

AFRICAN AGENCY WITHIN AND SURROUNDING CHESTER COUNTY,  
PENNSYLVANIA, 1850 TO 1865

A Dissertation  
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by  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation investigates African liberation agency in Chester County, Pennsylvania, from 1850 to 1865 and its impact within the county and surrounding area. The findings may help to better understand African agency in rural areas that are not always highlighted because of historical analysis mostly focusing on city populations when discussing African agency during the years 1850 to 1865. More specifically, the focus of this dissertation concerns the significant historical events within and near Chester County during that time period. These historical events include African liberation agency related to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Christiana Resistance, Parker sisters' kidnappings, founding of Hinsonville and its response to African enslavement, creation of Ashmun Institute, Civil War, and Thirteenth Amendment. Analyzing these historical events has immense implications to the role other rural African communities had in terms of liberation agency. This work serves as a scholarly source to help in the study of African communities in areas of Chester County, Pennsylvania, during the nineteenth century that have not been thoroughly researched. This study is conducted with the use of primary and secondary sources such as letters, newspapers, photographs, and literature related to the subject area.

As a lifetime resident of Chester County, there has been continuous curiosity and questions towards understanding the extent of African agency in the area. The European and European America agency of Chester County has been thoroughly examined, but there still lacks critical examination of African agency even though the area has had residents of African descent for several hundred years. Furthermore, there is even less

critical examination pertaining to African agency in Chester County from an Afrocentric analysis. Much of the scholarship produced on African agency in Chester County is a Eurocentric analysis that does not position African people as subjects but rather as objects in understanding phenomena. This dissertation uses an Afrocentric analysis that seeks to expand on existing literature as well as develop new knowledge that is unlike any previous work related to the subject. With this dissertation, the intent is to initiate new research on African agency in Chester County based upon the theories, methodologies, and traditions of Africology and African American Studies. This dissertation is committed to the purpose of African liberation and the production of knowledge that achieves victorious consciousness which is a key component of African agency.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to Adrian Stewart, Aidan Cantarera, Ellsworth White, Dorothy Denson, Kevin Dickinson, Steve McClain, and Tiffany Dickinson. Thank you for encouraging me and supporting me even in spirit. I love you and miss all of you every day. May your spirits live on forever. I also dedicate this dissertation to the many African agents that have far too often been ignored in Chester County and the surrounding area. I hope this dissertation has made your voices heard.

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learn life lessons, both positive and negative, from you. You were the one who taught me how to ride a bicycle, and I am still learning from you how to ride on the bicycle of life. You told me to perform like my sports hero Kobe Bryant, and I did just that. Thank you!

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deserve to cry, laugh, and take in all the emotions of this life long journey. This is only the beginning, hence why graduation is referred to as commencement. Continue to love yourself and be humble. If you are a loved one, and I did not mention you by name, then please do not be offended. I still love you! Thank you! Finally, to those that doubted this journey would be completed, thank you too. You all helped me to push to the end whether you knew it or not. There is no love lost. And in the words of Tupac Shakur, “Picture me rollin.” Thank you!

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## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Much of what has been researched and published in regards to African resistance to enslavement and towards liberation during the nineteenth century has focused on African agency in major cities such as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; New York City, New York; Boston, Massachusetts; Baltimore, Maryland; Richmond, Virginia; Charleston, South Carolina; New Orleans, Louisiana; etc. Through this observation, one may ask: what were Africans in the United States of America doing in rural areas during this time period? Who were these individual and collective agents as well as organizations? An examination of these inquiries may lead one to research rural areas within Pennsylvania, specifically Chester County. Pennsylvania is one of the earliest English colonies that became a part of colonial America and eventually the United States with Chester County as one of the original counties of the state. Like most of colonial America, Chester County was actively involved in the institution of African enslavement and would be affected by it from the county's beginnings until the abolishment of African enslavement in 1865 with the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment. This study will examine African agency in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area from 1850 with the legalization of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 until the abolition of African enslavement as a result of the Thirteenth Amendment. This time period was selected because of numerous conflicts and ideas that arose between the North and South over African enslavement, in which Chester County was a border region.

Although it is important to have more research conducted towards African rural communities in the United States during the nineteenth century, the critical problem that

needs to be addressed is the lack of subjectivity of African agency within much of the literature that has been produced about such locations during that particular time period. Unfortunately, this is a problem that exists when analyzing literature about African communities in the United States during the nineteenth century and as a whole no matter the time period in the country's history as well as in other areas worldwide where Africans are located. An examination of literature during and about the nineteenth century in Chester County and the surrounding area concerning African agency is no exception to the lack of focus on the subjectivity of African people. This dissertation seeks to end the Eurocentric analysis of African agency within Chester County from 1850 to 1865 and to produce an Afrocentric examination of this subject. In addition, by using an Afrocentric analysis, this dissertation seeks to expand on existing literature as well as develop new knowledge pertaining to African agency in Chester County and surrounding area from 1850 to 1865. This is accomplished by examining African agency during several key historical events such as the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Christiana Resistance, Parker sisters' kidnappings, the founding of Hinsonville and its response to African enslavement, creation of Ashmun Institute, Civil War, and Thirteenth Amendment. This research will allow a better understanding of African communities in Chester County and the surrounding area during that time period as subjects using an Afrocentric analysis rather than as objects using a Eurocentric analysis, in which the latter has been the dominant mode of examination thus far on the subject. Using an Afrocentric analysis will allow for a better understanding of the who, what, when, where,

and why of African communities in Chester County and the surrounding area through their own experiences and perspectives.

According to Molefi Kete Asante in his book *An Afrocentric Manifesto: Toward an African Renaissance* (2008), “An agent...must mean a human being who is capable of acting independently in his or her own best interest. Agency itself is the ability to provide the psychological and cultural resources necessary for the advancement of human freedom” (Asante, 2007, p. 40). For Asante, he believed in a commitment to the view that African people must be seen as agents in economic, cultural, political, and social terms (Asante, 2007). In terms of understanding the history of Africans, agency is important because Africans must be seen as participants within the scope of all phenomena rather than non-participants marginalized to the periphery of anything substantial during human existence. From the beginnings of what becomes the United States to modern times, Africans have had an intricate and important role in the country’s development. However, much of these contributions have been understood through the Eurocentric lens that dismisses African agency as minimal or altogether, especially in terms of resistance to enslavement and the gaining of their own liberation.

The concept of what Molefi Kete Asante terms as African personalism is ingrained within this dissertation. According to Asante, African personalism is a West African philosophical position and defined as “the quest for and commitment to harmony” (Mazama, 2003, p. 60). He continues, “In essence, personalism describes the activating energy contained in the person in pursuit of harmony, an activating energy which, in turn, determines the nature of reality” (Mazama, 2003, p. 60). This work is a

representation of my own personal quest and commitment to harmony. I was born and raised in Chester County and lived there for most of my life. My hometown is Oxford, but I have family and friends all throughout the county as well as have lived in Avondale, Kennett Square, and West Chester for several years. During my education in kindergarten through twelfth grade at Oxford, I always wondered about who I was as an African born in the United States and the other African people that resided in the county. Questions I used to always ask myself included: how did Africans arrive to Oxford? Who were these individuals? How did Lincoln University get built? Why is the university a separate community from Oxford? These are questions I did not know the answers to and were not provided with during my education at Oxford. It bothered me that no history teacher ever discussed African history of the area. It also bothered me that I did not know any African history of the area either besides that there was a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) located within five miles where I lived called Lincoln University, but I did not know anything about the educational institution. The path to beginning to seek these answers began in third when a European American classmate called me a “nigger.” I did not understand the full meaning of the word but knew it was wrong. I responded physically but did not understand what had caused my classmate to utter such distaste towards me. Racism continued to follow me throughout much of my Oxford education, and by eighth grade, I knew I would be attending Lincoln University if I decided to enter college. The simple reason for attending was I wanted to know what it would feel like to be in a community that was predominantly African and where I would be less subjected to racism from classmates as well as an educational

institution. I was not expecting to find answers to my questions concerning African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area, but that is exactly what began happening when I attended the Lincoln University during the fall semester of 2005.

During my first semester, it was required for all students to register for the course African American Experience. It was this course, taught by Professor Evelyn Poe, that would change my life and was the first for me that discussed African history outside of Harriet Tubman and the Civil Rights Movement. For the first time, I felt a sense of pride in myself and who I was knowing that as an African there was extensive, incredible history I knew nothing about which resulted in me minoring in Black Studies. I would have majored in Black Studies, but it was not offered as a major at the time. Throughout my undergraduate education, I took every course I could that related to African history, especially those taught by Dr. Zizwe Poe. However, I still did not know much about African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area. Fellow classmates would often ask me if there were Africans who even resided in Oxford at all. This bothered me because I knew Africans had lived in the area for a long time but did not know much outside of that. My education continued on at Temple University with my Master of Arts Degree in African American Studies; however, I still did not know much about African agency in my home area. It was not until I came back to Lincoln University to work after receiving my Master of Arts Degree that a coworker, Susan Chikwem, asked if I had ever heard of an African community named Hinsonville? I said no, and she began to tell me briefly about the community as well as recommended for me to read Marriane H. Russo and Paul A. Russo's *Hinsonville, a Community at the Crossroads: The Story of a*

*Nineteenth-Century African-American Village* (2005). I asked to borrow Mrs. Chikwem's copy to read and from then on finally began to learn and have a path towards understanding African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area that would once again forever change my life.

Within the book, there were stories of the residents within Hinsonville, in which I learned I had grown up and knew of their descendants such as those belonging to the families of the Grays, Palmers, and Walls. I also learned for the first time that the African community was essential to the building and success of Ashmun Institute that later was renamed Lincoln University. That was something never mentioned during my undergraduate education nor was there any mention of Hinsonville's Hosanna Church that was a part of the Underground Railroad and was a location for the African warrior abolitionists Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth to speak out against African enslavement. In addition, its cemetery is where ten of 18 African participants of the Civil War are buried that were residents of Hinsonville. After finishing the book, it led me on the journey of wanting to know more which became the focus of my dissertation research when I began the doctoral program in the Department of Africology and African American Studies at Temple University. As my research continued, it became more personal. I learned about how Africans arrived to Chester County and the surrounding area, how and why Ashmun Institute was created, who the African individuals were that liberated themselves and others, and the importance the area had in the Underground Railroad's operation. There are many connections this research has to my personal life because I have grown up around most of the areas mentioned, and I now have more

appreciation and understanding of the area I was born and raised. My childhood best friend, Brad Gustafson, and I used to play in his backyard located in Nottingham, Chester County, that was a part of the Mason-Dixon Line. We used to play a game where we would have one foot placed in Pennsylvania and the other in Maryland. Little did I know then of the Mason-Dixon Line once operating as the as boundary and symbol between liberation in Pennsylvania and enslavement in Maryland as well as its importance in understanding African agency of the area. Nottingham would also be the location where the liberated African sisters Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker were kidnapped in December 1851 that is an important part of this dissertation.

Another connection is with my family church, Mt. Zion A.M.E., located in Atglen, Chester County. As a youth, I had always heard stories within my church that it was an older one with its establishment during the time of African enslavement in the United States. On display in the church, there was an old wooden door stored in a glass case to the original building with a bullet still lodged in the door from when kidnappers attempted to abduct African warriors from the area in large part due to the legalization of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. The act made it mandatory that state government officials were to return African warriors who had gained liberation from enslavement back into bondage. In addition, African warriors were not permitted to testify in their own trials and held anyone responsible for “knowingly and willingly” hindering, obstructing, or preventing as well as concealing or harboring African warriors with legal action that would result in a 1,000-dollar fine and six months in prison (Wingert, 2016, p. 118). The passing of this legislation had great impact on all Africans throughout the

United States, especially within African communities near the Mason-Dixon Line in Chester County and the surrounding area. It is also at Mt. Zion A.M.E. where an African participant of the Christiana Resistance in Lancaster County, Samuel Hopkins, is buried whose grandson, Ambrose Hopkins, would later become the pastor of the church and was friends with my grandfather, Paul Denson. Places I have driven past or visited all throughout my life I found out were important locations of African agency and the Underground Railroad such as Christiana, Lincoln University, Kennett Square, and West Chester, yet none of this was information was known to me during any of my education which has caused great anger and sadness as well as the desire to change this lack of awareness not only for myself but others who may have the same questions I had as a youth. This dissertation is not only my quest and commitment for harmony to myself but also my community so that others can appreciate and un-silence the African voices from the underground that have far too often been ignored in Chester County and the surrounding area.

### **Definitions Of Utilized Terms**

African(s) - This is a term used for all people of African descent including those that resided in the United States. "African-American" was avoided because the term did not encompass the people of African descent during the time periods discussed who were not considered citizens of the United States and had few citizenship rights as a result of federal legislation and state legislation such as the Black Codes, Dred Scott Decision, Duke of York Laws, Fugitive Act of 1793, and Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Therefore,

the Africans discussed during the time periods within the dissertation were not considered American.

African warrior(s) - The term is used instead of the European-centered pejorative terms “fugitive” and “runaway” that both imply Africans seeking liberation from enslavement were committing wrongdoing because of federal laws and state laws. This is a term that embraces African self-defense against enslavement and physical violence used to achieve liberation. Examples include Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and William Parker.

