thereafter. Most slaves accompanied migrants from Maryland and Virginia to Delaware or were acquired through purchase in Philadelphia. Many of the slaves sold in the region came from the island plantations of the West Indies, and some of those were African. Another potential infusion of African influence in New Castle occurred in the late 18th and early 19th centuries when French émigrés from Ste. Domingue brought a small number of slaves with them and temporarily settled here. The number of enslaved people grew during the early 18th century and by the mid-18th century represented one-third of the population of southern New Castle County.

By 1860, only three percent of the African-Americans in New Castle County were slaves, and none lived in the town of New Castle. The expense of maintaining slaves in an urban setting,



The above graph of census data shows that by 1850 there were no longer any enslaved African-Americans in New Castle. This trend toward freedom continued to be true a decade later.

abolitionist pressure, laws limiting the sale of slaves out-of-state, and the practice of manumission combined to help bring about the decline of slavery in New Castle. As slaves aged, owners became more likely to manumit them. From 1820 to 1840, three-quarters of all slaves in New Castle were age 25 or younger.

Manumission

In Delaware, the practice of manumission—the freeing of enslaved people by their owners—outpaced other states, so that by the Civil War, the great proportion of Delaware's African-Americans was free. The convergence of Quaker idealism and shifts in the state's agricultural economy made slavery less financially advantageous and helps explain why so many slave owners resorted to manumission. Therefore, from the late 18th century onward, Delaware's slave owners practiced voluntary, albeit delayed, manumission. Sometimes this was because of economic motives; at other times it was due to altruistic concerns. Enlightenment ideals of the natural rights of all men, Quaker activism in northern Delaware, and economic convenience also undoubtedly motivated leading New Castle slave owners. At the same time, it is important to remember that being free in Delaware was not the same as being white and free. Because free blacks had very restricted economic, political, and social rights, a visitor to the state in 1837 described the status as "a mere mock freedom."

Slaves manumitted by prominent New Castle residents included Violet in 1787 owned by Nicholas Van Dyke; John Worthy in 1799 by David Finney; Henry in 1803 by John Moody; and two slaves in 1810, the property of Kensey Johns. Ann Clay manumitted 23-year-old Ned Jacobs in 1789; he also received "*freedom dues according to the custom of the country in cases of apprentices and servants*."

"Harriet Tubman is again in these parts.": Abolition & the Underground Railroad

Due to the courage of runaways and the efforts of their abolitionist supporters, New Castle emerged as both a station on the Underground Railroad and a venue for legal arguments about slavery, kidnapping, and fugitive slaves. Freedom runners used a series of safe houses and trails to travel and rest on their route to free northern states and Canada. The town attracted two nationally renowned Underground Railroad participants, conductor Harriet Tubman and station master Thomas Garrett.

The secret nature of their activities means that we may never know as much as we would like about the Underground Railroad. However, because activities in Delaware sometimes became public knowledge, it is well known that an active network assisted fugitives in and around the town of New Castle. For example, throughout the period of slavery, ads for runaways from other states identified New Castle as a supposed destination on their escape route. Furthermore, Tubman and Garrett conspired with one another to achieve this goal. Famed for having brought possibly as many as 300 individuals out of slavery, Tubman personally escorted runaways to and through New Castle. Her presence in the town is documented in an 1860 letter from Thomas Garrett to William Still:

> I write to let thee know that Harriet Tubman is again in these parts. She arrived last evening from one of her trips of mercy to God's poor, bringing two men with her as far as New Castle.

There is much more evidence about Garrett and his network. In the mid-1840s, Garrett helped the Hawkins family from Queen Anne's County, Maryland, escape from New Castle to Pennsylvania. He learned about their presence at the New Castle jail in separate notes from the Sheriff and his daughter, both of whom were abolitionist sympathizers. The Quaker quickly notified his lawyer, John Wales, who went before Judge James Booth to

defend the rights of Hawkins, who himself was a free man. Before the full truth could be discovered about who exactly in the family was free and who was a slave, they all fled in transportation arranged by Garrett. Because of their role in this affair, Garrett and fellow Quaker John Hunn, found themselves on the wrong side of the law in the infamous Trial of 1848, for which they paid dearly for their roles. At the same time, Garrett voiced publicly his determination to continue in the fight against slavery. In the 1850s, however, Garrett's attempts to free "salt-water Davis" from the clutches of slave owners who followed him from Georgia to New Castle failed, but not until Wales had assembled a defense with witnesses brought from Philadelphia. In 1860 Garrett arranged for the defense of Joseph Hamilton, one of his black conductors, who had to answer for trumped-up charges of theft.

Town Lore & the Underground Railroad

The escape to freedom continues to be a gripping tale in the imaginations of New Castle residents. Despite the public nature of these situations, we still do not know the names of black or white town residents who assisted Garrett. Family oral history and local legend indicate at least two specific locations in New Castle that may have had connections to the Underground Railroad. An additional location, a church, also seems likely.

Some believe that Lesley Manor on Sixth Street, now a bed-and-breakfast, was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Two hidden crawl spaces between closets and the floors above them are large enough to conceal a person. An underground tunnel connected to these spaces runs out of the house and across the yard to a location that once contained a pond with access to the river. Owners of the manor have long claimed that when Dr. Lesley built his house in the mid-1850s, he planned to shelter escaped slaves there. In many people's minds, the fact that Dr. Lesley sponsored a school for African-American children in New Castle in the 1860s further supports this supposition.

The Lukens Farm is another place tied to the Underground Railroad in local lore. Located north of town on the Delaware River, the farm was managed by the Haines family after 1915. The family believes that the house was a stop on the Underground Railroad, speculating that fleeing slaves were brought to the house by way of the river, directed to sit on a bench in an interior room of the farmhouse until dark, and then spirited away farther upriver.

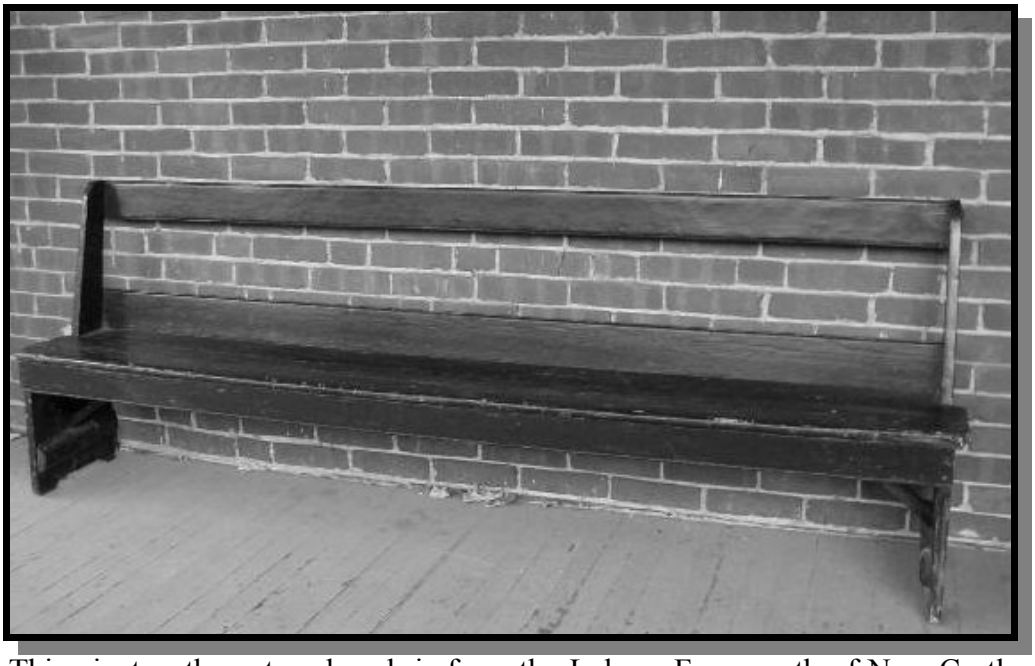
One must also ask if the African-American congregation of Peter Spencer's Bethany A.M.E. Church in New Castle assisted runaways, as did his church in Wilmington.

This early photo of Bethany U.A.M.E. Church in New Castle is an extremely rare view of this African-American congregation at the turn of the twentieth century. The site was possibly associated with the Underground Railroad.

