

Finding Enslaved Laborers at UVA

What I know:

Local area historic

Have a passion for the stories

Historical societies and Libraries

Local genealogy community

Lessons will be learned doing this type of research

There will be emotional times

Basic Understanding of African American Research

It's American History

Slavery = Economics

People were property

There was renting, buying and selling going on

Some were sold to the deep south

Free People of Color

African American Genealogical Research begins just like any other research

Begin with what you know

Think about what you don't know

Ask yourself who or what would know

Tips:

Stop jumping outside the box, stay inside the box and conduct deeper research and analysis

Remember every Record creates a Record

Challenges: Expect them, Embrace them and let them Expand your research skills

Strategy #1 Listen and Ask Questions

Stay Local

Learn about the slaveholders in the area

Use the census

Google

Online databases (ancestry, familysearch, etc.)

Strategy#2 Reverse the Genealogy (past to the future and P\present to the past)

Genealogy is about Time, Place and Asking Questions

What do you know now?

What do you need to know?

Who or what would know the information you are missing or seeking

Plan the research for resources & seek out what you need

Strategy #3 Slave Era Research and Questions

- ✓ Review the law during the research era!
- ✓ Finding Emancipation or Manumission papers
- ✓ Slave narratives, family genealogy records
- ✓ Bill of Sales, Plantation records: Inventories
- ✓ City & County directories, Public notices or records, local courthouse records (wills, probates), city halls & more!
- ✓ Find resources where Slave research has been successful...keeping in touch with the local genealogy groups, libraries, and historical societies-local
- ✓ Sharing, sharing, sharing



Strategy #5 Get a MAP, determine your research location

Strategy #6 Know what records and resources are available for the enslaved and free individuals-make a list

Strategy #6 Know the Records/Resources for the Enslaved and Free Individuals

- Slave Narratives
- Co-habitation records
- Military files
- Court cases
- University Records-Special Collections, JUEL site, public libraries
- Oral Histories
- Freedman's Bureau Records (Rations, labor contracts, etc.)
- Books, books and more books

Strategy #7 Getting the word out

Use social media:

Set up a Facebook page

Set up a Twitter account

Get a genealogy buddy

Strategy #8 Part of the Plan

Build a questionnaire or an Intake plan as a way to gather info about possible descendants

Set up meetings to review the Intake form

Build ancestry trees on slaveholders and the enslaved

Strategy #9 Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, (Record Group 105)

Strategy #10 Record Group 105

- The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (also referred to as the Freedmen's Bureau)
- Federal Record-under the military
- Created March 3, 1865 at the end of the Civil War to supervise the relief efforts including education, health care, food and clothing, refugee camps, legalizing of marriages, employment, and labor contracts
- The collection covers the years 1865 to 1872. Pre-Bureau Records-1863 Mississippi
- Various records, Marriage, Destitute, Ration, Transportation and much more

Refugees are White, Freedmen are formally enslaved

The Gems of Information in the Bureau

- Marriages
- Letters, Complaints, Reports
- Transportation
- Rations
- Labor Contracts
- Teachers reports, Education
- Applications for Land
- Miscellaneous, and much more
- Medical conditions
- Former location before the Civil War
- Military information
- Relationships, and more
- Includes time, place and locations
- Event dates
- Ages
- Race
- Occupations
- Residence/Locations
- Birth dates
- Marriages, also former marriages and children
- Death dates
- Former slave owners
- Other family members
- Records after the Civil War
- Names & Ages before 1870 Federal Population Census

Resources:

Historical Societies

Public libraries

Mapping the Freedmen's Bureau- <https://mappingthefreedmensbureau.com>



Going Forward

- A private & public virtual event happened in April 2021
- Continue to work with Descendant Enslaved Communities, a nonprofit- & helps locate more descendants, etc.
(<https://www.descendantsuva.org>)
- Continue to seek Slave owners and Enslaved Descendants