Enslaved African(s) - Instead of using the pejorative term “slave,” this term is used to better reflect the Africans’ humanity rather than their condition of those either born enslaved or kidnapped and forced into enslavement.

Liberated African(s) - These were the Africans who were born free and never enslaved. Examples include Robert Purvis, James Forten, and William Still.

Enslaver(s) - The term is used instead of the pejorative terms “slave master” or “slave owner” that dehumanize Africans and to better represent those who enslaved African people.

European(s) - This is a term used instead of “White” to better culturally locate people from the continent collectively.

European American(s) - This is also a term used instead of “White” for people who were European culturally and American in terms of nationality because they were either born in the United States and had full citizenship rights as a result of federal laws

and state laws or later became citizens of the country after immigration. Examples include Edward Gorsuch, Thaddeus Stevens, and William Lloyd Garrison.

Kidnapper(s) - Instead of using the pejorative term “slave catcher,” this term is used to better reflect the action of those who abducted Africans, whether African warriors or liberated Africans, and forced them into enslavement.

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The historical accounts and written works on African agency towards resisting enslavement in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area during the years 1850 to 1865 range from in-depth analysis to little mention of the action and importance of African agents during the time period. Many of the oral and written accounts of the time period focus on the contributions of European American agents driven by economic issues and moral repentance that create a narrative of enslaved Africans being saved by these individuals rather than the Africans themselves whether enslaved or liberated being the main agents of acquiring their own emancipation and freedom. There were European American agents who contributed to the effort of emancipation and freedom for African people in Chester County and throughout the United States of America; however, this dissertation seeks to acknowledge and detail the initiative of African agency in these battles for African liberty.

Molefi Kete Asante writes in *An Afrocentric Manifesto: Toward an African Renaissance* (2008) that when Africans view themselves as centered and central in their own history then they see themselves as agents rather than insignificant on the perimeter of European experiences (Asante, 2007). To understand African agency in its correct context, the actions of Africans must be the primary concentration. Asante asserts that African agency is a part of the theoretical concept Afrocentricity which he defines as “a consciousness, a quality of thought, and an analytical process based on Africans viewing themselves as subjects, that is agents in the world...” (Asante, 2007, p. 16). The written texts within this literature review that are African-centered place the African individual

and collective agents as central. These texts use firsthand and secondhand accounts to describe who the African agents were and what actions they took to gain liberation.

Literary texts selected for the literature review have a relation to the subject of African agency towards resisting enslavement in Chester County and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865. Literature that described African agency of the time period as beneficial to Africans in the quest for liberation against enslavement and focused on agency as subject rather than object was delegated as having an African-centered location. Defining an African-centered location and Afrocentric theoretical analysis is further reflected in the literary texts *The Afrocentric Idea: Revised and Expanded Edition* (Asante, 1998), *The Afrocentric Paradigm* (Mazama, 2003), *Contemporary African American Theater: Afrocentricity in the Works of Larry Neal, Amiri Baraka, and Charles Fuller* (Anadolu-Okur, 2011), *Facing South to Africa: Toward an Afrocentric Critical Orientation* (Asante, 2014), and *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge* (Asante, 1990). An in-depth examination of Afrocentricity and African agency as methodologies for this dissertation is provided in the Introduction chapter.

Some of the literature ignored the African agency of the time period and did not see it as beneficial to the Africans themselves nor the European American individuals who wished to quell the various forms of resistance. In addition, these styles of literature focus on African agency as object rather than subject in their descriptions. This means African agency is recounted more as a footnote or diminished in the grand scheme of historical events in terms of action that was carried out by the Africans themselves in gaining liberation from enslavement. Furthermore, as stated by Asante in *The Afrocentric*

*Idea*, these texts, oftentimes, use problematic terms in describing African agents such as “primitive,” “slaves,” or “deprived” (Asante, 2010, p. 44). Other problematic terms not mentioned by Asante in this literature review are “fugitive,” “runaway,” or “Negro.” Terms such as these do not reflect African agency as central and are used to undermine it by discussing Africans as “the other” (Asante, 2010, p. 177). Instead, the agency of Europeans and European-American agents are centralized. Therefore, these types of sources’ foci and authors are designated as having a European-centered location. However, those types of literary works describe in an essential way the various forms of African agency that existed nonetheless.

The primary sources and secondary sources were organized thematically and critically using Afrocentric Location Theory to relocate the narratives of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Christiana Resistance, Parker sisters kidnappings, and establishment of Ashmun Institute located in the community of Hinsonville. The primary sources used for this analysis are autobiographies, collective narratives, and personal narratives. The primary sources are published during the nineteenth century with the exception of *Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family* (1999) written by civil rights activist Pauli Murray (1910-1985). *Proud Shoes* is a personal narrative that chronicles the lives of Murray’s maternal grandparents Cornelia Smith and Robert Fitzgerald before and after she was born and is of particular importance because of the details provided about her grandfather’s residency in Hinsonville, Pennsylvania, with his parents and siblings during the mid-1800s. Pauli Murray also shares incredible details about her enslaved maternal great grandfather, Thomas Fitzgerald, and his journey to freedom as well as her enslaved

maternal great grandmother, Harriet Smith. The narratives provided by Murray about her family and self provides a great depiction of African agency in the North and South during the Antebellum Era, Civil War Era, Reconstruction Era, and Jim Crow Era. In addition, Murray provides insight to Robert Fitzgerald's personal experiences at Lincoln University during its early years.

The secondary sources include published books and internet websites. Both of which encompass the aforementioned themes of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Christiana Resistance, Parker sisters kidnappings, and establishment of Ashmun Institute located in the community of Hinsonville. The literary texts used for the secondary sources are published after the nineteenth century and in relation to the primary sources have their strengths and weaknesses in reference to their degree of focus on African-centered agency. The literature for the secondary sources consists of African-centered publications and European-centered publications. In addition, the secondary sources like the primary sources include African agency towards resisting enslavement in Chester County and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865.

### **Liberated Africans and the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850**

Osborne P. Anderson's *A Voice from Harper's Ferry: A Narrative of Events at Harper's Ferry: With Incidents Prior and Subsequent to Its Capture by Captain Brown and His Men* (2017) provides an informative depiction of African agency during the Antebellum Era. Anderson is regarded as the only surviving African member of John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in 1859. His narrative is essential to this

analysis because he was a resident of Chester County, Pennsylvania, and details a first-hand account of African agency against enslavement during a historical event that had a significant impact on the beginnings of the Civil War. William Still's *The Underground Railroad: Authentic Narratives and First-Hand Accounts* (2007) is another narrative that provides a detailed first-hand account of African agency against enslavement during the Antebellum Era. Still recorded the harrowing narratives of the Africans who had escaped enslavement through personal accounts, journals, letters, newspapers, and legal documents, which is considered by historians to be the most complete firsthand account ever written of the men, women, and children who were a part of the Underground Railroad to freedom.

Still's literary work is important because of its description of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and impact on Africans residing in Chester County and Lancaster County, particularly concerning the Christiana Resistance in 1851 and the African agents involved during that historical event. While Frederick Douglass' *My Bondage and My Freedom* (2018) and Nilgün Anadolu-Okur's *Dismantling Slavery: Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, and Formation of the Abolitionist Discourse, 1841-1851* (2016) do not have a direct mention of African agency in Chester County, both serve the purpose of detailing a firsthand and secondhand account of African agency for Douglass gaining liberation from enslavement. Anadolu-Okur's work is a secondary source and is valuable in also providing details of the primary organizer for the Christiana Resistance, William Parker, escape to Canada such as the method of escape and assistance he received as well as the specific location where he settled upon entering the country that other literature

does not yield. Even though Douglass' assistance to William Parker is not mentioned in *My Bondage and My Freedom*, it still is a valuable resource in understanding the liberation activity by Douglass himself and other African warriors in the United States of America that fought to defeat the agents of African oppression.

*History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania* (2005) by R.C. Smedley was heavily influenced by William Still's *The Underground Railroad: Authentic Narratives and First-Hand Accounts*. The literary text is useful for this analysis in providing instances of African agency through firsthand accounts of those who were at the epicenter of the Underground Railroad in Chester County and surrounding area, particularly with the Christiana Resistance. While it is today largely regarded as a seminal text by several local residents and historians of Chester County, particularly by the members of the Kennett Underground Railroad Center, the literary work does have major flaws. It focuses primarily on European American agency of Chester County and the surrounding area with in-depth analysis of the role European American abolitionists and Quakers played as a part of the Underground Railroad. Whether intentional or not, R.C. Smedley does not sufficiently bring attention to the African agency that had a major impact on the Underground Railroad.

One of the secondary sources for this analysis that is African-centered almost entirely is Kellie Carter Jackson's *Force and Freedom: Black Abolitionists and the Politics of Violence* (2019). Jackson claims the literary text is the first historical analysis that exclusively focuses on the tactical use of violence among antebellum black activists.

The text is a great source in understanding the importance of African abolitionists' agency of utilizing violence as central to abolitionism and emancipation that is often overlooked. It is relevant to this analysis because of its focus on the impact African agents from Chester County and Lancaster County who used violence, particularly Osborne Anderson and William Parker. Much of the information concerning Anderson as well as other African agents who participated in the raid on Harpers Ferry is taken from his firsthand account in *A Voice from Harper's Ferry: A Narrative of Events at Harper's Ferry: With Incidents Prior and Subsequent to Its Capture by Captain Brown and His Men*. The content about William Parker is important in analyzing the impact of the Christiana Resistance. Jackson is one of the few authors who argues that the Christiana Resistance and William Parker were influential in John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry even though there is an eight year gap between the two historical events. Jackson emphasizes the importance of African agency within Chester County's surrounding area having impact all across the United States of America and not just locally in Pennsylvania.

*The Negro in Pennsylvania, Slavery—Servitude—Freedom, 1639-1861* (1911) by Edward Raymond Turner is useful for this analysis in providing background knowledge of the arrival of Africans into Pennsylvania and statistical data of African populations in the state prior to 1850. In the chapter "Fugitive Slaves," there is information related to the effects of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 on Africans residing in Pennsylvania. Secondhand accounts of African agency towards resisting enslavement are detailed in the chapter in relation to the Christiana Resistance as well as instances of Africans from Pennsylvania challenging the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and enslavement kidnapers in

Baltimore, Maryland, which was known as a port city that sold captured Africans who sought liberation to southern plantations. The text is European-centered and focuses primarily on the laws of Pennsylvania and their effects towards Africans in Pennsylvania during the years mentioned in the book title. With a similar title, *The Negro in Pennsylvania History* (1970) by Ira V. Brown also provides background knowledge of the arrival of Africans into Pennsylvania as well as statistical data of African populations in the state during the eighteenth century and nineteenth century. Like Turner, Brown focuses on several laws of Pennsylvania and their effects towards Africans during those centuries and is also European-centered.

William J. Switala's *Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania, Second Edition* (2008) provides information in great detail pertaining to the escape routes and escapees of enslaved Africans along the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania. Details of Native American trails and old roads used for operating the Underground Railroad are described in this literary text. Photographs and maps are also used to contextualize the escape routes used for the Underground Railroad throughout Pennsylvania. The location of the author is European-centered as there are few firsthand or secondhand accounts of African agents who were a part of the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania, particularly in the areas of Chester County and Lancaster County. However, the literary text does provide insight into the geographical locations of stations along the Underground Railroad for Africans seeking freedom in those counties and beyond to other neighboring counties and states.

For less statewide focus and more of a regional one, particularly in South Central, Pennsylvania, in relation to agents and the Underground Railroad, Cooper H. Wingert's *Slavery & the Underground Railroad in South Central Pennsylvania* (2016) and *Abolitionists of South Central Pennsylvania* (2018) are useful for this analysis. For Wingert, South Central, Pennsylvania, includes the counties Adams County, Cumberland County, Franklin County, and York County. These four counties were considered a "hot spot" on the Underground Railroad and are close to Chester County, Pennsylvania, with York County being the closest at less than 60 miles and Franklin County the furthest at less than 120 miles (Wingert, 2016, p. 5). Like William J. Switala's *Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania, Second Edition*, Cooper H. Wingert's location is European-centered with much of his focus on European abolitionists and enslavers and few firsthand accounts of African agency. Similarly to Switala, the book does provide numerous photographs and maps that are used to contextualize the resistant agency and escape routes used by enslaved Africans in South Central, Pennsylvania. *Abolitionists of South Central Pennsylvania* also provides several photographs and maps that allow for examination of African agency; however, the literary text too is plagued with a European-centered location that focuses primarily on European American agents in South Central, Pennsylvania. Osbourne Anderson's harrowing escape to freedom in Canada through Franklin County after John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry is one of few firsthand accounts provided in the text, although brief, that details African agency.