Courtesy of Mrs. H. Sylvester Clark

Thinking About Freedom

It is difficult to verify local legends about the Underground Railroad so long after the fact. You are invited, however, to consider the difficult journey of the African-Americans fleeing to freedom through New Castle, as well as the risks taken by those who aided them to escape. Consider what it might have been like to live as a slave, and the fear that escape must have produced. The Haines' bench (below) reminds us that these stories about the passage from slavery to freedom generate an emotional connection that spans time.



This nineteenth-century bench is from the Lukens Farm north of New Castle. Family members have long believed that the house was a stop on the Underground Railroad.

Object on loan from Bishop Ronald Haines. Photo by C. H. Kaser.

Slavery, Freedom & the Law

In 1682, the land that would eventually become the state of Delaware was granted to William Penn and was known as the lower counties of Pennsylvania. Due to increasing dissatisfaction with their political and economic situation, the residents of the lower counties petitioned Penn for separate colonial status. Independent colonial status was achieved in 1704, and New Castle became the first capital of Delaware. As both a political and judicial seat, New Castle served as an important governmental center throughout the 1700s and much of the 1800s, and continued to house local, state, and federal court functions until 1881. Thus, New Castle formed the center of law throughout the county and even the state for much of the 19th century. For African-Americans, the town presented scenes of both punishment and freedom.

New Castle Court House

Before it moved to Wilmington in 1881, the New Castle Court House was the site of local, state, and federal judicial and governmental activity for 150 years. It was also a part of the American legal system that institutionalized racism. Early in the colonial period, slaves and indentured servants enjoyed few civil rights. In 1726, the British colonial governor created a special court for slaves. If a slave was proven guilty, his or her master received partial compensation for the loss of these services. In 1789, such cases were transferred to the authority of the Court of General Quarter Sessions; however, in 1797, the special court regained legal status for one crime—that of a slave accused of raping a white woman. In 1826, the special court was abolished once again, and authority transferred to the Court of General Sessions. The Court of Oyer and Terminer heard capital offense cases for both blacks and whites, while the federal courts addressed issues related to laws dealing with fugitive slaves.

Over the course of the period of slavery, codes developed that not

only restricted the rights of slaves, but eventually had a negative impact on the free black population. During these years, the legislature passed laws which insured that blacks could not vote, could not buy or sell alcohol, could not carry guns, could not travel without passes signed by whites, and could not travel outside of the state except for defined periods of time. On the other hand, it is significant that in Delaware a series of laws banned slave sales out-of-state in 1787, 1789 and 1797. Kidnapping laws passed in 1787, 1793 and 1841 were sometimes enforced, and, unlike in other slave states, African-Americans were presumed free unless the evidence proved otherwise.

By virtue of its legislative and judicial functions, the New Castle Court House became the symbolic representation of order and the rule of law in the community. The presence of the Court House and the nearby county jail meant that New Castle's African-Americans witnessed first hand the impact of court rulings and discriminatory codes. Runaways were incarcerated in the county jail, prosecuted at the court, and returned to their masters. Punishments of blacks judged guilty of crimes included public whippings, corporal punishments, and hangings, and it was not unusual for their sentences to be harsher than their white counterparts. A *Delaware Gazette* columnist from New Castle who worked at the Court House, Arthur, suggested that this backdrop set a somber tone among black residents in the 1850s. Arthur commended Justice of the Peace John Bradford for handling a legal claim between two argumentative African-American women who, after they paid their fines, "left, rejoicing that they had escaped the prison, so hateful to all darkies since Jim Anderson and his co-murderers were hung herein."

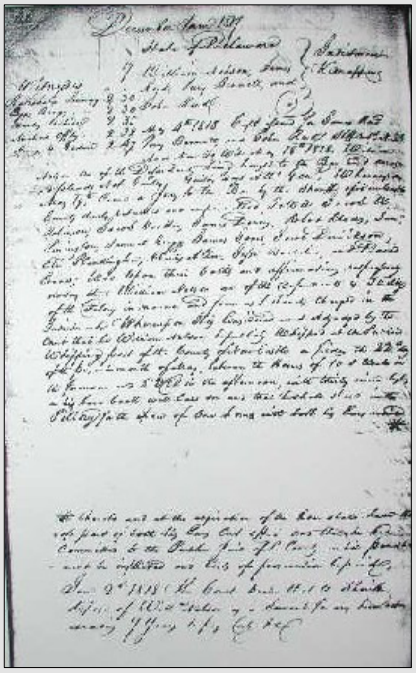
On some occasions, whites who violated the rights of African-Americans earned punishment at the hand of the law. For example, the kidnapping of blacks was a violation of state law and there are many instances of perpetrators of such a crime being judged guilty and punished. A case such as this is illustrated in the vignette *"I Went Out for Chips"* on the next page.

"I went out for chips"

At the trial of her kidnappers in 1816, Bathsheba Bungy, a 15-year-old free black girl, testified:

I went out for chips. Jas. Reed, Perry Bennett & Wm. Nelson seized me. Nelson the [defendant] & Jas. Reed took me to Dixon's Tavern in Maryland & Perry Bennett went home.

The subsequent trial and decision not only reflects the type of sentence given to those who violated the kidnapping laws, but also affirms one of the most important rights held by African-Americans in Delaware. Unlike other slave states, Delaware's legal system considered blacks free unless proven otherwise. The all-male white jury found Nelson and his cohorts guilty of kidnapping, for which the three-judge panel issued the following sentence:



...on Friday the 22nd day of May between 10 & 4 he shall be whipped at the public whipping Post of the County with 39 lashes on his back well laid on; and shall stand in the Pillory for the space of one hour with both his Ears nailed thereto, and at the expiration of the hour, shall have the soft part of both his Ears cut off, and that you shall be not commd till this punishment be inflicted, and the costs of the prosecution paid.

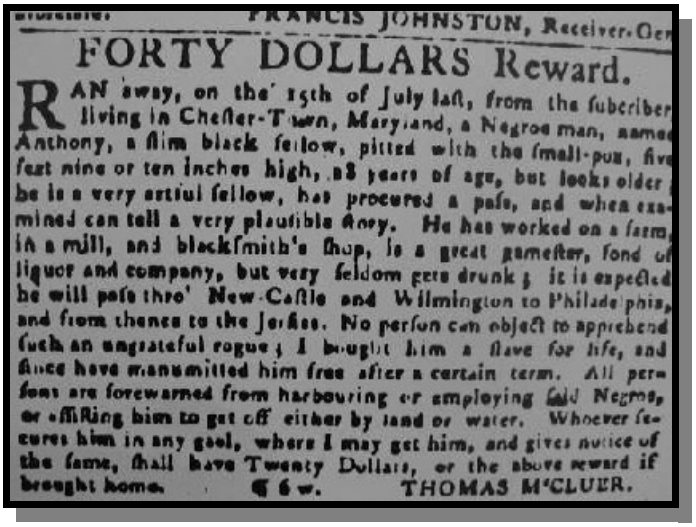
The official court record of the Bathsheba Bungy kidnapping case.

Courtesy of the Delaware State Archives

The town's inhabitants may have been heartened when in 1854, a black woman sued a white man to obtain wages due that he denied because she purportedly could not produce a record of what she was owed. The court, however, accepted her accounting, which was kept on a "*three-sided gum stick,* knotty, crooked, and very twisted…." There was a similar outcome in 1867, when a young African-American, Alexander Turner, won his case and damages against a white man for whom he had served as a substitute in the Civil War but was subsequently denied payment.

Another case of great interest to African-Americans occurred in the mid-19th century. Elias Saunders brought a lawsuit against Wilmington's Mother Church because the trustees there sought to deny Saunders the right to perform his duties as a presiding officer of the church. The case eventually caused a split within the body.

