Celebrating the history of Timbuctoo on Juneteenth

PREPARED FOR: NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY

Guy-Oreido Weston, MA
June 18, 2019
Points of Discussion

- What is Juneteenth?
- What and where was/is Timbuctoo?
- What is the history of Timbuctoo and its relationship to Juneteenth
What is Juneteenth?

Juneteenth is a holiday celebrated on June 19th that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. On June 19, 1865, Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger came to Galveston, Texas, to report that President Abraham Lincoln had abolished slavery 2 years earlier and request compliance with the law. Why the delay? Some accounts indicate a messenger who on his way to Texas with the news was murdered; others say the news was deliberately withheld.
...on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free;

... the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons,

The war effectively ended April 9, 1865 when General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant at the Battle of Appomattox Court House. Other Confederate generals followed suit.
What does Juneteenth have to do with New Jersey and other northern states, where abolition had at least begun decades earlier?

Antebellum Free communities AREN’T as unique as we might think

- Nearly 500,000 free African Americans were enumerated in the 1860 census. Free African Americans comprised between 11% and 14% of the African American population in each census since 1790.¹

- A number of African American communities existed during that period, such as those that founded Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church in Philadelphia in 1794, Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City in 1808, and Mount Moriah AME Church in Mount Holly in 1826

- Church leaders were actively involved in political advocacy efforts on behalf of African American communities. For example, Richard Allen was the first chairman of the Colored Convention Movement, organized in 1830 in Philadelphia.

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1777 - The Constitution of Vermont bans slavery

1780 - Pennsylvania prohibits further importation of slaves and establishes that all children are born free persons, regardless of parents’ race.

1783 – Massachusetts Supreme Court rules slavery illegal based in 1780 constitution; all slaves are instantly freed

1783 New Hampshire begins gradual manumission

1784 - Connecticut begins gradual manumission

1784 - Rhode Island begins gradual manumission

1791 – Vermont enters the Union as a free state

1799 – New York begins gradual manumission

In 1800, 1,001,898 Blacks account for 19% of the US population. 108,298 or 11% of them are free, according to the 1800 Census. They are listed by name.
Gradual Manumission in New Jersey

- In 1804, the State Legislature passed "An act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery" (P.L. 1804, chap. 103, p. 251). This monumental law required the registration of births of slaves' children born after 4 July 1804 and declared such children to be "free," but bound as servants to the owners of their mothers for a period of twenty-five years for males and twenty-one years for females.

- Notably, males born in 1804 would complete their indenture in 1829; females in 1825. Timbuctoo was founded in 1826.
1820
Percent of Black population recorded as “free,” by New Jersey county

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Free</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bergen</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunterdon</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesex</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouth</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NORTERN</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape May</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>97.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SOUTHERN</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cartography:
Eric Rhodes
MA Candidate in
History
Miami University
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Population 1820</th>
<th>% of Total Northern Population</th>
<th>Total Slave Population</th>
<th>% of Total Slave Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Counties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bergen</td>
<td>18,178</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>2,742</td>
<td>1,683</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>30,793</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>2,049</td>
<td>1,390</td>
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<td>Hunterdon</td>
<td>28,604</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>2,059</td>
<td>1,443</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middlesex</td>
<td>21,470</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>2,045</td>
<td>1,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouth</td>
<td>25,038</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>2,230</td>
<td>982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris</td>
<td>21,368</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>1,114</td>
<td>457</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td>16,506</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>2,609</td>
<td>1,487</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>32,752</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NORTHERN</td>
<td>194,709</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>15,699</td>
<td>8,324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Southern Counties |                  |                               |                        |                            |
| Burlington      | 28,822           | 10.4%                         | 1,343                  | 1,261                      |
| Cape May        | 4,265            | 1.5%                          | 233                    | 205                        |
| Cumberland      | 12,668           | 4.6%                          | 623                    | 605                        |
| Gloucester      | 23,089           | 8.3%                          | 1,103                  | 1,064                      |
| Salem           | 14,022           | 5.1%                          | 1,016                  | 1,001                      |
| TOTAL SOUTHERN  | 82,866           | 29.9%                         | 4,318                  | 4,136                      |