To understand the importance of the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania, especially Chester County and its surrounding area, it is essential to know the

significance of the Mason-Dixon Line. The Mason-Dixon Line is the state line that separates Maryland from Pennsylvania. Prior to the abolition of African enslavement within the United States of America in 1865 and during gradual emancipation of what would become the northern states in the late 1700s, the Mason-Dixon Line represented the geographical division and ideological dichotomy between the free territory of the North (Pennsylvania) and enslavement territory of the South (Maryland). The boundary is important to this analysis because Chester County is one of several southern Pennsylvania counties that borders the northern counties of Maryland that represent the Mason-Dixon Line which thus led to several conflicts between the two territories involving African agency, especially after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. *Just Over the Line: Chester County and the Underground Railroad* (2002) by William C. Kashatus helps to encapsulate these conflicts.

This literary text provides the best firsthand and secondhand accounts of specific African agency and agents in Chester County that are primarily African-centered. It also provides the history of African enslavement in Chester County as well as those both African and European who resisted African enslavement during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries residing in the county. *Just Over the Line: Chester County and the Underground Railroad* covers all the subject areas of this analysis in relation to African agency in Chester County: the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Christiana Resistance, Parker sisters kidnappings, establishment of Ashmun Institute located in the community of Hinsonville, and enactment of the Thirteenth Amendment. Most importantly, Kashatus is the only author in this analysis who lists the names of African agents in Chester County a

part of the Underground Railroad as well as their age, date of birth, date of death, kinship, occupation, residence, and wealth. Kashatus also lists the names of Africans from Chester County who belong to the 54th Massachusetts Regiment during the Civil War along with their age, company, home, occupation, and termination of service as well as Africans from Chester County who joined other United States Colored Troops during the Civil War.

As previously stated, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 had great impact within Chester County as well as the rest of the United States of America; some Africans feared for their lives as liberated individuals from enslavement at the possibility of being kidnapped and placed into a life of servitude. Andrew Delbanco's *The War Before the War: Fugitive Slaves and the Struggle for America's Soul from the Revolution to the Civil War* (2018) focuses on the impact of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 for Africans across the United States of America. The author and abolitionist Henry Bibb, who was formerly enslaved and founder of the anti-enslavement newspaper *Voice of the Fugitive*, is highlighted by Delbanco in providing a firsthand account of Bibb's reaction to the Christiana Resistance, in which Bibb compares William Parker to the leader of the Haitian Revolution, Toussaint L'Ouverture. The text is European-centered in its location as much of the focal point for the literary text does not include the firsthand and secondhand accounts of Africans affected by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 but rather the European American individuals who influenced the law, created the law, and defended the law. African agency is displayed through the perspective of European American individuals rather than the Africans themselves. In relation to this analysis, it is most

apparent in the description of the Christiania Resistance because William Parker is hardly mentioned but rather the trial of Castner Hanway and the European American individuals who presided over the case are the primary focus.

### **Parker Sisters' Fight for Liberation**

*Stealing Freedom Along the Mason-Dixon Line: Thomas McCreary, the Notorious Slave Catcher from Maryland* (2015) by Milt Diggins focuses primarily on Cecil County's most infamous enslavement kidnapper, Thomas McCreary. The literary text is European-centered; however, it does provide firsthand and secondhand accounts of the Africans who were kidnapped by McCreary and even those who assisted him in some cases as well as their agency prior to, during, and after being abducted. Diggins details many these Africans by their name, age, occupation, and residency. Some of the individuals detailed by Diggins were kidnapped prior to 1850 such as Henry Lee Brown in 1849; however, the greatest detail is given to Elizabeth Parker and her sister Rachel Parker who were kidnapped separately in 1851. These two instances are referenced by historians as the "Parker sisters kidnappings."

Another literary text that highlights the agency of Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker is Lucy Maddox's *The Parker Sisters: A Border Kidnapping* (2016). Maddox provides firsthand and secondhand accounts of both Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker as well as is one of few books that identifies the sisters' parents, Edward "Ned" Parker and Rebecca "Beck or Little Beck" Parker, and siblings (Maddox, 2016, p. 46). Although Maddox provides detailed accounts concerning the agency of the Parker family in

Chester County, the literary text is European-centered similar to Diggins' *Stealing Freedom Along the Mason-Dixon Line: Thomas McCreary, the Notorious Slave Catcher from Maryland*. Like Diggins, Maddox focuses primarily on the European American individuals who were directly involved in the kidnapping or rescue of both sisters. Rarely are the words of Elizabeth Parker or Rachel Parker expressed within the book to describe their own harrowing experiences of being kidnapped; however, in the appendix of the literary text, a reprint of an interview of Elizabeth Parker conducted on January 22, 1853, and published on January 25, 1853, and February 1, 1853, in the *West Chester Village Record* is provided.

### **Christiana Resistance for African Liberation**

*Pennsylvania's Black History* (1975) by Charles L. Blockson is a publication that focuses on the achievements and history of African agency in Pennsylvania in relation to the areas of the arts, literature, medicine, music and performing arts, and sports. It is significant to this analysis because of several references to African agency during the 1800s within Chester County and Lancaster County. Two other notable secondary sources that provide considerable detail on the Christiana Resistance are Jonathan Katz's *Resistance at Christiana: The Fugitive Slave Rebellion, Christiana, Pennsylvania, September 11, 1851: A Documentary Account* (1974) and Thomas P. Slaughter's *Bloody Dawn: The Christiana Riot and Racial Violence in the Antebellum North* (1991). Jonathan Katz's literary text is split into three sections that provide context to the Christiana Resistance. The first section entitled "Resistance" is most useful for this

analysis because it provides an account by William Parker, the former enslaved African and leader of the Christiana Resistance. In several chapters of the section “Resistance,” Parker’s own words are published to discuss his agency as a youth and enslaved prize fighter, running away from the Maryland plantation where he was enslaved, and organizing in Pennsylvania with others for “mutual protection against slaveholders and kidnappers” (Katz, 1974, p. 27). *Resistance at Christiana* is also essential in understanding the African agency of William Parker and other Africans during the Christiana Resistance by providing a number of drawings, maps, and pictures. The other two sections of Katz’s literary text detail the trial of the African and European American individuals accused of treason for participating in the Christiana Resistance and escape of William Parker and other Africans to Canada. In all three sections of the book, first-hand and second-hand accounts are used. *Resistance at Christiana: The Fugitive Slave Rebellion, Christiana, Pennsylvania, September 11, 1851: A Documentary Account* is one of the few secondary source texts published on the Christiana Resistance that provides a firsthand account from William Parker himself.

In comparison with Jonathan Katz’s literary text, Thomas P. Slaughter’s *Bloody Dawn: The Christiana Riot and Racial Violence in the Antebellum North* has less focus on the firsthand accounts of African agents who were involved during the Christiana Resistance like William Parker and more of a centralized attention to details concerning the culture of violence in the United States of America that led to and prevailed after the historical event. Like Katz, Slaughter does discuss the African and European American individuals involved during the resistance as well as the trial and escape of William

Parker and other African participants to Canada; however, Slaughter does spend much focus on the European American reaction of both Northerners and Southerners to the resistance. Slaughter states the book “looks more broadly at some of the ways that law functions as an expression of culture and how it represents the interests of some groups against threats posed by others” (Slaughter, 1991, p. xiii). African agency is highlighted throughout the book in describing the effects and responses towards the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and Christiana Resistance by Africans in Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, but much of the literature is European-centered.

Another primary source that assisted with this analysis is James J. Robins’ *Report of the Trial of Castner Hanway for Treason, in the Resistance of the Execution the Fugitive Slave Law of September, 1850* (1970) published from the notes of Arthur Cannon and Samuel B. Dalrymple. Cannon and Dalrymple were two phonographic reporters appointed by the Circuit Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania to give an account of the treason trial of one of the main participants during the Christiana Resistance—a European American man named Castner Hanway. The account of the treason trial provides firsthand detail of both the African and European American participants’ agency during the Christiana Resistance. This is important because there are various secondhand versions of what took place during the Christiana Resistance and to what extent each accused individual participated. Cannon and Dalrymple’s report showcases a firsthand account of Castner Hanway’s version of what took place and who was involved, which is vital in identifying who the African agents during the historical event were when it occurred.

## **Hinsonville—An African Liberated Community**

The premier literary text that provides the most information pertaining to African agency in Chester County, Pennsylvania, for this research is Marriane H. Russo and Paul A. Russo's *Hinsonville, a Community at the Crossroads: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century African-American Village* (2005). The book provides an African-centered focus on the agency and agents within the free African community of Hinsonville during the nineteenth century. The African agents belonged to some of the founding families of the community such as the Wallses, Amoses, Hinsons, and Glasgows as well as others whose lasting impact still continues today where Lincoln University (Pennsylvania), originally named Ashmun Institute, resides as the oldest degree granting Historically Black College and University (HBCU) that is located where Hinsonville once thrived. The literary text details events like the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the Christiana Resistance, the Parker sisters kidnappings, and the creation of Ashmun Institute as well as the impact those historical events had on the community and surrounding areas of Chester County. Similar to Lucy Maddox's *The Parker Sisters: A Border Kidnapping*, Marriane H. Russo and Paul A. Russo's usage of an appendix is vital in providing primary source information related to Hinsonville family genealogies, the names of descendants who gave oral historical accounts of Hinsonville to the authors, and United States Census data ranging from the years 1790 to 1880.

*Hinsonville's Heroes: Black Civil War Soldiers of Chester, County, Pennsylvania* (2018) written by Cheryl Renée Gooch is another principal literary text in relation to the free African community of Hinsonville. Like *Hinsonville, a Community at the*

*Crossroads: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century African-American Village*, it is also African-centered with its focus pertaining to 18 men of the community who volunteered to serve the Union Army during the Civil War. Most of the details provided within the literary text relate to the atrocities and victories of the war as well as its aftermath. This information is supplied from Robert Fitzgerald's personal journal which is not referenced often in Pauli Murray's *Proud Shoes*.

The most thorough account of Ashmun Institute's founding is detailed in Horace Mann Bond's *Education for Freedom: A History of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania* (1976). Bond examines the educational institution in three dimensions: the ideas and persons that came to focus on the university's initial creation, the special characteristics of the university's instrument through which ideas and personalities were projected to release, and the continuing reformation and redirection of ideas and personalities. Throughout the literary text, Bond maintains his support for the American Colonization Society and its connection to Ashmun Institute as an institution that helped to create leaders and "saviors" of Africa even though the American Colonization Society was founded upon racist ideology as well as wasn't widely supported by African communities within the United States of America during the nineteenth century when it was created (Bond, 1976, p. 488). While the literary text is European-centered with its support of the American Colonization Society and its racist ideology that Africans needed to be saved by European American colonizers disguised as Christian missionaries, it does provide various details about Hinsonville and its Civil War veterans similar to Cheryl Renée Gooch's *Hinsonville's Heroes: Black Civil War Soldiers of Chester, County*,

*Pennsylvania*. The difference between the two literary texts is that Horace Mann Bond describes the community of Hinsonville negatively.

*On Africa's Lands: The Forgotten Stories of Two Lincoln-Educated Missionaries in Liberia* (2014) also written by Cheryl Renée Gooch details the second reason for the institution's founding. Oftentimes, the letters of the brothers James Amos and Thomas Amos within the literary text use problematic terms and phrases such as benighted, vile, and heathen in blindness to describe the native Africans of Liberia. *On Africa's Lands: The Forgotten Stories of Two Lincoln-Educated Missionaries in Liberia* provides deep insight into the agency of James Amos and Thomas Amos while residing in Liberia as missionaries. The book also highlights the foundations of their consciousness that was established at Ashmun Institute which had direct ties to the American Colonization Society through its founder John Miller Dickey and whom the university was named after—Jehudi Ashmun.

Highlighting African agency and the battles for African liberty from 1850 to 1865 in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area is the purpose of this literature review and dissertation as a whole. An abundance of oral and written accounts of the time period focus on the contributions of European American agents driven by economic issues and moral repentance that create a narrative of enslaved Africans being saved by these individuals rather than the Africans themselves whether enslaved or liberated being the main agents of acquiring their own emancipation and freedom. European American agents who contributed to the effort of emancipation and freedom for African people in Chester County and throughout the United States of America cannot be disregarded;

however, this dissertation seeks to acknowledge and detail the initiative of African agency in these battles for African liberty.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODS

Molefi Kete Asante defines Afrocentricity as a “paradigmatic quality of thought with implications for analysis and practice where Africans are subjects and agents of phenomena acting in the context of their own historical reality, cultural image, and human interest” (Asante, 2008, p. 59). Afrocentricity is derived from the term “Afrocentric” that Asante borrowed from a 1961 speech by Kwame Nkrumah in Accra, Ghana, that insisted upon universities to be Afrocentric (Asante, 2014, p. 111). From this speech, Asante created the theoretical concept Afrocentricity, which was also the title of his first publication on the subject in 1980 (Asante, 2014). Asante states that within education the term “centricity” alludes to a perspective which involves locating students within the context of their own cultural references, so they can relate socially and psychologically to other cultural perspectives (Asante, 2014, p. 46). Therefore, Afrocentricity is a frame of reference in which phenomena are viewed from the perspective of Africans as agents within their own narrative as well as the centrality of Africans in every situation (Asante, 2014). For Asante, Afrocentricity is also an “intellectual perspective that privileges African agency within the context of African history and culture transcontinentally and trans-generationally” (Asante, 2008, p. 2). Afrocentricity desires to “obliterate the mental, physical, cultural, and economic dislocation of African people by thrusting Africans as centered, healthy, human beings in the context of African thought” (Asante, 2014, p. 18). This chapter describes the methods utilized to examine the historical accounts and written works on African agency towards

resisting enslavement in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area during the years 1850 to 1865 from an Afrocentric perspective.