A review of Thomas Garrett's court activities reveals both success and failure. At the infamous Trial of 1848, presided over by United States Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney and District Court Judge Willard Hall, Quakers Thomas Garrett and John Hunn were convicted of violating the Fugitive Slave Act. The decision illustrates that even a man as powerful as Garrett was subject to the legal consequences of assisting freedom runners. On the other hand, these situations show how quickly Garrett and his abolitionist black and white friends could mount an operation to defend runaways or their helpers and assist fleeing slaves in their escape. Garrett also used the trial to demonstrate publicly his enduring commitment to abolishing the evils of slavery. Even though in 1854 Garrett's lawyer, John Wales, lost his case trying to prove that "salt-water Davis," an escapee from Georgia, was not a slave, it gave public notice that Garrett and his team were still operating; so, too, in 1860 did the legal assistance offered black conductor Joseph Hamilton in yet another case in New Castle's court.



FRANCIS JOHNSTON, Receiver-Ge

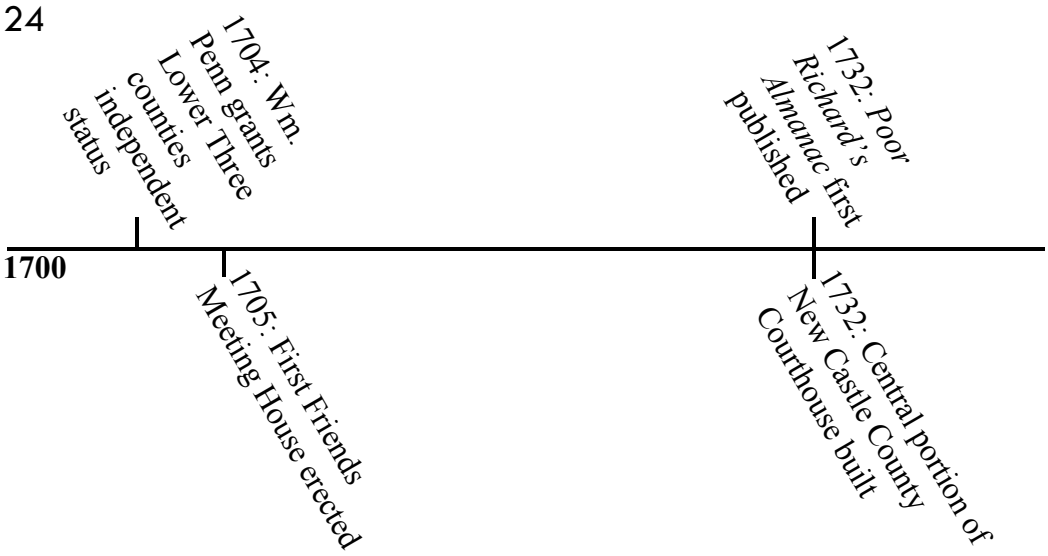
FORTY DOLLARS Reward.

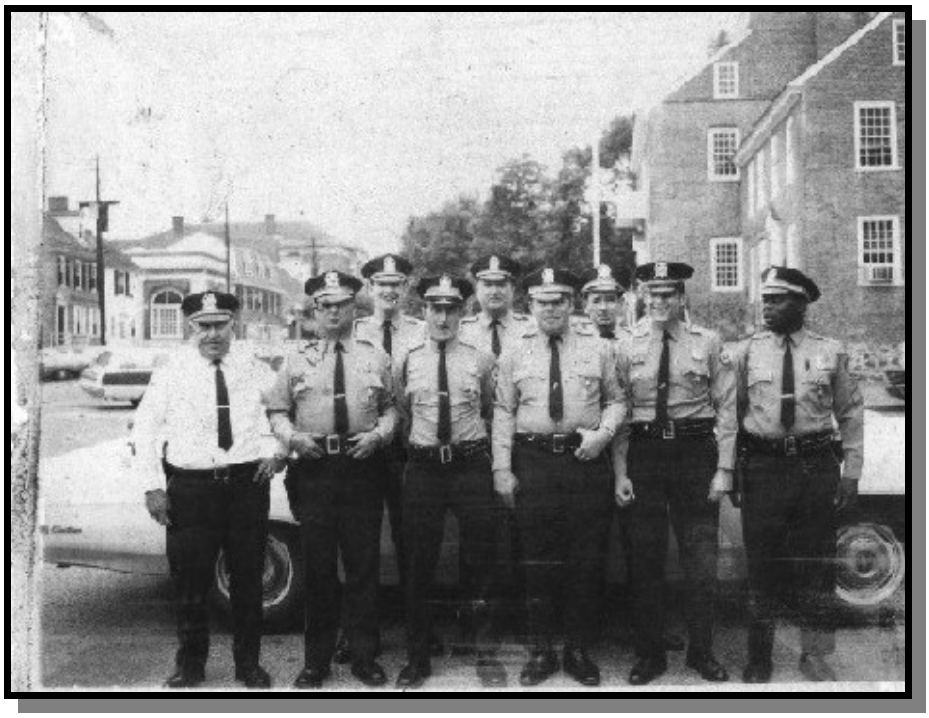
RAN away, on the 15th of July last, from the subscriber living in Chester-Town, Maryland, a Negroe man, named Anthony, a slim black fellow, pitted with the small-pox, five feet nine or ten inches high, 28 years of age, but looks older; he is a very artful fellow, has procured a pass, and when examined can tell a very plausible story. He has worked on a farm, in a mill, and blacksmith's shop, is a great gamester, fond of liquor and company, but very seldom gets drunk; it is expected he will pass thro' New-Castle and Wilmington to Philadelphia, and from thence to the Jerseys. No person can object to apprehending such an ungrateful rogue; I bought him a slave for life, and since have manumitted him free after a certain term. All persons are forewarned from harbouring or employing said Negroe, or offering him to get off either by land or water. Whoever secures him in any gaol, where I may get him, and gives notice of the same, shall have Twenty Dollars, or the above reward if brought home. 6 w. THOMAS M'CLURE.

Runaway advertisements were common in newspapers prior to the abolition of slavery. This ad from the *Pennsylvania Gazette* was placed in the late 18th century to recover what slave owners considered lost property. Such documents are used today to learn about the lives of enslaved people.

Marked, "Delaware Justice 1875," this wooden model suggests that the pillory and whipping post was not only the location of corporal punishment, but also an imposing symbol of law and order in the town of New Castle.

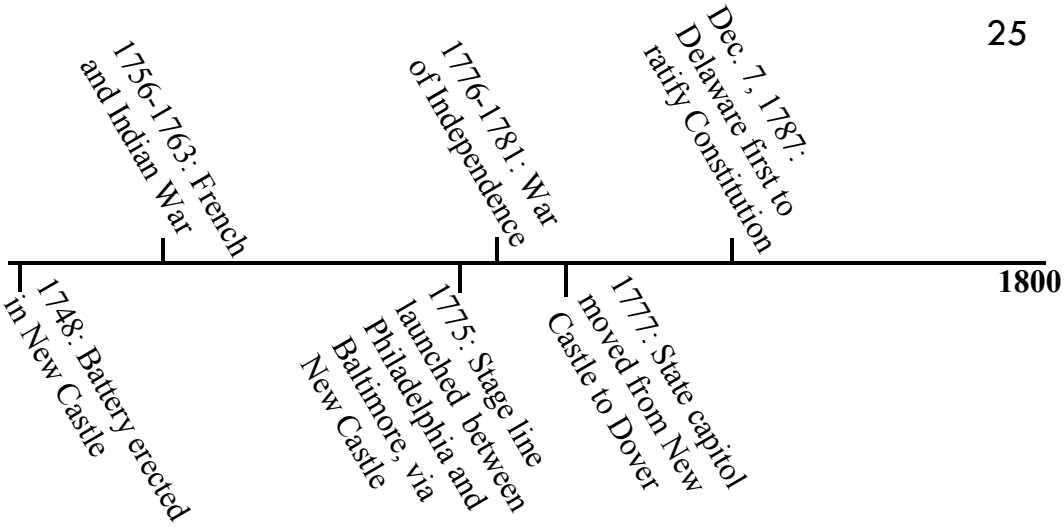
From the New Castle Historical Society Collection. Photo by C. H. Kaser.





Eugene C. Petty, the first African-American police officer in New Castle, is pictured at the far right of this photo of the New Castle Police Department. He retired in 1983 as Chief of Police.

Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Eugene C. Petty.