Total Northern Population: 194,709
Total Slave Population: 15,699
Total Free Population: 8,324

Southern Counties:

| County     | Population 1820 | % of Total Southern Population | Total Slave Population | % of Total Slave Population |
|------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|                        |                            |
| Burlington | 28,822          | 10.4%                         | 1,343                  | 1,261                      |
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| TOTAL SOUTHERN | 82,866         | 29.9%                         | 4,318                  | 4,136                      |

Total Southern Population: 82,866
Total Slave Population: 4,318

New Jersey Population by Race and County

Progress of Gradual Manumission of Slaves in NJ: Percent Free in Each Decennial Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Northern Counties</th>
<th>Southern Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1820</td>
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<tr>
<td>1830</td>
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<td>1840</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Northern Counties**: n=4,318
- **Southern Counties**: n=15,699

New Jersey Quakers and Slavery

Many Quakers owned slaves before 1776

They came to see that:
• enslavement of Africans was incompatible with the Christian golden rule
• liberty was the birthright of Blacks as well as Whites

After a long and passionate debate on the topic of slavery, members determined that slaveholders should play no role in the Society of Friends.

Quakers were leaders of advocacy to end slavery in NJ, petitioning the legislature to enact laws to abolish slavery in 1785;¹ succeeded in 1804²

¹Henry Scofield Cooley A Study of Slavery in New Jersey (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1896) 17-19
²Giles R. Wright, Afro-Americans in New Jersey: a short history. (Trenton, New Jersey Historical Commission, 1989), 19
Other differences between northern and southern counties

During much of the slavery period, about 75% of bondsman were found in Bergen, Essex, Middlesex, Hunterdon, Somerset, and Monmouth counties.¹

These counties, tended to be more economically developed and have labor scarcities,² thereby having economies that relied more on slave labor.

These counties had more German, Dutch and non-Quaker settlers.³

In these areas, slavery endured the longest and, as the immigrant population grew, white workers increasingly viewed free blacks as a threat to their occupational security.⁴

1,2,3,4 Giles R. Wright, Afro-Americans in New Jersey: A Short History (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1989)
Timbuctoo, New Jersey

Settled beginning in 1826 by former slaves and free African Americans with the assistance of Quakers

Was one of several antebellum free black settlements in New Jersey, most of which were located in the southern part of the state

Timbuctoo, like many of the settlements, was a stop on the Underground Railroad
African American settlements in New Jersey c.1860

Typically located near Quaker strongholds
- Timbuctoo near Mount Holly
- Colemantown near Mount Holly
- Lawnside (formerly Snow Hill or Sadlertown) near Haddonfield
- Small Gloucester near Sweedsboro
- Gouldtown and Springtown near Greenwich
Timbuctoo is an unincorporated community in Westampton Township, Burlington County, NJ, according to the U.S. Geological Survey Geographic Names Information System.
Timbuctoo Then and Today

1849 Map of Burlington County (portion)
Timbuctoo Then and Today

- Has existed in perpetuity since at least 1830 when Timbuctoo first appeared on a deed
  - Through deed and census research, you can track the development of Timbuctoo between 1830-1880
  - In the 1880 US Census the Village of Timbuctoo was enumerated as a separate entity within Westampton Township
  - In the decades between 1880 and 1920 Timbuctoo’s population declined significantly; picks up again by 1930 and 1940, the last year that Census records are publicly available.
  - People born in and near Timbuctoo in the 1930s and 1940s who continue to live there or nearby continue to refer to the community as Timbuctoo or ‘Bucto for short
What are the boundaries of Timbuctoo?

Earlier area consisted of about 15 acres
What’s known as Timbuctoo today is about 52 acres
Who were the first inhabitants of Timbuctoo?