Afrocentrists approach research by wanting to know the answers to questions that pertain to African agency. Asante within his literary text *An Afrocentric Manifesto: Toward an African Renaissance* (2008) approaches the data by seeking answers to questions such as: who were the individuals of African descent present in the city of Philadelphia during the historical event? What were these individual's names? What was their occupation? What were their thoughts and emotions about a debate that excluded people of African descent? Did enslaved Africans have choice in their enslavement? How did Africans resist oppression? These are some of the questions that would be posed to approach data, in which the focus is on Africans as subjects rather than objects in human phenomena. Afrocentrists' approach to research is in opposition to works such as Mary Lefkowitz's *Not Out of Africa* (1996) and Arthur Schlesinger's *The Disuniting of America* (1991) which sought to minimize African agency and place African history within the confines of Europe and European agency (Asante, 1998).

The Afrocentric approach to data is further detailed by Nilgün Anadolu-Okur in *Contemporary African American Theater: Afrocentricity in the Works of Larry Neal, Amiri Baraka, and Charles Fuller* (2011). Within this literary text, Anadolu-Okur describes the use of an Afrocentric analysis of data. The Afrocentric analysis includes recognized assumptions that are at the foundation of the Afrocentric critical method (Anadolu-Okur, 2011). The example she uses focuses specifically on plays and drama

but can be used for other areas of study. There are nine assumptions she lists that encompass an Afrocentric approach to data:

1) centering discourse in the historical literatures/oratures of the particular people; 2) transcending Eurocentric negations of the people's culture, which involves embracing more inclusive visions of reality; 3) using the three fundamental themes of transcendent discourse, which are human relations, human and supernatural relations, and the human relationship to self; 4) presenting the principal contexts of resistance, liberation, and action; 5) addressing the work to a particular audience; 6) employing the cultural mythoforms that inform the creative expression; 7) the social/political context which shapes the work; 8) lyrical qualities in the work; and 9) the ideas of unity and harmony. (Anadolu-Okur, 2011, p. 113)

All nine assumptions listed by Anadolu-Okur do not have to be used for an Afrocentric approach to data; one assumption or several can be utilized. This dissertation employs several of Anadolu-Okur's assumptions in relation to African agency in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865 such as centering discourse in the historical literatures/oratures of the particular people; transcending Eurocentric negations of the people's culture, which involves embracing more inclusive visions of reality; presenting the principal contexts of resistance, liberation, and action; the social/political context which shapes the work; and the ideas of unity and harmony.

Maulana Karenga's chapter entitled "Afrocentricity and Multicultural Education: Concept, Challenge and Contribution" within Ama Mazama's book *The Afrocentric Paradigm* (2003) avows Afrocentricity as a quality of thought. Ama Mazama's chapter that is of the same name for the title of her literary text asserts Afrocentricity as a paradigm. Danjuma Sinue Modupe in his chapter called "The Afrocentric Philosophical Perspective: A Narrative Outline" from Mazama's text declares Afrocentricity as a

metatheory. According to Asante, all three assertions are true (Asante, 2008). There are also three intellectual currents of Afrocentricity: Negritude, Diopian historiography, and Kawaiida (Asante, 2014). These intellectual currents precede Afrocentricity and have influenced it greatly; however, the theory of Afrocentricity is not the same as them. Negritude was a way of thinking for Africans residing in Paris, France, during the 1930s and 1940s as a response to French scholars who perpetuated racist ideology by contending Africa had no culture, especially self-conscious art or an artistic tradition. Through the use of poetry, drama, and literature, advocates of Negritude such as Leopold Sedar Senghor, Aime Cesaire, Jean Rabemananjara, and Leon Damas defended African agency and historical traditions (Asante, 2014). According to Asante, Negritude and Afrocentricity are similar in their endorsement of agency, but are different in that Negritude did not provide African centeredness. Diopian historiography, named after Cheikh Anta Diop and who Asante considers one of the most significant African scholars of the century because of his destruction of the European construction of ancient Africa, is similar to Afrocentricity because both share the same epistemology. In Diop's seminal texts *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality* (1974) and *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology* (1991), he decisively concludes the ancient Kemetians (Egyptians) were Black in skin pigmentation, and the origins of ancient Kemet (Egypt) begin in the Nile Valley. Diop's declaration created a new historiography that was supported scientifically through radiocarbon dating and disproved Africans had no culture or civilization that prior to his research was proclaimed by racist European scholars as fact. Yet Afrocentricity and Diopian historiography are different because

Asante contends Afrocentricity is significantly broader in its reach to form the discussion around the African world. Similar to Diopian historiography, Kawaida and Afrocentricity are alike in that both share the same epistemology. Kawaida is a theoretical concept proposed by Maulana Karenga that conveys the reconstruction of African American cultural values on the basis of African traditions that had been lost during enslavement. For Karenga, Kawaida relies on collective action and is a corrective measure to the cultural problems the African American community has developed because of misplaced consciousness as a result of alienation, degradation, dysfunctionality, self-hatred, and criminal activity (Asante, 2014). However, Kawaida and Afrocentricity differ because they highlight separate theoretical and philosophical methods. Asante states Kawaida's critique of culture is the genesis for suggesting African agency in two different types of phenomena--phenomena of infrastructure and structure and mental phenomena. Yet Kawaida is more concerned with ethical aspects of actions while Afrocentricity focuses more on structures that encourage moral decisions (Asante, 2014).

For this dissertation, Afrocentricity provides a thematic structure to assess African agency in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865 utilizing two key concepts—agency and Location Theory. Asante asserts that Afrocentricity is not only an intellectual perspective but also a theory of agency. The theory of agency is defined by Asante when he states:

Afrocentricity...is a theory of agency, that is, the idea that African people must be viewed and view themselves as agents rather than spectators to historical revolution and change. To this end Afrocentricity seeks to examine every aspect of the subject place of Africans in historical,

literary, architectural, ethical, philosophical, economic, and political life.  
(Asante, 2008, p. 17)

Asante continues by declaring, “Agency itself is the ability to provide the psychological and cultural resources necessary for the advancement of human freedom” (Asante, 2008, p. 40). For Asante and other Afrocentrists on the theory of agency, all knowledge is obligated to be emancipatory (Asante, 2008, p. 49). In terms of defining an agent, Asante states, “[Agent] must mean a human being who is capable of acting independently in his or her own best interests...In situations of un-freedom, oppression, racial oppression, the active idea within the concept of agent assumes the primary position” (Asante, 2008, p. 40). Similar to Asante's definition of an agent, Stephanie E. Smallwood discusses African agency in her book *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (2008). For Smallwood, African agency concerns subjective beings who have the ability to possess independence as opposed to objective beings who are fully alienated and available to exploitation particularly in regards to African enslavement (Smallwood, 2008). Smallwood continues that African agency aboard enslavement ships was expressed through the voice and its power to project words and sounds that formed a relationship of pain to language. In seeking liberation, enslaved Africans used their voices as a means to survive and “to explain it, to define and delimit it” (Smallwood, 2008, p. 125). The ability to possess independence and its association with African agency is also shared by Vincent Woodward in his literary text *The Delectable Negro: Human Consumption and Homoeroticism within U.S. Slave Culture* (2014) and Ramesh Mallipeddi in his book *Spectacular Suffering: Witnessing Slavery in the Eighteenth-*

*Century British Atlantic* (2016). For Mallipeddi, African agency is subjective as Smallwood explains and does not only equate to resistance but rather the ability to be autonomous under extreme domination through social practices “such as subsistence cultivation, marketing and exchange, weekend plays, holiday celebrations, festivals, and funeral rites” (Mallipeddi, 2016, p. 16).

However, the concept of an agent being able to act independently in his or her own best interests in relation to enslaved Africans is brought into question by Saidiya V. Hartman in the book *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (1997). Hartman brings this into question because of the constant subjection and negation of agency for enslaved Africans, particularly women, by European and European American enslavers, in which many enslaved Africans were conditioned even to neutralize their own “voice” or agency as a result of the brutality and antagonisms of enslavement such as unwarranted sexual encounters (Hartman, 1997, p. 53). This is also noted by Marisa J. Fuentes in her literary text *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (2016) which agrees with Hartman’s assessment in terms of agency and enslaved African women. Fuentes writes, “Agency cannot be examined outside the constraints of slavery’s systematic mechanism of domination” (Fuentes, 2016, p. 69). Hartman expounds that African agency was even deemed criminal for enslaved Africans particularly within the United States of America’s judicial system. She does not deny that African agency did exist during African enslavement but notes the difficulty of being able to act independently in one’s own best interests during that time period because asserting agency led to punishment.

The concept of agency and agents are vital to this dissertation because numerous of the oral and written accounts concerning the years 1850 to 1865 focus on the contributions of European American agents driven by economic issues and moral repentance such as R.C. Smedley's *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania* (2005), William J. Switala's *Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania, Second Edition* (2008), Cooper H. Wingert's *Slavery & the Underground Railroad in South Central Pennsylvania* (2016) and *Abolitionists of South Central Pennsylvania* (2018), Andrew Delbanco's *The War Before the War: Fugitive Slaves and the Struggle for America's Soul from the Revolution to the Civil War* (2018), and Lucy Maddox's *The Parker Sisters: A Border Kidnapping* (2016). This creates a narrative of enslaved Africans being saved by these individuals rather than the Africans themselves whether enslaved or liberated being the main agents of acquiring their own emancipation and freedom. The reliance upon European American benevolence for their freedom was not the case for a multitude of Africans. Many were able to independently attain their own liberation in the best interests of themselves in situations of un-freedom and racial oppression and are the primary focus for this dissertation.

This does not mean there were no European American agents who contributed to the effort of emancipation and freedom for African people in Chester County and throughout the United States of America. However, focusing primarily on the contributions of European American agents and excluding African agents creates dis-agency. Asante defines dis-agency as "every situation where the African is dismissed as a player or actor within his or her own world" (Asante, 2008, p. 40). For Asante, dis-

agency creates marginality, and for him the worst form of marginality is to be marginal within one's own story because it destroys the presence, meaning, activities, and images of Africans and is a dismantling of the spiritual and material personality of African people. Marisa J. Fuentes alludes to this by explaining the importance of "personhood" in understanding historical accounts of enslaved Africans (Fuentes, 2016, p. 3). For example, she writes that European colonial authority, oftentimes, objectified enslaved Africans within historical records by using generic names such as "Negro" or "slave" which creates marginality instead of personhood in utilizing the proper names of enslaved Africans (Fuentes, 2016, p. 3). Fuentes writes, "The objectification of the enslaved allowed authorities to reduce them to valued objects to be bought and sold... This same objectification led to the violence in and of the archive" (Fuentes, 2016, p. 5). To rectify the issue of marginality for enslaved Africans within historical records, Fuentes suggests "to acknowledge and actively resist the perpetuation of their subjugation and commodification in our own discourse and historical practices" (Fuentes, 2016, p. 12). Asante asserts when there is a successful mass movement of Africans from marginality within Europe to their own reality there then can be a true revolution (Asante, 2008). In concurrence with Asante's assertions concerning agency, agents, and dis-agency, this dissertation seeks to acknowledge and detail the initiatives of African agency in the battles for African liberty and to place Africans into the interior of their own story and not the margins to help create true revolution and liberation. As Asante states, "I am most free when I am most active on the basis of my own volition. Even if I am active and

believe myself to be free under the will of another, I am not truly liberated” (Mazama, 2003, p. 50).

Ama Mazama in her textbook *The Afrocentric Paradigm* (2003) asserts that Asante’s application of Afrocentricity to textual analysis provides Afrocentrists with Location Theory. In terms of a textual analysis, Location Theory focuses primarily on the importance of two concepts—location and dislocation. The location of an author is distinguished by identifying language, attitude, and direction. According to Mazama, language includes the semantic analysis of the words used. Attitude involves the orientation and response of an author to situations and ideas that are showcased within the text. Direction showcases itself mainly through symbols within the text (Mazama, 2003).

For Afrocentrists, location is a primary activity for Afrocentric analysis. In any event, institution, interaction, personality, situation, or text, collectively referred to as phenomena by Asante, it must be studied and analyzed in relationship to psychological time and space (Asante, 2008). Asante continues that Afrocentricity deems phenomena as diverse, dynamic, and in motion. As a result, it is essential for an Afrocentric researcher to accurately document the location of phenomena by analyzing attitude, direction, and language of a particular phenom because it allows the researcher to start from an orientation that has significance for the ultimate analysis of a situation or condition as well as reveal the imagination of an author. For Asante, this type of analysis means chronology is important and must be used in conjunction with location to understand society, history, or personality (Asante, 2008). According to Asante, attitude

“refers to a predisposition to respond in a characteristic manner to some situation, value, idea, object, or group of person” (Mazama, 2003, p. 240). A researcher or author can indicate his or her location by attitude towards specific ideas, person, or objects (Mazama, 2003). Asante defines direction as the route of a researcher’s or author’s “sentiments, themes, and interest...with reference to the point at which they are aimed” (Mazama, 2003, p. 240). Direction is identified by the symbols that happen within a text such as use of Ebonics (Mazama, 2003). Lastly, language is defined by Asante as “a regularized code that has been agreed upon by a community of users... language can be said to involve grammatical rules, nuances, words, and deep structures” (Mazama, 2003, p. 239). For Asante, his focus in terms of language is mainly with the meaning of words although function and etymology are also important. Location can be determined by analyzing language that uses pejorative terms (Mazama, 2003).