LIVING AND WORKING IN NEW CASTLE

Household & Family Patterns in the First Half of the 19th Century

Although free blacks often lived in their own homes or rented houses, it was also common for them and slaves to live in white households, usually as adolescents or young adults. In 1800, 46 percent of white households in New Castle—almost half the population—included black residents. During the early 19th century, the median size of a free black household in New Castle was four members, which was smaller than the average white household of 5.8 members. About two-thirds of black households were composed of two parents with children, and males headed ninety percent of black households. By 1860, most white households did not include African-American inhabitants, but among those that did, 44 African-Americans lived in them, primarily as servants. No white household had more than three African-American inhabitants. The town contained nearly 50 African-American households, 38 of which were headed by males. Most male heads of household were employed as day laborers and were almost always the only adult male in the household. Two exceptions appear in the census: one household had five resident laborers and another had four.

African-American Occupations and Households in New Castle, 1850 and 1860

According to federal census data in 1850 and 1860, most black males with occupations were laborers, while females were servants. In 1860, the age of servants ranged from 11 to 85, while those of laborers ranged from 13 to 95. Slavery, limited training and education, and racial prejudice restricted employment opportunities for African-Americans in New Castle. Yet within these limitations, African-Americans showed initiative. Those who were able grabbed opportunities in trades and in services such as house servants, coachmen and hack drivers, ostlers and waiters at inns, bricklayers and carpenters, or waterman and sailors in the bay or ocean. Only a handful of African Americans are identified with occupations that could be considered entrepreneurial. Perhaps mid-century men like John Peterson and Henry Lilly, who kept oyster houses, and Jacob Finney, a hackman who later owned a livery stable, took inspiration from some of their predecessors. In that earlier generation was the "French Mulatto" Augustus Jamot, who in the early 1800s opened a hairdresser and accessories shop. Robert VanJoy, began as a laborer, worked as a farmer, and then rented his property to whites; at a later time, Peter Jackson ran an oyster house.

Women faced even greater restrictions and are identified primarily as servants. African-American women apparently had very few employment options and not until the 1860 census are their occupations listed. In this case, they were exclusively servants, probably an indication that they had done the same type of work prior to that time. The structure of American family life in the 19th century differed from today's. Household chores like washing, cooking, ironing, and cleaning required hard physical labor, and modern conveniences like washing machines and electric irons had not yet been invented. Household management demanded skill and often required outside help—often that of

enslaved or hired African-American women. Many of these servants lived and worked in white-owned households or establishments, whereas the laborers tended to head independent households. It is impossible to know exactly what kind of work they performed, but the servants lived in the homes of clergymen, hotel and innkeepers, lawyers, maiden ladies, and widows. Other heads of households for whom African-American laborers worked included a bank teller, brick maker, butcher, coal merchant, engineer, farmer, gentleman, grain merchant, retired merchant, and shoemaker. Only six African-American women appeared to be heads of the household, and none of the women listed as living in an African-American household had an occupation attached to her name. It is likely that their work went unrecorded.

"In Competition with the Wilmington & New Castle Railroad Company"

The story of Jacob Finney, identified as a 34-year-old hack driver in the federal censuses, represents the connection of African-Americans to one of New Castle's pre-eminent industries—transportation. New Castle had long served as a Mid-Atlantic transfer point for travel and trade by ship, carriage, and eventually rail. Free blacks and slaves held positions as teamsters, hack drivers, coachmen, sailors, stewards, laborers, and worked in service jobs at inns, boarding houses, and stables. Even enslaved individuals skilled as wagoners merited mention in newspaper ads, and there is mention of blacks "pushing hand-carts at a trot full of goods" through Packet Alley to the harbor. George Ford handled a barouche for one of the town's young men to see Lafayette during his visit to New Castle. Caleb Darby, a manumitted slave, was a teamster who drove a Conestoga wagon for the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad.

In the 1840s and 1850s, daily and seasonal transportation needs created by the courts, camp meetings, tourism to beaches in

Delaware and New Jersey, California gold-seekers, and immigrants from overseas brought travelers to town. One newspaper in 1850 estimated that 150 people per day traveled by stage between New Castle and Wilmington. These operations, as well as New Castle's largest industrial employer, the New Castle Manufacturing Company, employed blacks as laborers.

Before the railroads were built, Jacob Finney drove a stage for the old Union Line from New Castle to Frenchtown, Maryland, as part of a steamboat venture that linked places such as Philadelphia and Baltimore. Later he operated a hack between Wilmington and New Castle, as he said, "in competition with the Wilmington and New Castle Railroad Company." He eventually owned one of the town's five livery stables and operated a sleigh, and his real estate grew in value from $200 to $500. At the time of his death in 1873 his inventory of household items included a cook stove, chairs, tables, chest, feather bed, as well as 12 fowls, 3 ducks, and 2 pigs—and a sleigh with two strings of bells, one hack lounge, and one hack with a back.

Alexander Cooper, a lawyer who practiced in New Castle, provided this description of Jacob in 1866:

> I rode over from Wilmington in Jake Finney's hack… Jake was an unusually large and burly Negro, lame in one leg. He was dark in color, a genuine black man, yet an active and thorough democrat in politics. He always voted for a democrat and assigned his reason for it (which is absolutely true,) that the republicans never granted him any favors, while the democrats always did. Whenever he wanted assistance he called upon a democrat, and invariably got it… he drove me to the old Court House. I alighted, and paid him thirty five cents for my fare…

Perhaps the following accident, reported by Arthur, a correspondent for the *Delaware Gazette*, accounted for Jacob's lameness:

> Old Jacob's hack was standing at the wharf near the depot, the horses took flight and ran up Delaware Street and turning into Orange Street proceeded toward Wilmington at a furious rate. The hack was much damaged, the top being entirely broken off and destroyed. A subscription was immediate set on foot (in New Castle) and before night a sufficient sum was raised to repair the loss.

While census information provides an overview of the town, newspapers provide other details of black entrepreneurship. For example, the *Delaware Gazette* described the New Castle Ice Cream Saloon run by Henry Lilly in 1860:

> …he has a superior quality of Ice Cream which he will dispose of at reasonable rates. He has fitted up a saloon in superior style and will be happy to wait on all that may favor him with their patronage. N. B. Parties, Pic Nics, Excursions, supplied at any hour of the day in any quantity.

In the 1860 census, however, Lilly is listed as an oyster house keeper with real estate valued at $500 and personal worth of $100. After the war, Lilly was also known to manage a shop that sold candy and porter on one of the wharves. By then, according to A. B. Cooper, he had established a reputation as "a good cook and caterer...employed at...weddings and other public and private dinners...and did it well and satisfactorily and in a manner suited to the taste of an epicure." Henry was also active in the town's African-American church and educational activities.

The Great Migration (1916-1929)

During World War I, approximately one-half million African-Americans abandoned their southern homes and streamed into northern industrial centers. This movement was spurred by the war economy, combined with the virtual cessation of foreign immigration and the mobilization of the armed forces, which created new opportunities for black workers

in northern industry. Known as the "Great Migration," this exodus continued during the 1920s, with the movement doubling in volume.

Most of the New Castle residents interviewed for this exhibit are the descendants of those who came to New Castle as part of the Great Migration, rather than the descendants of the town's earliest African-American residents. This illustrates that two waves of African-American migration brought blacks to New Castle. Earlier groups arrived in the bonds of slavery; later groups came in hope of improved economic status and quality of life.