Detailed land records in the Burlington County Clerk’s Office go back to the eighteenth century. The first land sales to African Americans in the area now known as Timbuctoo occurred in 1826, when four parcels of land are sold by a Quaker businessman by the name of William Hilyard.

The buyers were:

David Parker (1 acre for $15.40)
Ezekiel Parker (1.4 acres for $22.16)
Wardell Parker (1.5 acres for $24.05)
Hezekiah Hall (.5 acre for $8.33)

All were believed to be escaped slaves from MD
In Timbuctoo, near Mount Holly, on Friday last, February 21, 1851, Hezekiah Hall, (colored) aged about 60 years. The deceased in early life, was a slave, and belonged to Charles Carroll, of Carrollton.

He escaped from bondage in the year 1814. He settled in our midst about the year 1824, since which time he has resided here.

He was regarded by every one as a man of unblemished character, and his truly upright walk and Christian deportment commanded the highest respect.

His remains were followed to the grave on Sunday last, February 23, 1851, by a very large concourse of friends and neighbors.
Does that mean every early settler in Timbuctoo was an escaped slave?

Larger historical context suggest not:

- Nearly 2/3 of African Americans living in southern New Jersey in 1790 were free; largely due to Quaker influence; by 1820 that number had risen to 96% (details later)

- Detailed documentation does not exist for each and every person; however, we know that former slaves are increasingly a minority with decades of free people giving birth.

- There is no rational basis for assuming that African American in Timbuctoo segregated themselves from the larger community.
Sources of information about Timbuctoo residents’ origin

Census Records

This is one place where we can see how African Americans reported their own status, which asked for birthplace, and sometimes parents birthplace beginning in 1850

- A significant number reported birth in slave states, chiefly Maryland.

- Similarly, significant numbers reported birth in free states, chiefly New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

- While it is reasonable to question whether some reporting birth in the north did so to avoid documenting history in a slave state, why would one assume that each and every African American reporting birth in New Jersey or PA was a “fugitive on the run,” even after the Civil War?
1850 Census:
Timbuctoo, Westampton Township, Burlington County
1880 Census:
Timbuttoo, Westampton Township, Burlington County
1880 US Census

- The US Census identified the “Village of Timbuctoo” as a separate entity within Westampton Township for the first time in 1880; 108 residents and 29 households were enumerated.

- A January 1886 article from the Camden Post claims a population of 600

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Other Data Sources about Timbuctoo early Timbuctoo residents

- Oral histories
- Newspaper Obituaries
- New Jersey Births and Christenings Index
Not all antebellum African American history is a history of suffering and defeat.

We know about the challenges, deficits, discrimination, and degradation.

What do we know about the successes, accomplishments, resilience, and victories?

What do we know about the larger context environments that facilitated our progress?
I WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THE SLAVES THAT FOUGHT BACK
A well-known slave-catcher, George Alberti, sought to capture an escaped slave by the name of Perry Simmons.

Alberti traveled with several associates and enlisted the help of a local constable to help take Simmons into custody.

Reportedly, Simmons had lived in the Timbuctoo area for a decade or more and had a strong network of supporters among Timbuctoo residents.

When news of the attempt to capture Simmons reached his allies, a large group rushed to Simmons aid yelling and screaming, wielding weapons and scared the smaller raiding party off.

BATTLE OF PINE SWAMP

December 1860

1Excitement at Timbuctoo, the Battle of Pine Swamp: Invaders forced to Retreat. The New Jersey Mirror, 6 December 1860. Transcribed from microfilm on 21 March 2017
How do we know those details?
An 1100 word “blow by blow” account from the New Jersey Mirror

Uses words like “kidnapers” and “invaders” to describe the slave catchers

Full of humorous anecdotes describing Simmons’ response:

◦ “Perry at once suspected who they were and the object of their midnight errand, and very coolly answered that they ‘could not fool Perry Simmons with any such story as that.”