Other important components used in understanding location according to Asante are time, etymology, and reclamation. Time is important for an Afrocentric researcher because it must be understood to have an accurate analysis of phenomena. Asante believes the best way to capture location of a text is comprehending the time and space of the researcher or author. Once that is determined, it is easier to construct the limitations for the phenom itself (Asante, 2008). Another component in understanding location is etymology of words and terms. Etymology is essential to discerning location because it correctly identifies and locates concepts. Similar to etymology, reclamation is a key

component in conceptualizing location in its ability to retrieve names, places, and concepts that create dislocation in the African world.

All components of location are essential to the dissertation in analyzing the primary sources and secondary sources concerning African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865 and locating the authors as African-centered or European-centered. For example, within the literature, it is common to find problematic yet historically situated terms such as “fugitive,” “Negro,” “primitive,” “runaway,” and “slave.” These terms are avoided and replaced with terms like “enslaved,” “African warriors,” “liberated Africans,” and “liberation.” In reference to what many historians deem the “Christiana Riot,” the term “Christiana Resistance” is used instead along with the aforementioned replacement terms to provide proper reclamation of names, places, and concepts within the analysis of African agency and make it central. Literature that describes African agency of the time period as beneficial to Africans in the quest for liberation against enslavement and focuses on agency as subject rather than object is delegated as having an African-centered location. Literature that focuses on African agency as object rather than subject in its descriptions, recounts African agency more as a footnote or diminished in the grand scheme of historical events in terms of action that was carried out by the Africans themselves in gaining liberation from enslavement, uses problematic terms, and centralizes European and European-American agency is deemed as possessing a European-centered location.

The work of this dissertation is an Afrocentric historiography that provides a new orientation to data by providing substantial and valuable analysis of African agency and

phenomena from 1850 to 1865 in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area. Afrocentricity is used because it provides a more honest and inclusive approach to understanding the history of Africans than what has been produced on the subject by researchers and authors who primarily possess a European-centered location. As Asante states, “To assert Europe in the midst of Africa is to write over the everyday experiences of the African people. One strikes out the lived histories of the African people by this brazen imposition” (Asante, 2008, p. 64). The objective of this work is to uphold, centralize, and elevate the everyday experiences of Africans of the time period and locale that have long been diminished and disregarded in favor of European and European-American preeminence.

## CHAPTER 4 CONDITIONS OF AFRICAN AGENCY PRIOR TO 1850 IN PENNSYLVANIA

The area that is considered today Chester County, Pennsylvania, was first occupied by the Delawares of the Lenni-Lenape Native Americans prior to European settlement in the seventeenth century. There are few locations with Native American names found presently within Chester County; however, four names remain—Lenape, Pocopson, Octorara, and Toughkenamon (Jacob, 1980). The African presence and agency within Pennsylvania can be detected as early as the 1630s. One of the earliest records is in 1639 when a convict is “sentenced to be taken to South River to serve among the blacks there” (Turner, 1911, p. 1). Prior to Pennsylvania becoming an English colony, Africans were persecuted by the Swedes, Dutch, and Finns within the territory. In 1644, there is record of an African named Anthony who labored in making hay for cattle and followed Swedish Governor Printz at Tinicum (modern day Delaware County) on his “pleasure yacht” (Turner, 1911, p. 1). An early record in 1657 accuses Dutch Vice-Director Jacob Alricks of “using the Company’s oxen and negroes” (Turner, 1911, p. 1). Another early record in 1662 describes “a company of blacks” being asked to be sent to Dutch Governor Stuyvesant from Vice-Director Beekman (Turner, 1911, p. 1). In 1664, a record indicates 50 enslaved Africans provided by the Dutch West India Company were requested to labor along the Delaware River (Turner, 1911). Early African presence can also be found in Delaware in 1664 when the English took control of New Amstel (renamed New Castle) which was plundered “and a number of negroes [60 to 70] were confiscated and sold” with 11 returned to Peter Alricks, nephew of Jacob Alricks (Turner,

1911, p. 2). The English immediately enacted Duke of York's Laws within the areas seized, and within these laws there is mentioned Africans as "servants for life" (Turner, 1911, p.18). Furthermore, the laws stated "no Christian shall be held in bond slavery or villenage" which accelerated more Africans being enslaved (Turner, 1911, p. 18). By 1677, a record indicates enslaved Africans living on the Delaware River. In 1678, enslaved Africans were being requested to be imported from Maryland by the justices of New Castle by an emissary (Turner, 1911).

Chester County, Pennsylvania, was "founded" in 1682 by William Penn upon his arrival to the "New World" in Upland, Pennsylvania—located today in Delaware County (Jacob, 1980). Arriving on the banks of the Delaware River near the small Swedish community, Penn claimed the region as a part of a land grant payment for debts owed to his father by King Charles II, in which he renamed the region "Chester" (Russo, 2005, p. 6). King Charles II was indebted to Penn's father, William Penn Sr., because as a British admiral William Penn Sr. seized Jamaica for England in 1655 which created the opportunity for enslaved African labor under British control on the island (Wingert, 2016). On March 4, 1681, a charter for the colony of Pennsylvania was granted by King Charles II to pay the debt owed to William Penn Sr. as well as encourage Quakers to leave England for the colony (Kashatus, 2002). The name "Chester County" was claimed by Penn as the whole area south and west of the city Philadelphia (Jacob, 1980). At the time of its establishment, the boundaries of Pennsylvania were not entirely confirmed because of an overlap with land declared by Cecilius Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore, who in 1632 had established the Maryland Colony. Both Penn and Calvert recognized

each of their colonies at the same fortieth degree of latitude which was the southern border for Pennsylvania and northern border for Maryland; this led to 13 miles of an overlap. Philadelphia was a part of the Maryland Colony but was claimed as belonging to the Pennsylvania Colony when European settlers arriving there were told by Penn to pay him taxes. As retaliation, Calvert claimed areas of Pennsylvania as a part of Maryland. It was not until 1763 when a resolution began when English astronomers and surveyors Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon were hired by the Penn and Calvert families to establish a boundary line. On January 7, 1764, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon surveyed for months the stars located on farmland in Chester County owned by John Harlan. By early March, Mason and Dixon determined their surveying location was unquestionably a part of Pennsylvania and not Maryland and placed a rectangular white quartz slab in the ground as a marker later known as the “Star-Gazer’s Stone” (Kashatus, 2002, p. 7). Following the fixed latitude of 39 degrees and 44 minutes, Mason and Dixon placed stones every mile westward and surpassed the modern day western terminus of Maryland; however, Native American threats to the west caused their journey to cease in 1767. It was not until 1769 when Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon’s journey resumed that what would be called the Mason-Dixon Line was established to the Ohio River. The Mason-Dixon Line would come to prominence beginning in 1780 when Pennsylvania passed gradual abolition of enslaved Africans, in which the border would serve as a boundary and symbol between liberation in Pennsylvania and enslavement in Maryland (Kashatus, 2002).

African enslavement was not outlawed by William Penn's governing document, Frame of Government, when Pennsylvania was established in 1682 (Kashatus, 2002). One of the earliest mentions of African enslavement by William Penn is his charter to the Free Society of Traders, a group of merchant Quakers, in 1682 stating that Africans should be liberated by colonists after fourteen years. A similar suggestion was made by Governor Johan Rising to the Swedes in 1654 before Pennsylvania was a British colony that enslaved Africans should be liberated after a period of years (Turner, 1911). However, writing to his steward at Pennsbury, Chester County, Penn suggests in 1685 Africans would be best as labor because they could be enslaved for life. During the same year, non-coincidentally, a deed from Patrick Robinson Countie Clark of Philadelphia states an African named Jack was to be enslaved to Joseph Browne forever. However, no law was enacted that authorized enslavement or stated whether it was legal in the colony of Pennsylvania during the seventeenth century. African enslavement was assumed to be legal in the colony of Pennsylvania because it was in other colonies such as Virginia (Turner, 1911). By 1687, Africans were present in Chester County. One of the earliest records of enslaved Africans gaining manumission by an enslaver in the county was in 1701 when married couple Jane and John were liberated even though release from enslavement had taken place prior in Pennsylvania during the 1680s (Turner, 1911). According to Charles L. Blockson in the book *African Americans in Pennsylvania: Above Ground and Underground an Illustrated Guide* (2001), most enslaved and liberated Africans throughout the period of enslavement within Pennsylvania were located in the south-eastern region of what would become the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in and

near Philadelphia such as Bucks County, Chester County, Lancaster County, Montgomery County, and York County. Other Africans resided in western Pennsylvania as a result of French settlement. Penn was a Quaker enslaver and not much is known about the Africans he enslaved other than their enforced European names—Sam, Sue, Dorcas, Hesiah, Yass, Jack, and Jack’s wife Parthenia (Blockson, 2001). Penn’s will in 1701 declared the Africans he enslaved to be manumitted upon his death, and 100 acres was to be given to Sam. Nevertheless, Penn’s final will in 1711 did not contain the same provisions, and the Africans enslaved by him were never liberated upon his death in 1718 nor by his wife, Hannah, who inherited them as a part of his estate. In 1720, she requested to James Logan, William Penn’s colonial secretary, the sale of Penn’s enslaved Africans, but this was never carried out.

Manumitting enslaved Africans through wills was not commonplace until circa 1740. By that time, one out of three Quakers manumitted enslaved Africans through wills (McDaniel, 2009). This included an enslaved African named Hercules who gained manumission circa 1744 from his enslaver, John Harris, founder of the future state capital of Pennsylvania—Harrisburg (Turner, 1911). Hercules was granted manumission only because he saved John Harris from Native Americans, who previously controlled the area of Harrisburg, and were going to burn him alive (Blockson, 2001). Some Africans were granted temporary manumission or were forced to accept clauses that would grant manumission only if they accepted responsibility for paying 30 pounds. This fee was passed into law circa 1725 that all enslavers were to provide 30 pounds of “security” in case a newly manumitted African became ill or could not provide for himself or herself

(Turner, 1911, pp. 55-56). Nevertheless, many remained enslaved as a result of wills. The first will on record in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, that was filed in 1750 by European American enslaver Robert Dunning kept an African male with the enforced European name Whiteball and an African female with the enforced European name Phillis enslaved (Wingert, 2016).

According to historian Hugh Thomas, European American Quaker William Frampton was the first to transport enslaved Africans during the 1680s even though it was considered by European American Quakers during the 1670s (McDaniel, 2009). In 1684, 150 Africans were brought into Philadelphia to be sold into enslavement amongst its 2,000 residents, mainly from the Caribbean (Wingert, 2016). Quaker merchants in Philadelphia relied on and sold enslaved African produced goods from Caribbean enslavers, particularly from Barbados. At times, wealthy Quaker merchants applied credit leftover from sales of flour, grain, or herring which permitted the ability to purchase enslaved Africans no longer wanted by Caribbean enslavers who labeled them as “refuse” or “waste” because of their inability to sustain the intensive labor demands forced upon them (Wingert, 2016, p. 13). These were the only Africans purchased by Pennsylvania enslavers as late as the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Pennsylvania enslavers also preferred young Africans for labor and often requested young males and females in fear those in their twenties and beyond were too old to learn a trade or were too “dishonest” and “corrupted” to be enslaved (Wingert, 2016, p.17). The use of terms like corrupted, dishonest, drunken, disorderly, incompetent, refuse, unintelligent, and wasted were used to label and undermine the agency of Africans who were seeking

liberation. Africans labeled as such were in reality African warriors. Early records indicate enslaved Africans sought liberation in Pennsylvania during the same year it was charted as a British colony in 1681 and even devised plans that did not come to fruition of a large uprising after word spread about Africans revolting in New York in 1712 (Turner, 1911). This indicates African warriors fought against enslavement since the early beginnings of the future state and did not accept their condition to the contrary of European American authors who published such fabrications.

In Chester County, enslaved Africans were primarily used for farming and other correlated activities. Labor was dictated by gender and changed during each season. During harvesting and planting seasons, male enslaved Africans labored in farming fields. For the winter, male enslaved Africans constructed or repaired buildings, cut firewood, mended fences, and traveled with enslavers to Philadelphia or New York. They also were forced to do domestic work as chimneysweeps, coachmen, cooks, laborers, personal attendants, sailors, and stevedores. If enslaved by an artisan, then male enslaved Africans made barrels, boots, furniture, houses, iron, and sails. Female enslaved Africans were restricted to primarily an enslaver's home with labor such as childcare, cleaning, cooking, and spinning (Kashatus, 2002). Generally, enslaved Africans in Pennsylvania were permitted to marry each other and learn Christianity but were buried separately from European Americans. Liberated Africans were also not permitted to be buried in cemeteries with European Americans during the eighteenth century (Turner, 1911). Throughout the eighteenth century in Philadelphia, enslavers did not encourage enslaved Africans to have children because they were often viewed as an additional expense. In

some instances, enslaved African women who bore children were punished by being sold to a separate plantations from their children (Kashatus, 2002).