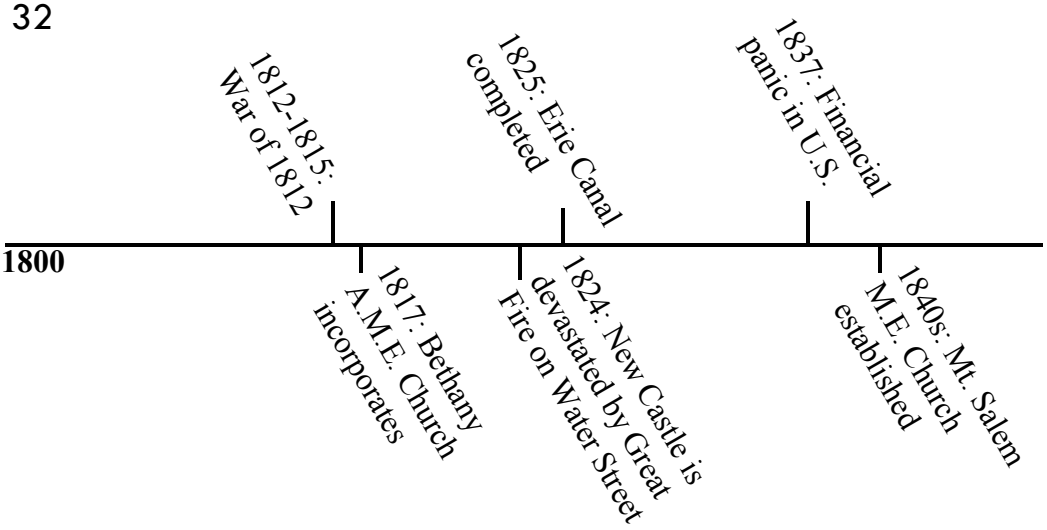
Employment in the 20th Century

Factory and industrial work comprised the largest sector of employment for African-Americans in greater New Castle in the early to mid-twentieth century. Such was the case for Joseph H. Pinkett, who had a succession of jobs in steel factories in Wilmington. Several local businesses thrived in New Castle, however.

In the Buttonwood neighborhood of New Castle, Pinkett's wife, Leona (Black) Pinkett recalls one particular business, George's Market. Mr. George Pennington's store, located on the corner of Arbutus Avenue and Route 9, was within walking distance of the houses in Buttonwood and "had pretty much the basics. He had fruit, vegetables, meat, bread, household products, gasoline…" Mrs. Pinkett noted that if a person did not have enough money to pay for his goods, Mr. Pennington would keep the bill on a tab to pay at another time.

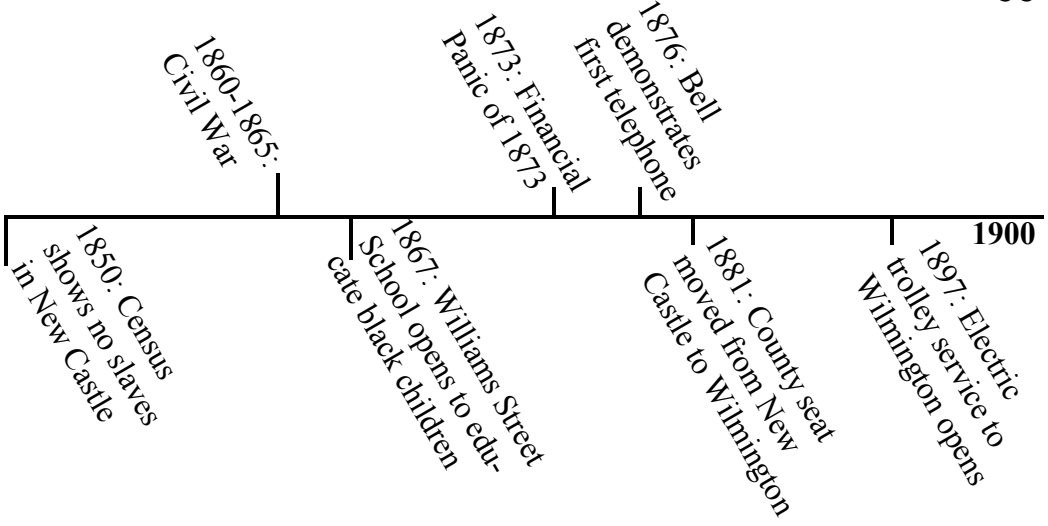
In the town of New Castle, residents describe a wide variety of jobs done by African-Americans. A host of casual laborers supported small businesses, skilled workers were employed in the building and manufacturing industries, and increasing numbers of white-collar workers staffed schools and offices.

Toward the later half of the 20th century, racial barriers were broken in the areas of law and government. In 1971, Mr. H. Sylvester Clark became the first African-American to serve on the New Castle city council. His appointment, and later election, to city council represents an important symbolic change in New Castle. Mr. Eugene C. Petty similarly broke barriers in New Castle. He joined the Police Department in the early 1970s as the first African-American police officer. He retired in 1983 having served eight years as Chief of Police in New Castle and six years as Chief Constable for the State of Delaware.



This photograph from the 1940s shows young students on the steps of the Buttonwood School in New Castle. Front row (left to right): Teel Taylor, Jean Wright, Eloise Taylor. Back row: Sylvia Twyman, Loretta Carter, Izetta Cephas.

Courtesy of Dolores Twyman McCray



HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

New Castle's housing, integrated in the 19th century, became more residentially segregated by the mid-20th century. Racism and the nature of the work that African-Americans performed probably fostered this trend. Before the advent of the automobile and public transportation, it was necessary for people to live within a reasonable walking distance of their workplaces. The two main areas of African-American housing were the central area of town and Buttonwood, a neighborhood on Route 9 north of New Castle.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the development of segregated housing for African-Americans became standard practice. Restrictive housing covenants attached to property titles often dictated standards for residents based on race and ethnicity. These covenants were particularly popular in new suburban districts and were applied when the lots were first subdivided. Besides prohibiting residents of a particular race or religious affiliation, deed covenants also outlined the size or price of a house to be built on a property, stipulated locations for outbuildings and garages, and forbade specific usages such as commerce or industry. Despite these kinds of restrictions, some neighborhoods developed without the application of restrictive

covenants based on racial discrimination. The establishment of single-family black households represents a critical milestone in African-American history.

Residents in the Central District

No one particular area of central New Castle contained an exclusively African-American population. The town experienced its peak development in the 18th century, and retained an extremely stable population of both blacks and whites throughout the early 19th century in comparison with the rest of the state. African-Americans, who comprised a significant sector of the population in the town from the early 18th century, established a firm presence in several areas of the town. The greatest concentrations of African-Americans lived on the eastern and western ends of Third, Fourth, and Fifth Streets. The dwellings tended to be modest, frame row houses. For example, an African-American, Rachel Carter, rented the residence on Third Street now known as the Dutch House in the early 20th century, before it was developed as a museum.

African-American residents of central New Castle remember the town's residential patterns during the early 20th century. Bishop Ronald Haines, who grew up on Fifth and Tremont Streets, recalled that "every street" had both blacks and whites although there was perhaps "one whole block" on Fifth Street, between Delaware and Tremont that was exclusively African-American. Although whites and blacks lived in close proximity, he commented, "New Castle was a good example of a 'Jim Crow' town" with little or no interaction between African-Americans and whites, or between residents in downtown and suburban areas. Gladys Clark, a lifelong inhabitant of New Castle, commented that the town today seems less integrated in regard to housing than it did while she was growing up. Many black families have sold their homes in New Castle, and moved into newer suburban communities.

Buttonwood

The Buttonwood neighborhood, located on the northeastern edge of New Castle off Route 9, was established in 1902. The neighborhood is comprised of one main street, Buttonwood Avenue, which intersects several smaller lanes, including Arbutus Avenue, Lincoln Street, Meehan Street, Railroad Avenue, New Castle Avenue, and Foster Avenue. This historically black suburban development has been a stronghold for African-Americans, drawing residents from both Wilmington and the town of New Castle. Residents of Buttonwood have often commented on the vibrant sense of community in the neighborhood over the years, centering on the family, church, and school.

Barbara Pinkett Hicks in front of Buttonwood United Methodist Church. Photo taken mid-20th century.

Courtesy of Dolores Twyman McCray

The neighborhood takes its name from the adjacent estate, Buttonwood Plantation, built by James Booth, Sr. in the early 1800s. Booth, a prominent statesman and judge, played a critical early role in the abolition of slavery. Among other important activities, he participated in the Delaware State Constitutional Convention in 1776, which led to a ban on the importation of slaves into the state.

