

# Bondage, Freedom and the Building of

# Early White and Black Communities

White and Black Communities Grow Side-by-Side But Not Together



## Early nineteenth century Black residents in New Jersey shared surnames with white residents in Hunterdon County who held Black people in bondage for over a century.

Surnames include: Blackwell, Boyer, Truehart, Grover, Hagaman, McIntire, Nevius, Peterson, Stives, Raisner, Reasoner, Hubbard, Schenk, Smith, Waldron, Hunt, Van Lieu, Van Dyke and Van Doren

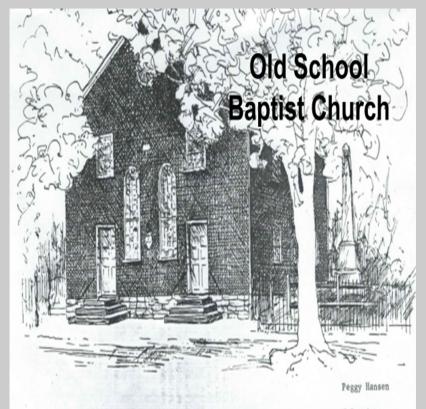


"We knew there were members of the family who were enslaved and never knew who they were or what happened to them."

Beverly Mills and Elaine Buck, "African Americans of Central New Jersey: A History of Harmony and Hostility," *Looking Backward*, the Van Liew Family May 20, 2021 Interview, p. 106



Moore Blackwell and family



The Hopewell Old School Baptist Church is the mother church of the Kingwood Baptist Congregation and burial site of John Hart, signer of the Declaration of Independence. Only the back wall of the first church built in 1747 was retained when the present structure was erected in 1822. According to the 1800 census, more than 1,300 bound workers were in Hunterdon County, a region that included white, free Black, enslaved Black and Indigenous people living "together" in communities but on diverging trajectories.

America continued to embrace the belief that some people were more entitled than others to power and privilege. This mindset extended to the early Christian church when Black and white parishioners worshipped together.





Rev. Richard Allen



#### Forming Autonomy Within the Black Community

Rev. Richard Allen, along with Absalom Jones, spearheaded the formation of Philadelphia's Free African Society in 1787.

During this time, organizations sprang up in surrounding regions which included Hopewell Township. Rev. Allen and Absalom Jones' new founding of an independent Methodist church was fully established in the 1790's. This new denomination was established during the same time as the ultra-separatist American Colonization Society (ACS).

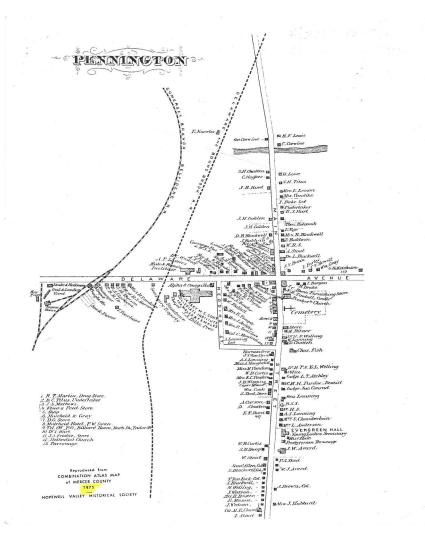


Absalom Jones



Founded in 1816, by Robert Finley, a white Presbyterian affiliated with the Princeton Theological Seminary, the ACS believed freed Black people were a threat to America's economic well being and could potentially cause unrest among the enslaved.





### Post Civil War & Early Twentieth Century: Black and White Communities Continue to Build

Through the mid-nineteenth century, African American families built homes and sank their roots deeper into the land of their ancestors. An 1875 Everts & Stewart map outlined primary streets in Pennington, New Jersey. If a home was inhabited by African Americans, "col" was designated next to the family surname. If there was no designation, the assumption was that it was the home of a white family.



# Black and white people co-exist in their respective communities which may as well be worlds apart





African American ladies from the region formed a card club to socialize in their own spaces. Many of these women worked as domestics in the homes of local white families to supplement income





Local African American women celebrate at a neighborhood wedding reception.

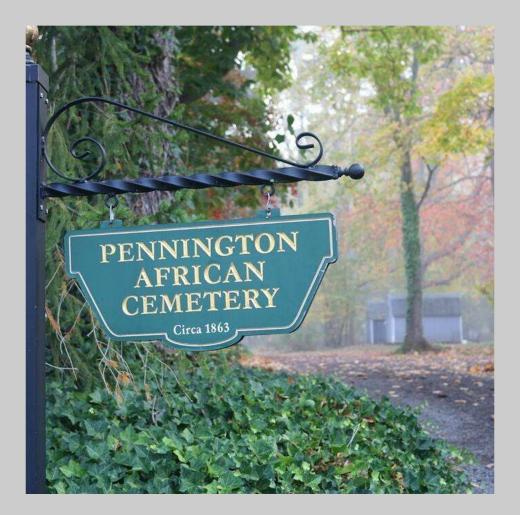






Former Mt. Zion African Episcopal Church Current Home of the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum (SSAAM)







## Stoutsburg Cemetery, Provinceline Road, Hopewell Township,