Most Quakers of Pennsylvania did not prefer the use of enslaved Africans for labor but rather European indentured servants because enslaved Africans cost more than a European indentured servant. Grain and lumber were used to purchase enslaved Africans, in which an average adult cost 40 pounds sterling (Brown, 1970). In Chester County, enslaved Africans were classified in wills and inventories as luxury items by European American enslavers (Kashatus, 2002). In both Chester County and Philadelphia, enslaved Africans labored singularly or as groups of two or three with enslavers or European indentured servants; enslaved Africans rarely labored in large groups. In addition, enslaved Africans lived in the same household as European indentured servants and European American enslavers (Kashatus, 2002). From the granting of Pennsylvania's charter in 1681 by King Charles II, it was intended to keep Africans in a place of inferiority even though it was a Quaker colony that claimed to believe in principles of nonviolence and a divine spirit within all humans (Hine, 2014). In 1683, legislation was passed that granted law enforcement officers the power to arrest any African, enslaved or liberated, traveling without permission from an enslaver (Asante, 2002). Any African who traveled without permission was to be arrested, jailed, and after imprisonment receive 30 lashes from an enslaver (Turner, 1911). Other legislation prohibited social intercourse with indentured servants and degraded Africans to "special courts and judges" where penalties were much harsher than those applied to European Americans (Blockson, 2001, p. 7). In 1698, a Chester County Court outlawed

the mixture of races between Africans and European Americans when an African man and European American woman produced a child and were set to marry. As a result of the intercourse, the court ordered the European American woman to receive 21 lashes and the African male to never “meddle” with another European American female, or the punishment would be “paine [pain] of his life” (Turner, 1911, p. 30). In terms of marriage, William Penn attempted to regulate it amongst enslaved Africans but was unsuccessful in passing a bill through the Pennsylvania legislature in 1700 (Blockson, 2001). Beginning in Germantown, Pennsylvania, protest against African enslavement began to manifest amongst European Americans within the colony, in which an anti-enslavement resolution was signed by German refugee Mennonites and Quakers on April, 18, 1688 (Blockson, 2001). According to *Reference Library of Black America, Volume I* (2001), the anti-enslavement resolution is considered to be the first protest against African enslavement by European Americans in the English colonies and perhaps the Western Hemisphere. By 1696, Quakers who participated in the importation of enslaved Africans through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade were threatened with dismissal from the society (Smith, 2001). Although this took place, Africans were still denied admittance to the Society of Friends as Quakers in Pennsylvania as late as the nineteenth century. For example, the African named William Boen was denied admittance in 1763 and was not granted membership until 1814 (Turner, 1911).

In 1700, the Pennsylvania legislature created two separate court systems for European Americans and Africans. As a result, all Africans whether enslaved or liberated would not be tried by a jury of their peers but rather by two justices of the peace and “six

of the most substantial freeholders of the neighborhood” (Wingert, 2016, p. 35). In 1711, the Pennsylvania colonial legislature attempted to end African enslavement in the colony under pressure from Mennonites and Quakers; however, it was overruled by the British government (Smith, 2001). Further legislation was passed in 1726 within Pennsylvania that established Black Codes similar to those in southern colonies to restrict the rights of Africans. These laws disallowed all Africans from consuming alcohol in or near any house or shop where strong liquor was sold; allowed local officials to arrest and “bind out to service” all liberated Africans who were unemployed, vagrants, or wanderers; forbid enslaved Africans to travel more than ten miles without an enslaver’s permission; required enslaved Africans to be at their enslaver’s home by nine o’clock at night; disallowed enslaved Africans to meet in groups of more than four people; and discouraged interracial marriage between Africans, enslaved or liberated, and European Americans (Wingert, 2016, p. 27). Any liberated African who married a European American could be penalized with enslavement. Liberated Africans were also not permitted to interact with enslaved Africans or invite them to their home without an enslaver’s approval (Wingert, 2016). Liberated Africans who violated this law were at risk of fines and whippings as well as enslavement if the fines could not be paid (Turner, 1911). Other laws that were a part of the Black Codes penalized enslaved Africans with corporal punishment for trivial violations such as carrying weapons, hunting on Native American territory or other people's lands, hunting on Sunday, offending the night watch or a wagoner, participating in horse racing or shooting matches, and using fireworks without the governor’s consent. Africans also faced harsher punishments for crimes than

European Americans that could result in death such as committing arson, burglary, buggery, murder, or rape (Turner, 1911).

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, enslaved Africans in the English colonies were estimated to be 28,000 with 23,000 located in the South (Smith, 2001). It is estimated Pennsylvania Quakers enslaved half of the colony's enslaved Africans by 1700 (McDaniel, 2009). According to the early Pennsylvania historian Edward Turner, it is estimated 1,000 Africans were enslaved in the colony by 1700, 2,500 by 1725, and 6,000 by 1750 when African enslavement reached its peak in Pennsylvania (Turner, 1911). In 1750, the area located west of the Susquehanna River and north of South Mountain was named Cumberland County. Cumberland County also consisted of the land of Cumberland Valley from the Susquehanna River across from Harris' Ferry to the border of Maryland. At the time, the county included modern day Cumberland County, Franklin County, Perry County, and other western territory; all of which are considered a part of south central Pennsylvania. A year prior to the establishment of Cumberland County, York County was created as the area located on the southern side of South Mountain that bordered Maryland. At the time of its establishment, York County included modern day York County and Adams County which are also a part of south central Pennsylvania. From its early beginnings, wealthy European American farmers living in south central Pennsylvania were enslavers of Africans (Wingert, 2016). African enslavement increased in south central Pennsylvania during the mid-1750s as a result of the French and Indian War that began in 1754, in which European American indentured servants joined British forces. By 1765, it is estimated 200 enslaved Africans resided in

Cumberland County alone although there were fluctuations of enslaved Africans during the 1770s as a result of more demand for European American indentured servants as a cheaper labor force. However, this changed by 1778 when many European American indentured servants fought in the Revolutionary War, lasting from 1775 to 1783, causing enslaved Africans residing in Cumberland County to reach an estimated 400 and an estimated 775 by 1784. York County had the same estimation in 1778 with also 400 enslaved Africans and an estimated 584 by 1783. By the mid-1780s, there was an estimation of over one-thousand enslaved Africans in the modern counties of Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, and York. These same counties accounted for 28-percent of enslaved Africans in Pennsylvania by 1790 and more than 60-percent by 1810 accounting for 500 out of the 795 enslaved Africans listed in the state. In 1790, Franklin County was estimated to have the majority out of the aforementioned counties with 330 enslaved Africans while Cumberland County was estimated to have 223 enslaved Africans. By 1800, Adams County was estimated to have had 114 enslaved Africans, Cumberland County had 228 enslaved Africans, Franklin County had 181 enslaved Africans, and York County had 77 enslaved Africans. In 1810, Franklin County had an estimated 87 enslaved Africans while Cumberland County had 307 enslaved Africans that accounted for about 40-percent of the state total largely because the county lacked a large Quaker presence that was against enslavement by the nineteenth century like the other counties of south central Pennsylvania. Cumberland County enslavers were predominantly Presbyterian and did not have the same number of abolitionists within its denomination like Quakers. By 1840, Adams County was estimated to have had two enslaved Africans,

and Cumberland County had 24 enslaved Africans while both Franklin County and York County had no enslaved Africans on record even though enslavement continued within the state, and not all enslaved Africans were registered by enslavers (Wingert, 2016).

The first federal census in 1790 estimated 1,300 liberated Africans lived in the counties of Cumberland, Franklin, and York with only 13 listed as the heads of household (Wingert, 2016). The low number for listed heads of household is attributed to many liberated Africans residing on plantations owned by enslavers as a part of a system similar to sharecropping. Debts were constantly enforced upon liberated Africans for small infractions such as being unable to work because of care taking of family members or injuries sustained from job tasks causing several to become insolvent and placed into jail that further caused debt accumulation. If not placed into jail for being in debt, then liberated Africans also could be remanded to the “poorhouse” to live out their final days or kidnapped and forced into enslavement (Wingert, 2016, p. 61). It was also around 1790 within Franklin County that African warriors who liberated themselves from enslavement in Maryland established the community they referred to as “Africa” (Blockson, 2001, p. 176). Twenty-five African families created the community of Africa (modern day Cove Gap) that was located at the foot of Mount Parnell, in which its members consisted of blacksmiths, carpenters, farmers, laborers, quarrymen, and teachers. Similarly, there was another African community referred to as “Africa” to the west in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, where the African named James Graham assisted African warriors in gaining liberation by transporting them in his wagon from the town of Bedford to Johnstown. Other Africans near Bedford that assisted African warriors were

Elias Rouse, Hugh Barclay, Joseph Crawley, Reverend John Fiddler, and Wyatt Perry (Switala, 2008). Hugh Barclay's home that was a part of the Underground Railroad was referred to as "the Grove" (Switala, 2008, p. 33). There was also an African community consisting of 20 to 25 families referred to as "Little Africa" in Franklin County two miles west of the town Mercersburg in what was called Greenwood (Wingert, 2016, pp. 108-109). Little Africa was where the male African Robert Black, considered one of several "Captains of the Underground Railroad," assisted African warriors in escaping enslavement (Wingert, 2016, p. 109). It was at Little Africa that several African warriors defended themselves against kidnapers and killed a magistrate and wounded two kidnapers in 1837 (Wingert, 2016).

After the establishment of Africa, Africans organized another community in Franklin County called Yellow Hill that was a part of the Underground Railroad during the nineteenth century. In addition, the county jail located in Chambersburg and built in 1818 was a part of the Underground Railroad with use of its tunnels to assist African warriors in escaping enslavement (Blockson, 2001). Other African communities that were a part of the Underground Railroad during the nineteenth century within Franklin County existed in Chambersburg, Greencastle, and Mercersburg. In Greencastle, the male African named Moses Anderson assisted African warriors in gaining liberation by sheltering them at his home that was a part of the Underground Railroad. There was also an African community in Adams County located at Gettysburg that traced its beginnings back to the beginnings of the town and was a part of the Underground Railroad as well as other towns such as Carlisle and Shippensburg in Cumberland County, Columbia in

Lancaster County, Harrisburg in Dauphin County, and York in York County. At Gettysburg, despite the danger of many kidnappers residing there, the liberated Africans John “Jack” Hopkins, who was one of several African janitors at Pennsylvania College (modern day Gettysburg College), and Mag Palm helped African warriors seeking liberation from enslavement within Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, Washington D.C., and eastern Maryland (Wingert, 2016, p. 109). John Hopkins was careful to avoid notice from the African named Eden Devan who was an ally to kidnappers of African warriors in Gettysburg (Blockson, 2001). The African named Hamilton Everett also assisted African warriors in Gettysburg (Switala, 2008). To the west of Gettysburg, the liberated African Basil Biggs assisted African warriors at his home during the day then assisted them to the home of liberated African Edward Matthews who lived at Yellow Hill (Wingert, 2016).

At York, the African warrior William C. Goodridge assisted other African warriors to liberation like he had done for himself at the age of sixteen from enslavement in Baltimore, Maryland. Upon gaining liberation, William C. Goodridge resided in New York where he worked as a barber and attended African rights conventions. Afterwards, he returned back to York in 1840 where he had once been used as enslaved labor for a tanner at the age of six. It is in York where Goodridge became a wealthy businessman that sold candy, household goods, medical supplies, and toys as well as owned a line of railroad cars that assisted African warriors to gaining liberation with assistance from the Africans Stephen Smith and William Whipper who also owned railroad cars and lumber businesses (Wingert, 2016). In addition, Goodridge owned the largest building in York

County, Centre Hall, that was five-stories tall and included a photographic studio (Wingert, 2018). His residence on 123 Philadelphia Street in York became a location to assist African warriors to liberation with the help from the liberated African teamster named Cato Jourdan who guided them to Columbia in his wagon (Wingert, 2016). At Columbia, Stephen Smith assisted African warriors to liberation. Stephen Smith originally resided in the township Paxtang located in Dauphin County as a enslaved Africa and was manumitted at the age of 28 where he began to work at a lumberyard in Columbia. At the age of ten, he witnessed an attempted kidnapping of his mother, who was enslaved, that was prevented by citizens of Columbia which inspired him to work and save money by buying and reselling lumber once he was manumitted to become of the wealthiest citizens in Columbia. Stephen Smith's wife also assisted in him accumulating wealth through her oyster and refreshment house. European American citizens in Columbia became jealous of Africans living prosperously and created anti-African mobs to break the windows of homes and commit violence against African communities in August 1834. On September, 2, 1834, another anti-African mob attacked Stephen Smith's Front Street office that caused him to eventually sell his lumber business and move to Philadelphia in 1842 (Wingert, 2018).