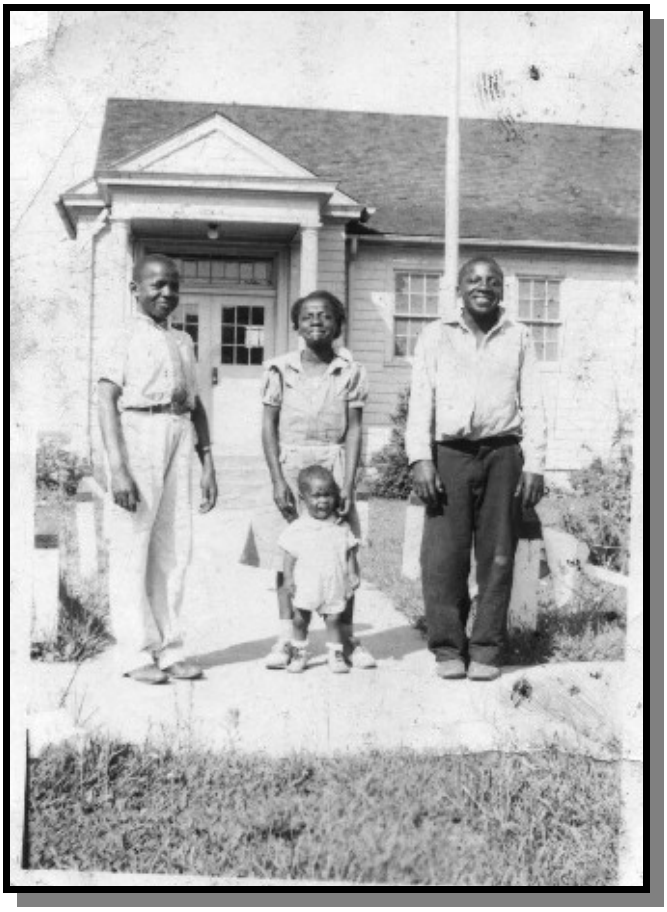
Life in Buttonwood

The Buttonwood neighborhood experienced modest changes in the 20th century. As Teel Petty, a lifelong resident describes, "It's pretty much the same—I think the streets have improved a little... So we're missing quite a few houses that used to be here that are just vacant lots now." Most houses in Buttonwood are located on Buttonwood Avenue and the adjacent street, Arbutus Avenue.

The neighborhood illustrates a key principle in the history of late 19th and early 20th century development: as innovations in transportation such as streetcars, trolleys, trains, and automobiles allowed cities and towns to become larger than ever before, they also allowed a greater level of segregation to occur. This segregation occurred on many levels—economic, ethnic, and racial. The comments of another lifelong Buttonwood resident, Alberta Pritchett Ponzo, reflect this trend:

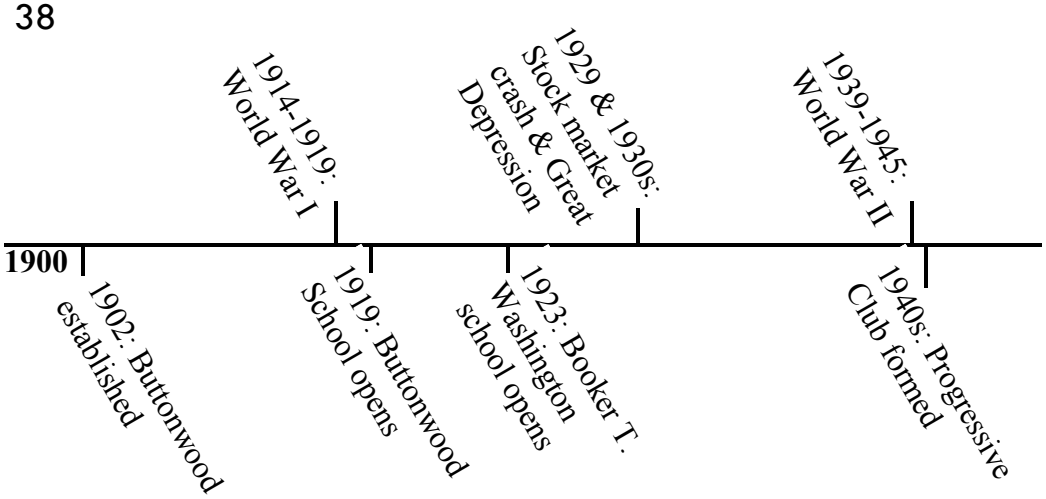
> As a sixty-five year old, born and raised, resident of the black community of Buttonwood, the story I have to tell is very bleak. Buttonwood has sustained itself without the support of the local government or the goodwill of the city of New Castle at large. As a resident of Buttonwood, I have never bonded with the "city of New Castle." Maybe it's because of the sustained neglect by the city's administration or the indifference of the city's residents. In past years, due to segregation, Buttonwood residents' structured social and cultural experiences were through the Buttonwood Methodist Church, the Buttonwood School, when it was in existence, and the larger black

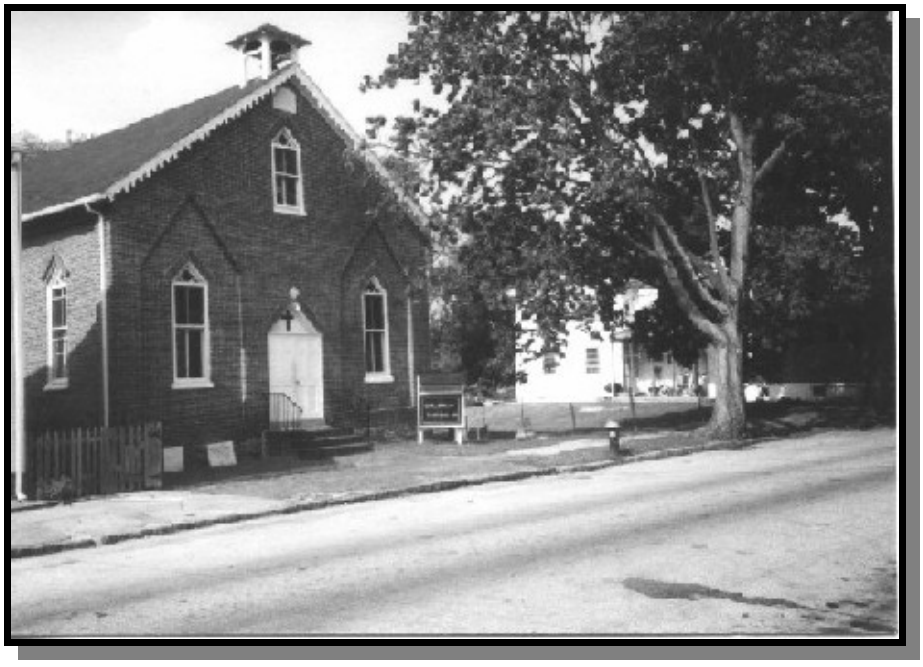
community of Wilmington. My childhood spent in my community, Buttonwood, was wholesome and enjoyable. My return to the community has been peaceful and fulfilling. Only as an adult did I look back and view my life in New Castle as racist, segregated, and stagnant. To be asked to comment on Afro-Americans in the City of New Castle is like asking a slave to comment on life in the "Quarters" on the master's plantation.



"Henry's Family"

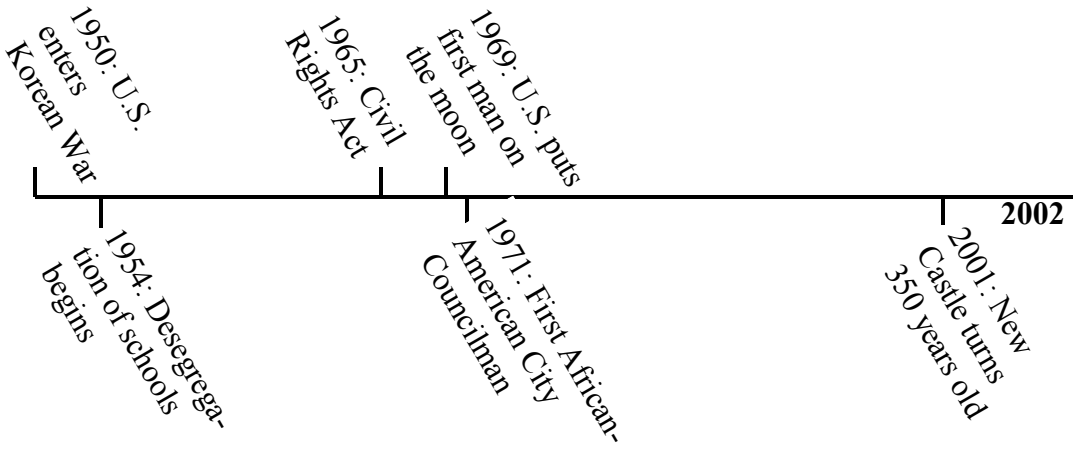
Courtesy of Dolores Twyman McCray





View of Mount Salem Methodist Episcopal Church at 140 East Fourth Street. While the congregation was established in the 1840s, construction on this second building was completed in 1878.