◦ “Perry, considering the circumstances, was firm and undaunted, and stood at the head of the stairway, with one of his guns, threatening to shoot the first man who attempted to come up.”
Old Alberti, at one time, started up the stairway, but as he turned round, so that the top was visible, he saw that muzzle of Perry’s musket was but a short distance from him, and he came down something quicker than he went up.

They ...concluded that ‘discretion was the better part of valor’ and hastily retreating to the carriages left the scene of their brilliant achievement as though Old Satan was after them.

They undoubtedly had a great horror of the Timbuctoo warriors, for they went down the road at a rapid rate, and ... the horses were even then being urged to their utmost speed”.

Full text available on https://timbuctoonj.com/battle-of-pine-swamp
Battle of Pine Swamp, continued

Follow up report on December 13th, 1860:

- The kidnapping party who were after Perry Simmons secured the services of the Moorestown constable, by the meanest deception. Coming to his house at a late hour at night, they told him they had a warrant against a colored man for stealing and wished him to serve it.

- He went with them, and it was not until after they reached Perry’s house that he was made acquainted with the real nature of the business, when he at once told them he would have nothing to do with making the arrest and started home on foot. He had a long and very walk, but he considered it infinitely more pleasant than to remain and assist such a man as George Alberti, in carrying off a Negro and his family.

CONTRAST: Timbuctoo, NJ in 1860 versus Galveston, Texas in 1865
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Community Development in Timbuctoo

AND SOME POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS
Be it remembered that on this eighteenth day of July, AD 1840, personally appeared before me, the subscriber, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, Robert Evans, Major Mitchell, Samuel Still, Thomas Harris, and John Brewer who have been duly elected trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Mount Moriah located near Mount Holly ... did each take the necessary qualifications of the statute in such case made and provided viz. To support the Constitution of the United States. To bear true faith and allegiance to the government of this State. And faithfully to discharge the duties incumbent on them as trustees of said Church according to the best of their understanding and abilities.
January 4, 1834:

Land purchased to establish the African Union School

Peter Quire is the seller. Edward Giles, Hezekiah Hall, and Major Mitchell are identified as Trustees in the deed, which states:

“whereas, in the Settlement of Tombuctoo...and in the vicinity thereof, there are many people of Colour (so called) who seem sensible of the advantages of a suitable school education and are destitute for a house for that purpose. And the said Peter Quire and Maria, his wife in consideration of the premises and the affection they bear to the people of Colour and the desire they have to promote their true and best interests are minded to settle, give, grant and convey...said premises to the uses and intents hereinafter pointed out and described.”

The deed further describes some rules of operation, such as the requirement that any future Trustees be people of Colour who live within ten miles of the premises.

1Burlington County, NJ, Deeds, G3:389, Peter Quire to Edward Giles, et al, (January 4, 1834); Burlington County Clerk’s Office, Mount Holly
October 14, 1841:

Land purchased for Schoolhouse and Place for Divine Worship¹

This deed identifies William Hill, John Bruer, Major Mitchell, Samuel Stevens, and Hezekiah Hall who receive the premises as “joint tenants in trust” for the purpose of a schoolhouse (and a place of divine worship and for no other purpose).”

The deed further stipulates that the trustees may sell the premises and move elsewhere if they later determine that a different location would be more suitable for their purpose.

¹Burlington County, NJ, Deeds, A4:422, Amos Bullock to William Hill, et al, 14 October 1841; Burlington County Clerk’s Office, Mount Holly
May 2, 1854:

Land purchased for Zion Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal African Church of Timbuctoo

- The seller is Peter V. Coppuck. Trustees acting on behalf of the church are David Parker, Noble L. Johns, Adam Gibson, Jacob Colwell, James Pinion, Richard Christie, and William Chase.

- The deed stipulates that the premises are to be used “as a place of religious worship and a place to bury the dead.”...”rules and discipline of the African American Episcopal Zion Church in America.”