Similar to William C. Goodridge, John Peck was also an African barber and worked as an agent for the abolitionist newspapers *The Emancipator* and *Weekly Advocate*. John Peck also assisted African warriors with gaining liberation in Carlisle when he arrived there in 1821. Like other African barbers, the barbershop allowed for Peck to gather information he overheard from his customers to help African warriors.

Also, at his barbershop, he kept anti-enslavement literature such as that of the European American abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison's newspaper *The Liberator*. John Peck would later create the Carlisle Anti-Slavery Society and represented the society as a delegate at an 1837 convention in Harrisburg that assembled the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society (Wingert 2018). During that same year, John Peck moved to Pittsburgh and opened John C. Peck's Oyster House that became a part of the Underground Railroad. In addition, the over 300 Africans that worked at the European American owned hotel called Monongahela House in Pittsburgh would help African warriors gain liberation when enslavers brought them there to stay. The African workers at the hotel would hurry African warriors away to either John B. Vashon's City Baths or John Peck's Oyster House (Switala, 2008). It would be at Carlisle in June 1847 where liberated Africans would come to the courthouse to overtake enslavers and kidnapers with canes, clubs, and stones to prevent a three Africans from being forced into enslavement by Maryland kidnapers. The liberated Africans were able to assist two African warriors, a woman and ten year old child, during the melee in gaining liberation while the male African remained in custody. One of the enslavers, James Kennedy, was beaten so severely that he later died from his injuries (Wingert, 2016). Afterwards, 34 Africans were arrested, nine women and 25 men, on charges that ranged from assault to murder. Two months later, a jury found 13 of the African participants guilty and sentenced 11 of them to three years of solitary confinement at the Eastern Penitentiary in Philadelphia which was overturned by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court during the spring of 1848 (Delbanco, 2018). Another liberated African who assisted African warriors in gaining

liberation in Cumberland County through Shippensburg was George Cole as well as Henry Watson in Chambersburg. The liberated African Mike Buck, known for his gold earrings and bandana handkerchief, assisted African warriors in Lower Dickinson township that was southwest of Carlisle to the home of European American abolitionist Richard Woods. As a benefit, some of the African warriors who remained in Cumberland County were able to find equal wages to that of European Americans at eight dollars a month by working on the farm of Richard Woods (Wingert, 2016).

The increase in African enslavement during the late eighteenth century led to more Africans seeking liberation by fleeing plantations in south central Pennsylvania. The British forces promised freedom for enslaved Africans thus causing several of them to seek liberation by fighting for or joining British occupied areas of Pennsylvania colonies (Wingert, 2016). Thousands of Africans also fought for American forces during the Revolutionary War such as Edward Hector. Edward Hector was a native of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and took part in the Battle of Brandywine in September 1777 as a part of the Third Pennsylvania Artillery. He showcased valor when his regiment was ordered to pull back, and he defied the command and fought off British forces that saved an ammunition wagon (Brown, 1970). With an increase in demand for enslaved African labor, Africans in south central Pennsylvania were sold more often by enslavers through newspaper advertisements and private sales as well as the rare occasion by auction. One of the earliest surviving bills of sale dating back to November 1770 concerns a young African male named Pacoh who was enslaved by Robert Whitehill of East Pennsborough (modern day East Pennsboro), Cumberland County, for over ten

years. Not much is known about Pachoh, but Whitehill would later draft the Pennsylvania state constitution in 1776 as well as express dissent to the Federal Constitution which later influenced James Madison in the creation of the Bill of Rights (Wingert, 2016).

During the early 1760s, enslavers began to create advertisements in the newspaper *Pennsylvania Gazette* searching for Africans who had liberated themselves. These advertisements described the clothing, craft, languages, musical talents, names, overcame diseases, piercings, and skin color as well as African cultural facial markings of liberated Africans. African cultural facial markings were described in south central Pennsylvania advertisements as late as 1794. This is an indication that African cultural values remained relevant despite enslavement (Wingert, 2016). An African male warrior discussed often in advertisements from York County was named Moses Grimes. Asserting his own agency, Moses Grimes was the name he gave himself, and he was described in advertisements as five foot four and five inches, light skin complexion, bald, and age 29 the first time he gained liberation. Furthermore, he was described as being very religious, in which he participated in burials, church services as a preacher, and marriage ceremonies for Africans. Moses Grimes was also recorded in advertisements negatively that was often attributed to African warriors by enslavers who sought to discredit these individuals and labeled him as being dishonest and drunken. During his mid-twenties, he was imprisoned in York County in 1764 for traveling alone by horse and claiming to be liberated. No enslaver attempted to claim Grimes, indicating he was not lying, yet he remained jailed until being sold to an enslaver to pay his prison charges. In

March 1769, Grimes fled and gained liberation for the first time but was kidnapped shortly afterwards. He fled a different enslaver and gained liberation for the second time in July 1769 but was also kidnapped again momentarily. Moses Grimes gained liberation for the third time in May 1770 and was accompanied with another African only described as a “mason’s apprentice” (Wingert, 2016, p. 26). Grimes was kidnapped again in Philadelphia but gained liberation for the fourth time in November 1772 where it was believed he settled in Carlisle, Cumberland County, and remained liberated (Wingert, 2016). Moses Grimes’ resilience in gaining liberation is a testament to the courage and resilience of not only himself but other African warriors with similar stories who gained liberation before and after him in Pennsylvania and worldwide wherever African enslavement took place.

Due to the demand for enslaved African labor during the 1750s in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia enslavement ships began to kidnap Africans directly from Africa as well as the Caribbean (Wingert, 2016). The surge in African enslavement labor caused several Philadelphians to push back on the institution by blaming enslavement ships for deadly illnesses that took place at the time. In 1761, legislation was passed to appease those who blamed enslavement ships for illnesses which applied a ten pound payment for each enslaved African imported into the Pennsylvania colony; this increased to 20 pounds in 1773 (Wingert, 2016). From 1767 to 1775, historian Gary Nash estimates Philadelphia had about 1,000 enslaved Africans and came to this conclusion using burial and taxable property records (McDaniel, 2009). Burial records from 1767 also indicate

Philadelphia's European American population was 13-percent Quaker, and 17-percent of enslavers in the city were Quakers (McDaniel, 2009).

During the early 1700s, most residents of Chester County were European American farmers and artisans which included Anglicans, colonial settlers, Presbyterians, and Quakers as well as those who were not affiliated with any church (Russo, 2005). By the late 1700s, nineteen percent of European Americans in Chester County enslaved Africans. The wealthiest enslavers had five to ten enslaved Africans while others had one or two. In 1780, more than one-third of all enslaved Africans in Chester County lived in the area surrounding what would become Hinsonville—a nineteenth century community of liberated Africans where modern day Lincoln University is located. (Russo, 2005). Additionally, in 1780, Pennsylvania passed legislation that granted liberation to enslaved Africans brought into the state and resided there for more than six months though members of Congress were exempt from the legislation. The interpretation of the law, however, remained controversial for the next 40 years because the words “consecutive” and “continuous” were not used (Delbanco, 2018). A lawyer representing two enslaved African women, Magdalen and Zare, brought to Pennsylvania from Cape Francois, Saint Domingo (modern day Haiti) in the court case *Commonwealth v. Chambre* in 1794 argued the collective resided in Pennsylvania for five months and three weeks and were removed by the enslaver to avoid breaking the law. Because six months was not defined by the law, the lawyer argued Magdalen and Zare were liberated as a result of residing in Pennsylvania for six lunar months, but the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania did not agree.

Magdalen and Zare were to remain enslaved (*COM. OF PENNSYLVANIA V. CHAMBRE*, 4 U.S. 143 (1794)).

The tactic of removing enslaved Africans from Pennsylvania right before six months even if for one day was used by several enslavers including President George Washington who sought council on the matter from Attorney General Edmund Randolph, in which the latter was affected by the law when several Africans he claimed as an enslaver gained liberation (Delbanco, 2018). Others overtly ignored the law such as South Carolina Senator Pierce Butler who lived in Philadelphia over six months while enslaving an African man named Ben. Pierce Butler was served with a writ of habeas corpus to manumit Ben as a result of him residing in Pennsylvania for more than six months, but the Senator responded by saying “I am a citizen of South Carolina. The laws of Pennsylvania have nothing to do with me” (Delbanco, 2018, p. 91). The controversy surrounding the meaning of six months would not be resolved until the 1821 court case *Butler v. Delaplaine* which stated “continuous, day-to-day, residence for six calendar months” and warned enslavers against “fraudulent shuffling backwards and forwards” in and out of state to restart the six month period (Delbanco, 2018). During the court case, Thaddeus Stevens, who would later become a prominent European American abolitionist, argued on the behalf of an enslaver, John Delaplaine, that the female African warrior Charity Butler be returned to enslavement. Charity Butler had gained her liberation after being hired out as labor in Maryland and brought to Pennsylvania without consent from John Delaplaine. At the time of the court case, Charity Butler was married with two children, who were never enslaved, and was residing in Pennsylvania. This did not

matter to Pennsylvanian legislators because the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania ruled Charity Butler and her two children would be enslaved (Wright, 2018).

On March 1, 1780, the Pennsylvania legislature, several of the representatives being enslavers themselves, enacted a law for gradual liberation of enslaved Africans stating that children whose mothers were enslaved for life would be liberated at age 28 (Hine, 2014). The age stipulation was used as a tactic to appease and compensate enslavers for what they believed to be “nurture” (Wingert, 2016, p. 38). The law itself did not liberate any African immediately nor any African born before March 1, 1780. To enforce the law, enslavers were required to register all enslaved Africans to county clerks with information that included age, gender, name, and skin color and were charged a two-dollar fee per enslaved African registered. Not all enslaved Africans were listed for taxes by enslavers, especially children, as a part of loophole. This changed slightly in 1782 when all enslaved Africans above the age of 12 were to be taxed. The law for gradual liberation made it so all enslaved Africans were to be registered—even those not listed for taxation (Wingert, 2016). Any enslaved African not registered by November 1, 1780, was to be liberated unless he or she was brought into Pennsylvania by an enslaver out of state in which the law did not apply (Brown, 1970). Enslaved Africans born after March 1, 1780, were also to be registered with an amendment passed in 1788. Furthermore, the amendment made it illegal for enslavers to separate enslaved Africans by selling members of a family no more than ten miles from each other. Any enslaved African not registered was to be liberated. Despite this being the law, many enslavers at first did not register enslaved Africans and asked for amendments that extended registration to keep

Africans enslaved as well as created petitions (Wingert, 2016). In addition, some enslavers sent away pregnant enslaved African women temporarily to avoid children being born in Pennsylvania to gain the possibility of liberation which was outlawed with the 1788 amendment. Other enslavers such as those that resided in the Caribbean, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia purposely brought enslaved Africans to Pennsylvania to ensure they would be enslaved until the age of 28 as well as receive compensation for sales of Africans as the demand for enslaved African labor increased (Turner, 1911). Also, in 1788, several Black Codes were repealed including intermarriage between Africans and European Americans; however, enslaved Africans still could not testify in court against anyone considered a “freeman” (Brown, 1970, p. 8). In addition, any Pennsylvanian found guilty of participating in the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade was to be fined 1,000 pounds (Brown, 1970).

Regardless of the law, there still remained loopholes that kept Africans enslaved. For example, an enslaved African in the township of East Pennsborough located in Cumberland County with the enforced European name Chloe was never told by her enslavers of being able to be manumitted at age 28 despite her being born in December 1782. Throughout her young life, Chloe was sold to multiple enslavers throughout Pennsylvania and eventually returned back to East Pennsborough enslaved by Andrew Carothers whose wife, Mary, constantly whipped her. In response to the abuse and wanting liberation, Chloe attempted to burn the Carothers’ barn twice and was unsuccessful but did succeed in drowning two daughters of her enslaver. The first drowning was made to appear as an accident while the second one caused suspicion

resulting in the trial, conviction, and hanging of Chloe in 1801. As another example of an African seeking liberation in Cumberland County, an enslaved African with the enforced European name Nelly made claim that she should be manumitted because of the law created in 1780 that allowed for gradual liberation. Nelly's case went to the Supreme Court in 1823, in which she argued that her enslaved mother, Rachel, was registered incorrectly and was born in November 1780. At age 15, Rachel had given birth to Nelly in 1795. Nelly argued that Rachel should have gained liberation at age 28 as a result of the law while she herself should be liberated as well because of the gradual liberation legislation. However, the Supreme Court ruled Rachel was not registered incorrectly, and Nelly remained enslaved. In 1826, the court declared that only children of mothers who were enslaved for life could gain liberation at age 28 (Wingert, 2016). Prior, Pennsylvania legislators ruled in 1816 that African warrior mothers that gained liberation in Pennsylvania prior to becoming pregnant would consider children that were birthed afterwards to be liberated (Turner, 1911).