From the New Castle Historical Society Collection



NEW CASTLE'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHURCHES: "SO SAY ONE, SO SAY ALL"

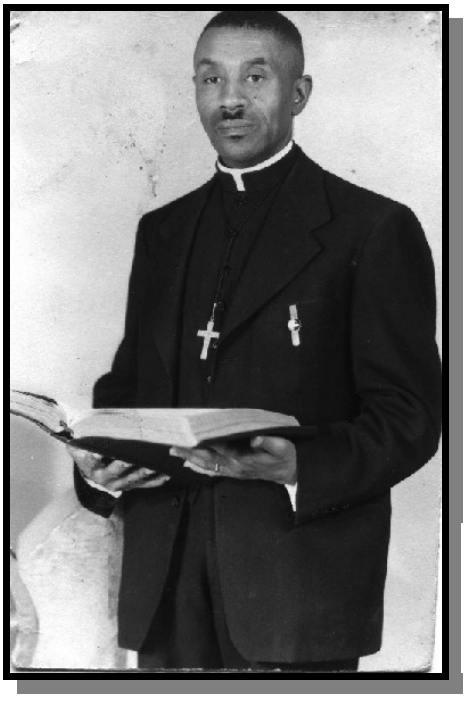
On October 27, 1817, the town's blacks incorporated the African-American **Bethany U.A.M.E. Church**. It was a direct offshoot of Peter Spencer's independent African Methodist movement started in Wilmington, and Spencer himself was involved in setting up the church in New Castle. In 1818, some of New Castle's black townsmen constructed the first church, a small frame building about 60 feet square located at Fourth and Williams Streets on land conveyed from Alexander Duncan to the trustees of the African Union Church: Tony Hayes, Philip Young, John West, Isaac Mousley, David Smith, and Jacob Marsh.

On March 10, 1859, the African Union Church bought an adjoining lot to their church from the heirs of William B. Janvier, and using the additional land, built a new, larger brick church in the 1860s. The name of the church was changed in 1867, and on September 16, 1868, the papers and property of the congregation were transferred to the new trustees of the Union American [Methodist Episcopal] Church of New Castle. This document was signed "so say one, so say all" by J. Ayers, Norris Maxwell, S. Waters, N. Brinkley and Perry Sisco, secretary. By 1869, the

rebuilt church included a gallery and expanded seating capacity. The most recent remodeling took place in 1949 under the pastoral direction of Reverend Alfred E. Miller and included new pews, a dining room, rest rooms, and an addition at the rear of the church.

While the establishment of Bethany U.A.M.E. Church was a landmark step in religious freedom, many black residents of New Castle continued to worship within other traditional, segregated congregations in town. By 1840, the practice of segregation in these churches inspired the establishment of a second African-American congregation in New Castle. The **Mount Salem M.E. Church**, located at 140 East Fourth Street, is a Methodist Episcopal congregation that was established in the 1840s. The first church on the site, a wooden frame building, was constructed in 1857, and the present brick church was completed in 1878.

A third African-American congregation established in greater New Castle is the **Buttonwood United Methodist Church**, located on Buttonwood Avenue. The church was founded early in the 20th century as part of the Buttonwood community. The church built in 1947 is still in use today.



Reverend Taylor

Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Eugene C. Petty

EDUCATION

Education for African-Americans in the United States has been tainted by prejudice throughout its history. Slaves in the United States were expressly forbidden even basic education such as reading and writing, and, for the most part, blacks were denied access to public education until after the Civil War. Despite this bleak national picture, African-Americans in New Castle had sporadic opportunities for formal schooling.

The old Quaker Meeting House in New Castle (now demolished) is believed to have housed an early Negro school established by the African School Society. Composed mainly of Quakers from Wilmington, this organization was likely responsible for establishing another Negro school in New Castle; a book dated 1838 was found under the floorboards of the Immanuel Church's Parish House, and contained the inscription "*African Sabbath School, New Castle*." In 1863, according to a newspaper report, the African-American townspeople took advantage of a summer visitor from Boston willing to teach their children and used their Methodist church to educate nearly 50 "young and middle aged pupils" in a Sabbath school. According to their teacher, "the colored children of New Castle will compare favorably in behavior and aptitude to learn, with any who have been under her charge." Another example of the intermittent efforts to educate blacks made by both races of local citizens is described in the following passage from the November 8, 1867 *Delaware Gazette*:

> A New Colored School has been erected by the liberality of several citizens, among whom were Mr. Tasker, who gave the lot, Dr. Lesley and Mr. Spruance. It is quite a neat and tasty affair. There are thirty scholars who are taught by Miss Jones of Portland, Maine. Their prowess is truly wonderful. They answer correctly numerous important questions in geography and punctuation. They read well and sang excellently, their voice being in unison, and with correct measure.

While none of the 19th-century school buildings for African-Americans survives in New Castle, several schools from the 20th century are still extant, including the Buttonwood School and the Booker T. Washington School.

Williams Street School

New Castle's first fully institutionalized black school, the **Williams Street School**, was located on the site of the current Goodwill Fire Company. The school was established by the Delaware Association for the Moral Improvement and Education of Colored People in 1867 and opened October 5th of that year. Students studied reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar. At that time, African-American schools did not receive funding from the state and relied on the Freedman's Bureau for an operations budget. In 1869, the Freedman's Bureau provided $2,440 to the school, which also received the charitable support of local individuals, both black and white.

By 1877, the Actuary of the Delaware Association, Henry C. Conrad, reported that the Williams Street School had 48 pupils enrolled, that the school was open six and three-quarters months, between October and May, and that the Association paid $54 toward the salary of a teacher. The school continued to operate until the Booker T. Washington School was opened in 1923.

The DuPont Schools

The **Buttonwood School** was founded out of the need to provide Buttonwood neighborhood children with a school close to their homes. On August 8, 1919, a special meeting of the Board of Education was called to address the needs of the Buttonwood community. The Board and community agreed that a small 14 x 14 foot addition could be made to the local church to house the school. The first teacher, Mr. James Coulbourne, was hired at a salary of $85 per month.

At the same time the original Buttonwood School was established, Pierre S. DuPont and the Service Citizens of Delaware (later the Delaware School Auxiliary Association) sponsored a number of surveys of the state's educational system, giving particular attention to the conditions of the school buildings for African-Americans. They concluded that African-American pupils could be better served by the construction of one and two room schools throughout the state. The Department of Education accepted this recommendation and P. S. DuPont personally financed the construction of 86 school buildings for African-Americans; two of these "DuPont Schools" were in New Castle.

The Delaware School Auxiliary Association identified two locations for new schools in New Castle: one on South Street in the downtown area, the other in the Buttonwood neighborhood. Completed in 1923, the **Booker T. Washington School** was constructed on the South Street location replacing the Williams Street School. The Delaware School Auxiliary Association paid $23,405.97 for the entire cost of the land and the construction of the two-room brick building. Two teachers, Bertha Howard Battle and Albion T. Unthank, taught grades one through eight in the two-room school. Mrs. Battle was the first person to teach grades one through four, from 1923 until 1936. Mr. Unthank taught grades five through eight from 1926 until his death in 1953. Both

teachers received an annual salary of $1150, approximately 85 percent of what white teachers earned. Booker T. Washington was last used as a school in September 1958, and was then used to supplement other educational programs until the early 1980s.

The second DuPont School was constructed in the Buttonwood neighborhood. The new **Buttonwood School** replaced the small church addition that the community had been using to conduct classes. It was originally a two-room frame school, completed in 1926 at a cost of $15,346.78. Additional classrooms were later added to the building. Sylvester Woolford, Sr. taught at Buttonwood School from 1934 until 1952, when the school closed.

Graduation at the Buttonwood School in the 1940s.
Front row (L-R): Dolores Twyman, Mary Harden, Mildred Raisin, Alberta Prichett, Betty Jenkins.
Back row: Sylvester Woolford, teacher, Franklin Taylor, Bernard Pinkett, teacher unknown.