- The cemetery is known today as the Timbucto Civil War Cemetery because 8 of the 11 remaining gravestones are all US Colored Troops (USCT). However, a geophysical survey conducted in 2009 identified approximately 79 graves. The large number of graves without stones may be attributed to the fact that wooden grave markers were common in the era of this cemetery and wooden markers may have disintegrated over time.

- By contrast, USCT received headstones as a benefit of military service.

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1 Burlington County, NJ, Deeds, E6:256, Peter Coppuck to David Parker, et al, 2 May 1854; Burlington County Clerk’s Office, Mount Holly
Who is really buried in the Timbuctoo cemetery?

There are also three civilian gravestones

The oldest is a woman and is dated 1847; 14 years before the Civil War

Her name was Eliza Parker; wife of church Trustee David Parker
Figure 15. Results of ground-penetrating radar survey at the Timbuctoo Cemetery Area.
Obituaries of some Timbuctoo residents, as recorded the local newspaper (The New Jersey Mirror)

WHAT DO THEY TELL US?
June 1877
Death of David Parker

One of the first four Timbuctoo settlers in September 1826

Very prominent Community leader identified in incorporation documents and news reports; associated with multiple land transactions

David Parker, an aged colored man who for perhaps one half century has occupied a prominent position with his race in this vicinity and has commanded the respect and esteem of a large number of white friends, died at is residence in Timbuctoo on Sunday, aged about 75 years.

“King David,” as he had been known in other years, was possessed of more than ordinary intelligence, and a determined will, which made him a natural leader as long as his physical strength lasted, and he was general at the head of any movement among them....

... David was an ardent Republican, no effort availing to seduce him from the support of the party that gave him the ballot, and he allowed none of his followers to be caught by the enemy.

... The deceased will be missed by citizens of both races, and much sincere regret felt that his light has gone out.

*The New Jersey Mirror*, 28 June 1877. Transcribed from Microfilm on 21 September 2017
February 13, 1862

Death of Perry Simmons

Perry Simmons, the colored man, whose attempted arrest as a fugitive slave, on two occasions, created considerable excitement in our neighborhood, died in Timbuctoo, a week or two ago.

Perry had not been well since the last attempt to capture him, in consequence of taking a severe cold on that freezing night.

It will be recollected that he was forced to fly suddenly from his bedroom to the garret, where he was obliged to remain till morning, suffering severely from the cold.

Perry is at last beyond the reach of his Southern master.

CONTRAST:
Timbuctoo, NJ in 1860 versus Galveston, Texas in 1865
April 22, 1875

Death of Lambert Giles

My third great-grandfather

Lambert Giles, a well-known colored man, long a resident of this vicinity, was found dead by the side of the road from Mount Holly to Rancocas, near the barn of the late Caleb A. Woodward, on Monday evening about 7 1/2 o'clock. He had been at work at his usual occupation, white-washing, in Mount Holly during the day and left here for his home at Bucto about 7 o'clock.

Deceased was subject to attacks of an epileptic nature and doubtless died in a fit of this kind. Coroner Laumaster viewed the body in company with Dr. R. E. Brown and no doubt being entertained of the cause of his death, an inquest was deemed unnecessary.

Lambert was an industrious and worthy man, and noted for his courtesy of manner. He was about 60 years of age...

The sudden demise of the old colored whitewasher, Lambert Giles, last week... put a number of housekeepers on the wing to find somebody to fill his engagements.

Lambert followed an humble calling, but was regarded as about perfect in his art, and will be more missed than would many of our more pretentious citizens.

He was often engaged weeks in advance.
REMEMBERING OUR FOREFATHER
IN 2016
LAMBERT GILES
MAY 15, 1815
APR. 19, 1875

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHOSE GRAVE MARKERS DID NOT SURVIVE TIME, APRIL 2017
Where do I fit in to this discussion?
Sale to John Bruere: December 15, 1829

1Burlington County, New Jersey, Deeds, Y-2:577, Samuel Atkinson and wife to John Bruere 15 December 1829; Burlington County Clerk’s Office, Mount Holly.
Challenges in heir property

My 4th great-grandfather purchased a one-acre parcel in Timbuctoo on December 15, 1829 for $30.

My introduction to genealogy came through a gift of the original deed and other nineteenth century supporting documents which remain in my family today.

To obtain clear title in 1992, we had to file a Quiet Title Action that had 15 defendants, five of whom were born before the Civil War.

Names from these documents combined with microfilm research at the New Jersey State Archives in 1992 facilitated identification of relatives going back as far as c.1792.

Conclusion: I cheated (regarding the wealth of information I have been able to uncover 😊)
In the name of God, Amen. I John Brewer of the Township of Northampton in the County of Burlington and State of New Jersey being weak in body but of sound and disposing mind and memory do make and publish this my last will and testament viz.:

First- It is my will that all my just debts and funeral expenses be paid as soon as may be after my decease.

Item- I give devise and bequeath unto my wife, Anne Brewer for and during her natural life all my real and personal estate whatsoever and wheresoever the said may be situate- subject only to the payment above specified.

Item- after the death of my said wife, I give and devise unto Charles Anthony, Sr., and to his heirs and assigns all the following described lot of land being part of the lot I now occupy, to wit. Beginning at the corner of my land on the road where it adjoins Samuel Parker’s land, thence running along said Parker’s line 60 ft, thence across the lot to within 12 ft of Major Mitchell’s line, thence down parallel to his line 60 ft to the said road, thence along said road to the place of beginning be the contents more or less (excepting the schoolhouse lot)

Item- All the rest, residue, and remainder of my said estate, Real and personal, after the death of my said wife, I give devise and bequeath unto Sarah Barnes, the daughter of my said wife, Ann Bruer to her and her lawful issue, but if the said Sarah should die without lawful issue, then and in that case, it is my will, and I do give devise and bequeath the same and every part thereof unto the children of Peter Quire and Charles Anthony, Sr., to be equally divided between them and share alike. Lastly, I do nominate, constitute, and appoint Joseph Ash and Charles Anthony, Sr., Executors of this my last will and testament.

Witnesses: Amos Bullock, John R. Stack
Inventory of the property of John Bruer thus taken by the subscriber, this eleventh day of May 1843 viz.

Wearing apparel of deceased 10.00

Bureau 4.00 Dining table 4.00 8.00
Lot of crockery ware and tumblers (in front room) 5.00

1/2 Doz back chairs 2.00 Rocking chair and cushion 1.00 3.00
__________ 1.00 Looking glass .75 1.75

1 pair of blinds in front room 1.00
1 clock Stand 1.00 Trunk and box 2.00 3.00
Lot of carpeting in front room 3.00
1 bed bedstead, and bedding (back room) 10.00
" " (middle room) 10.00

1 drum (for stove) 1.00
1/2 dozen ___ chairs 1.25
Lot of carpeting upstairs 2.00
1 small bedstead and box in middle room 1.00
Lot of bottles, barrel boxes in end room 1.50
1 Sacking bottom extra bedding in end room 5.00
1 Walnut table and pine table 1.50
1 Stove in kitchen and pipe 4.00
Lot of ______ and crockery in kitchen 3.00
3 Iron pots 1.00 1 Silver watch 4.00 5.00
Lot of sundries in house 5.00
1 bedstead and ___(Still) house 3.50
1 ____________ 0.50
1 Cow and 2 pigs 19.00 108.00

Appraised by Joseph Stokes & George Hulme

IN E. p.41
Indenture of Mortgage
October 22, 1845
$155

- Paid back in annual payments, usually between $1.50 to $7.00.
- Receipts are hand written on back of the mortgage document.
- One entry reads “received of John Giles, 2000 bricks @ $12.00 a thousand to pay the interest on the within bond for 1875 and 1876...”
Giles family members born between 1881 and 1917 in Timbuctoo
Timbuctoo Today

https://timbuctoonj.com/
Settlement in Timbuctoo began in September 1826, when a Quaker by the name of William Hilyard sold parcels of land to four African American men, all believed to be escaped slaves from Maryland:

David Parker (1 acre for $15.40)
Ezekiel Parker (1.4 acres for $22.16)
Wardell Parker (1.5 acres for $24.05)
Hezekiah Hall (0.5 acre for $8.33)

The next recorded sale was in 1829, when John Bruer bought 1 acre from Quaker Samuel Atkinson for $30. Timbuctoo first appeared on a deed in 1830, when Major Mitchell bought .5 acre from Samuel Atkinson for $15. By the mid-1800s Timbuctoo had about 135 residents.

Institutions in Timbuctoo
Some key milestones in Timbuctoo's early development include establishing institutions, such as:

African Union School (1834)
Schoolhouse and Place of Divine Worship (1841)
Zion Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal African Church (1854)
Beneficial Society of the United Sons and Daughters of Timbuctoo and Vicinity (1856)

In some cases, institutions may have existed long before their incorporation dates, as legislation providing for incorporation of churches and benevolent organizations was relatively recent in this era. By the turn of the 19th century, Timbuctoo's population was declining. Many of those who left moved to more urbanized areas with broader employment opportunities. Nevertheless, Census records and oral histories indicate that Timbuctoo has been continuously occupied since its inception.

For more information about Timbuctoo, scan the QR code to the left with a smartphone, or visit https://timbuctoo.org
Original Site of
Zion Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal African Church and Cemetery
Purchased: December 17, 1854
Incorporated: December 23, 1854
Established c. 1840s

To have and to hold the said lot of land, hereditaments and premises, hereby granted and released ... unto the said Trustees of Zion Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal African Church, and their successors, to the only proper use and benefit and behalf of the said Trustees and their successors, to be used as a place of religious worship, according to the form of government and discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in America, and as a place for the burial of the dead, of such as are in connection with said church or the descendants thereof, (and such others as the majority of the Trustees for the time being may permit) forever.

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Christopher Rush
Oversight: Rev. D.C. Matthews
Pastor: Rev. Joseph Sinclair

Trustees:
David Parker
Noble L. Johns
Adam Gibson
Jacob Colwell
James Pinion
Richard Christy
William Chase

Operating since 1796, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church was officially formed in New York City in 1821. This formalization was influenced by experiences at John Street Methodist Church, where blacks had the "privilege" of worshipping along with whites, but had to sit separately, receive communion after all whites had been served first, be baptized only after all whites had been baptized, as well as other indignities. Having established their own denomination, the AME Zion Church was free to establish its own agenda, which included joining the abolitionist movement. In Timgad, that meant playing an active role in the Underground Railroad, and responding to community needs, in addition to providing spiritual guidance and Christian fellowship. The cemetery was established for church membership and associates, which included US Colored Troops that fought in the Civil War, as well as church leaders and rank and file church members. The deed excerpt above makes this clarification. A geophysical survey conducted in 2009 identified at least 70 gravesites. The fact that 8 of 11 remaining grave markers are US Colored Troops has been attributed to the fact that stone grave markers were a luxury that only people of means or recipients of veteran's benefits could afford. Ordinary citizens frequently had wooden markers, which would not survive time. The date of the oldest marked grave is September, 1847. The deceased was Eliza Parker, wife of Trustee David Parker. This date suggests the church and cemetery existed long before they were incorporated, which was not uncommon during that era. African American burial sites are important repositories of African American history and culture, in addition to being sacred grounds that memorialize the dead.
Discussion

- How does the history of Timbuctoo challenge your understanding of New Jersey history in general and African American history in particular?

- What is the contrast between the dominant narrative of the African American struggle for freedom as typically discussed and the discussion of today.

- How can we most effectively enhance improve teaching and understanding of African American history with this information?
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