Courtesy of Dolores Twyman McCray

Higher Education

During the late 19th and first half of the 20th-century, only two institutions provided higher education opportunities for African-American students throughout the state: the **Delaware State College** for colored students in Dover founded in 1891, and **Howard High School** in Wilmington. The first Howard High School was formally dedicated September 20, 1869 and was located at 604 Orange Street. This building was replaced in 1928 by a much larger facility located at 13th and Poplar Streets, and drew students from all over northern Delaware, including New Castle. Recognized by the National Register of Historic Places for its landmark significance in the history of education, Howard High School "inspired a high caliber of education" through "the common bonds of pride, ambition, and support."

Because the school drew students from the Greater Wilmington region, New Castle students who attended Howard High School formed a network of friendships throughout northern Delaware. African-American students from New Castle generally found their experience there was extremely positive and inspiring. Buttonwood resident Grace Woolford, wife of Buttonwood schoolteacher Sylvester Woolford, grew up in Newark. She recalls meeting her husband through friends from Howard High School at a dance in Chester, Pennsylvania. The school created lifelong bonds, and became, in the words of one historian, "a part of the heritage of local families."

Desegregation was underway in Delaware by 1954, when Buttonwood resident Teel Petty was among the first African-American students to attend William Penn High School. One of her recollections from her school days appears on the next page.

"...so why shouldn't I be one?"

Starting in 1954, the educational system in Delaware began to be desegregated. Students from the Old Town, as well as the outlying suburban districts started attending William Penn High School. Today schools are still changing in reaction to desegregation which began almost 50 years ago. For example, while much discussion of present day curriculum changes center on promoting a "multi-cultural" interpretation of history, students from Buttonwood School and Howard High School were educated with a broad understanding of African-American achievement. In an interview regarding her life in Buttonwood, Teel Petty examines this phenomena:

> It's really strange because they talk about Black history but I've always had Black history in my life. I've always known there were Black movie stars and Black boxers and always had that history awareness. I guess it's from my schooling. So when I went to William Penn, I felt like I wanted to be a majorette, so why shouldn't I be one? Anybody can be a majorette, and I never thought because I was Black, I couldn't be one. They might have thought that but I never thought it.

Teel Taylor, pictured here in her majorette uniform in 1957, was in the first integrated class at William Penn High School. While the school was integrated by law, students still held many racist beliefs: white majorettes refused to wear uniforms worn by black majorettes.

Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Eugene C. Petty

COMMUNITY LIFE

The development of established social organizations for African-Americans during the 20th century represented a major step forward from restrictive laws of the 18th and 19th centuries. Such laws prevented gatherings of more than four blacks due to white paranoia over insurrections among the slave and free black populations.

Early attempts to establish African-American organizations were met with much resistance from the white community; however, certain early groups helped establish a basis for social organizations for African-Americans in New Castle. For example, in 1830, a group that included at least some if not all manumitted slaves, presented an Act to Incorporate the Sons of Benevolence in the Town of New Castle to the State of Delaware General Assembly:

> Joseph Manly, Robert Jackson, Levi Finney, Peter Jackson, James Finney and Caleb Darby now associated and such others as may hereafter be associated with them for the purpose of suppressing vice and immorality, burying the dead, and taking care of the indigent and sick among their coloured brethren shall be and are hereby ordained and declared to be a body politic and corporate, by the name of the Sons of Benevolence in the Town of New Castle.

The assembly declined their request for incorporation and the town's African-American population had to wait until the 20th century to take advantage of legal changes and a more tolerant atmosphere to establish organizations for social interaction outside of church.

The Community Progressive Club, Inc.

One of the major social influences in New Castle during the 20th century was the Community Progressive Club, Inc., formed in the early 1940s out of the need to provide wholesome activity for the youth of New Castle. The organization sponsored a Boy Scout troop, Cub Scouts, and Brownies, as well as an annual awards banquet to honor civic leaders. It continues to provide similar services to this day.

In the 1960s, the Club worked to provide new opportunities for community children, both black and white. Government surveys determined that New Castle could offer a new national program, Head Start, to help young children gain skills to achieve success in school. When no other community agencies were willing to undertake the new project, the Community Progressive Club initiated the program. According to Mrs. Gladys Clark, "[Head Start] was so successful and grew so fast that within two or three years, the schools were willing to take it then." Club members raised funds in order to renovate the building, providing the bath-room and kitchen facilities required for the program.

African-Americans in New Castle recall that in the early 20th century, they were not allowed to shop in New Castle stores or to attend the local theater except for special showings at Christmastime. Mrs. Lydia Garnett founded the Community Progressive Club in order to fill a need in the community for a public gathering place. Along with local African-American churches, the Club fostered community action against racial segregation.

The Community Progressive Club, Inc. sponsors a variety of beneficial programs for the town of New Castle. This is a photograph of their annual luncheon April 14, 1962.

Courtesy of Mrs. H. Sylvester Clark

Sports

Baseball was one of the major pastimes for children and adults in New Castle and Buttonwood throughout the 20th century. Many of the young boys played on pick-up 'sand lot' teams as well as organized, county leagues. Because local children, both black and white, loved to play baseball together, the sport helped to break down the practice of segregation imposed by others.

Residents of Buttonwood have strong memories regarding the establishment of neighborhood baseball teams. There were two official teams, the Buttonwood Cubs for younger children and the Buttonwood Tigers for older boys. The Tigers had two specific incarnations. As Mr. Bernard Pinkett recalls:

> The Buttonwood Tigers had two teams. The second team was formed about 1945, and lasted until about 1951. And I was the mascot at that time. I was the batboy. They had a uniform for me—it was a regular Buttonwood Tigers uniform, my size. Traveled with the team… I always loved the game because—actually my mother and father played baseball. My father was a part of the [earlier] Buttonwood Tigers…We really did play for the love of the game.

Above

Buttonwood Scout Troop sponsored by the Community Progressive Club, Inc.
Front row (L-R): ——, Trice Flammer, David Harris, Ulysses McManus, Lewis Pinkett
Second row: Wayne Holladay, ——, Gilbert Pinkett, James Rudd
Third row: Luther Twyman, Kenneth Davis, John McManus

Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Eugene C. Petty

Left

Buttonwood Cubs baseball team.
Row 1 (L-R): Tony Tucker, —— Hines
Row 2: Cyrus Harris, Coach, —— Hines, David Harris, ——, Lewis Pinkett
Row 3: Norman Trice, Ernest Thomas, Gilbert Pinkett, Reginald Davis, Wilson Comfort

Courtesy of the Pinkett Family

A Story of Desegregation

You may have noticed that this book has no specific chapter on segregation; rather, the stories and effects of segregation and racism are woven into each chapter. When asked if he remembered any particular instances of racism or segregation growing up, Eugene Petty replied, "that was every day." Though each person interviewed for this exhibit did have vivid memories of specific incidents, many expressed a similar sentiment—racism and segregation were a regular part of everyday life. We hope presenting the effects of these evils in the context of each chapter's theme conveys how this aspect of life was part of the tapestry of living in New Castle—part of work, school, church and social gathering. We choose to end, however, with a story of hope.

The walls of the Old Library building, which houses the exhibit this book is based upon, echo with the ghosts of segregation and desegregation in New Castle. The private New Castle County Library Company was racially segregated when, in the early 1940s, Gladys Clark and her friend Pearl Henry walked up to the desk and asked for a library card. Gladys remembers that the librarian, in her surprise, said she would have to ask her superior if a card could be issued. Gladys and Pearl went to the library director's home and asked to be issued a card. The director did so, and the girls borrowed books from the library. In church on the next Sunday, the pastor admonished the congregation to go apply for a library card, to take out books, and to return them "promptly and in good condition."

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The New Castle Historical Society would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to the exhibit:

Exhibit Committee

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This book is based upon an exhibit curated by Heidi Harendza, Curatorial Intern from the Center for Historic Architecture and Design, University of Delaware, and Bruce Dalleo, Director of the New Castle Historical Society. Support for the book is provided by the Delaware Heritage Commission.

Book design and layout by Catherine Hoffman Kaser
Printed by Aztec, Wilmington, Delaware