The passing of gradual liberation in Pennsylvania led to the increase of African warriors seeking liberation in the state from enslavement southern states. Many of whom were not married and young males in their teens and twenties from Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia (Kashatus, 2002). When legislation was passed for gradual liberation in 1780, the average enslaved African in Cumberland County was age 17. The oldest male enslaved African, with the enforced European name Sharper, was 70, and the oldest female enslaved African, with the enforced European American name Chloe, was 60. Commonly enforced European female names on record were Bett, Betty, Dinah, Fanny,

Hannah, Jude, Luce, Lucy, Nance, Nancy, Patience, Pegg, Pleasant, Prudence, Venus, and Violet. For males, commonly enforced European names on record were Ben, Bob, Cato, Cesar, Dick, Hercules, Julius, Paris, Pomp, Pompey, Prince, Sambo, Sampson, Tim, and Tom. Eight percent of enslaved Africans in Cumberland County were given the title captain, colonel, esquire, general, reverend, or sheriff. An estimated 71-percent of enslaved Africans in Cumberland County were enslaved by farmers and millers, seven-percent by artisans, and three percent by merchants and shopkeepers (Wingert, 2016). Only some wealthy Pennsylvania enslavers liberated enslaved Africans after the passing of gradual liberation while others used them as indentured servants or moved to states where enslavement was legal. However, several Africans from western Virginia liberated themselves by fleeing to western Pennsylvania and settled in locations such as Fayette County and Erie County upon learning of gradual liberation being permitted in the state (Blockson, 2001). Gradual liberation in Pennsylvania did not result in less enactment of laws used to oppress Africans. The creation of the United States Constitution at the Philadelphia Convention in 1787 allowed for the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade to continue in the country until 1808. The Constitution also established the Three-Fifths Compromise which allowed for three out of every five enslaved Africans to be counted in state populations for the purpose of taxation and representation in the House of Representatives.

On April 12, 1787, the African warriors Absalom Jones and Richard Allen established the one of the first African organizations—the Free African Society. The organization was created to provide mutual aid such as assistance for widows and

orphans, funeral services, medical care, and religious services for Africans. Members of the Free African Society contributed monetarily per month to help provide aid. Absalom Jones was enslaved when born in Sussex County, Delaware, in 1746. Although Absalom Jones labored in fields and as a domestic, he learned how to read and saved money to purchase a Bible. Later, his enslaver brought Absalom Jones to Philadelphia to labor as a porter where he learned to write and cipher. Through saving money and having assistance from Quakers, he was able to gain liberation for himself and his wife and later purchase a home. Richard Allen was also enslaved when born in Philadelphia in 1760. Shortly after birth, he was enslaved in Dover, Delaware, where he labored and saved money to gain liberation. Upon gaining liberation, Richard Allen returned back to the Philadelphia area to work as an itinerant preacher, teamster, and woodcutter.

As a result of creating the Free African Society, similar societies were created in northern states. In addition, the establishment of the society led to Absalom Jones forming the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas and Richard Allen installing Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1794. Both churches were erected in Philadelphia and needed for Africans residing in the city because several of its members, including Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, left St. George's Methodist Church after being interrupted during prayer and directed to move to the rear of the balcony by its European American members (Brown, 1970). The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas became the first African episcopal parish in the United States of America, and Absalom Jones was regarded as the first African ordained priest in the country (Blockson, 2001). In 1799, Jones and his congregation established a school where he taught

which lead to the opening of another school by Africans that was non-sectarian shortly before 1805 (Turner, 1911). Meanwhile, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church became the first African methodist church in the United States of America, and Richard Allen would later become the first African bishop in the country as well as of the Christian denomination African Methodist Episcopal Church that was formed in 1816 (Brown, 1970). African churches not only served religious purposes but also were locations for creating publishing companies such as the A.M.E. Book Concern for its members to protest against African enslavement and gain support for African businesses, discussing politics and social reform, education, recreation, and Underground Railroad activity (Blockson, 2001).

After the ratification of the United States Constitution in 1788, Philadelphia was used as the temporary capital of the United States of America during the 1790s. In 1791, Congress passed a law that excluded Africans and Native Americans from serving in peacetime militias. Two years later, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 was enacted by Congress and criminalized the harboring of an enslaved African or the prevention of his or her arrest (Smith, 2001). The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 made it law that enslaved Africans remained enslaved even past state lines as well as detailed the process in court for enslavers and kidnappers employed by enslavers in abducting Africans which, oftentimes, included those who were liberated. To make a claim, enslavers and kidnappers were to appear in front of a federal judge or city, county, or town magistrate and declare the person kidnapped as a “fugitive” (Wingert, 2016, p. 77). To combat against liberated Africans being kidnapped, the Pennsylvania legislature passed a

personal liberty law in 1826 that created penalties for committing the act. In addition, an enslaver could be charged with court expenses and had to provide more details for an African accused of being a fugitive such as a legal affidavit proving enslavement; however, the law did not stop the kidnapping of liberated Africans. The creation of the personal liberty law was in response to five African boys that were kidnapped in 1825 from docks located in Philadelphia and sold into enslavement in Georgia and Mississippi (Delbanco, 2018). Four of the five boys, Alex Manlove, age eight; Cornelius Sinclair, age 10; Enos Tilghman, age ten; and Joe Johnson, age 14 or 15, were born liberated Africans while Sam Scomp, age 15, had recently liberated himself from enslavement in New Jersey. The five young Africans were deceived into boarding a ship because the African kidnapper John Purnell, who the boys referred to as John Smith, convinced them they would be paid more than their usual payment for working aboard the vessel. Unknowingly to them, John Purnell was a part of the kidnapping crew run by European American Joseph Johnson that seized the five young Africans (Masad, 2019).

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 was created as a result of the enslaved African John Davis. John Davis was enslaved in northwest Virginia, but the area became a part of Washington County, Pennsylvania, in 1779. After gradual liberation was passed the following year, John Davis was supposed to be registered by his enslaver, but that never occurred as most enslavers along the Virginia border of Pennsylvania ignored the legislation. In 1788, John Davis was hired out for labor by his enslaver and was taken to Ohio County, Virginia (modern day West Virginia), where he traveled back and forth between Pennsylvania and Virginia. Abolitionists learned of John Davis never being

registered and argued he was liberated as a result and was brought to Pennsylvania to permanently reside. However, John Davis was assaulted and kidnapped by three bounty hunters and was forced back to Virginia. The bounty hunters were recruited by the man who hired out John Davis as a result of fear in being responsible for compensation to the enslaver of John Davis. A Pennsylvania grand jury indicted the three kidnapers in November 1788 on charges of assault and kidnapping, but none of them appeared in court to face the charges. As a result, the focus became whether the three kidnapers were to be prosecuted rather than the rights of John Davis as a liberated African. To resolve the issue, the Fugitive Slave Act was signed into law on February 12, 1793, by President George Washington. The law did not guarantee legal counsel for Africans, legal counsel to speak in defense of Africans, or for Africans to be tried by a jury of their peers. This allowed liberated Africans to be kidnapped and enslaved more easily. Thus, John Davis remained enslaved in Virginia even though he had gained liberation in accordance with Pennsylvania law, and his kidnapers were never prosecuted (Delbanco, 2018).

Liberated Africans who belonged to the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery (Pennsylvania Abolition Society) in Adams County, Chester County, Lancaster County, and York County opposed the kidnappings of Africans and sought to prevent them from taking place (Wingert, 2016). Later, in Adams County, liberated Africans who were members of St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal Church located on Breckenridge Street and Washington Street would create what was named the Slave's Refuge Society. The society also opposed kidnappings of Africans and supported the

liberation of African warriors. The founding members of the society included Henry Butler, Henry Chiler, James Cameron, James Jones, and John Jones (Wingert, 2018). In 1799, 74 liberated Africans in Philadelphia protested against the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 (Turner, 1911). A year later, in 1800, liberated Africans in Philadelphia petitioned for African enslavement to end by offering to have a tax levied against themselves to compensate enslavers monetarily but was of no avail. Kidnappings of Africans in Philadelphia increased during the early 1800s as a direct result of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 being passed into legislation. Attempted kidnappings also took place in other parts of Pennsylvania, especially near the Mason-Dixon Line, such as in West Nottingham, Chester County, in which an attempted kidnapping took place in 1801 (Turner, 1911).

Edward Turner estimates that by the end of the eighteenth century into the nineteenth century the number of enslaved Africans decreased in Pennsylvania each passing decade with estimates at 3,737 in 1790, 1,706 in 1800, 795 in 1810, 211 in 1820, 67 in 1830, and 64 in 1840. Turner notes that the United States Census listed the number of enslaved Africans at 386 in 1830 which caused alarm with an increase from the previous decade that led to the creation of a committee by the Senate. According to Turner, the committee determined United States officers who conducted the census had been careless and reported a false number; however, it is not known the exact number of enslaved Africans within Pennsylvania because enslavers throughout the state's period of enslavement did not register all enslaved Africans (Turner, 1911). Enslaved Africans were not accounted for in the United States Census Reports for Pennsylvania after 1840,

but enslavement still continued on in the state. For instance, an enslaver in Lancaster County continued enslavement of an unnamed male African until 1860 (Turner, 1911).

From 1800 to 1860, Pennsylvania, especially Philadelphia, was a destination for African warriors seeking liberation from southern states. From 1820 to 1839, it is estimated 110 African warriors resided in Chester County ranging in age from two to 65. These African warriors had gained liberation for themselves from Delaware, Maryland, Mississippi, and Virginia. Most of them were male, in their twenties, and had gained liberation primarily from enslavement in Maryland. Some gained liberation alone while others were couples or a part of larger groups (Smedley, 2005). Although African warriors gained liberation in Pennsylvania, the area was still dangerous for kidnappings of Africans. As written by James Pembroke, a male African warrior who gained liberation from enslavement at Maryland's Eastern Shore and settled first in Adams County, Pennsylvania, in 1828, "There was no safety in Pennsylvania...for a fugitive, except in lurking-places, or under the care of judicious friends, who could be entrusted not only with liberty, but also life itself" (Wingert, 2016, p. 97). While living in Adams County for six months, James Pembroke learned to read and write. Later, he changed his name to James William Charles Pennington and resided in Philadelphia as well as eventually became the first African to attend Yale University (Wingert, 2016).

In 1800, it was estimated 4,210 liberated Africans resided in Philadelphia, and that amount increased to 10,736 by 1850 (Hine, 2014). Education was important for liberated Africans in Philadelphia and establishments such as debating societies, libraries, and schools were created by themselves during the early nineteenth century. Home

ownership was also important as Africans that owned homes accounted for eight percent of the African population in the city by 1847 (Turner, 1911). As a result of liberated Africans rising in population, Pennsylvania attempted to legislate in 1813 a requirement that all liberated Africans within the state to register and carry a pass to prevent Africans who sought liberation from the South entrance into the state. The liberated African James Forten, who was residing in Philadelphia as a wealthy entrepreneur, along with other Africans contended the legislation was a violation of the Constitution. As a result of them speaking out along with Quaker abolitionists, the law was not passed (Asante, 2002). Forten also assisted in organizing the Convention of Free Negroes at Philadelphia in 1830 that was against colonization to Africa and supported the abolition of African enslavement and granting of Africans as citizens of the United States of America. Like other liberated Africans in northern states such as William Whipper, Forten was against colonization to Africa for liberated Africans proposed by the American Colonization Society when it was founded in 1816. Whipper even went as far as suggesting at the 1835 Negro Convention the word “African” be removed from the names of churches, lodges, schools, societies, and other institutions (Anadolu-Okur, 2016, p. 118). Although Forten was against colonization to Africa, he did believe Haiti was a better location to emigrate for Africans because it was a “symbol of black nationalism” (Switala, 2008, p. 9). Forten was also the founder and continuing President of the American Moral Reform Society that was made up of African males who supported “Education, Temperance, Economy, and Universal Liberty” (Brown, 1970, p. 18). In addition, he was a supporter of the nineteenth century peace movement and women’s rights (Brown, 1970). James

Forten's wife, Charlotte, along with their three daughters Harriet, Margaretta, and Sarah also assisted in demanding African rights during the nineteenth century. Altogether, the Forten family assisted in creating six abolitionist organizations, including the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society established in 1833 (PBS Online, 2021).

Not all organizations created by liberated Africans focused solely on abolishing African enslavement including the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society which also emphasized education for the youth and the purchase and use of produce not made by enslaved African labor. African societies that supported produce not made by enslaved African labor were established as early as 1830 when 230 African males signed the constitution of the Colored Men's Free Produce Society of Pennsylvania. Afterwards, the Colored Female's Free Produce Society of Pennsylvania was created in 1831. These African societies continued to spread across eastern cities within the United States of America and created grocery stores that sold only produce not created by enslaved African labor. European American Quakers in Chester County and Lancaster County also established such societies (McDaniel, 2009). In 1818, liberated Africans from Philadelphia formed the Pennsylvania Augustine Society to educate all Africans (Smith, 2001). The Institute for Colored Youth, later renamed Cheyney University, was also established in the city to train African teachers in 1837 (Blockson, 2001). Africans in Pittsburgh, lead by John B. Vashon and Reverend Lewis Woodson, formed the African Education Society to educate Africans of all ages in 1832. Reverend Lewis Woodson settled in Pittsburgh in 1815 and shortly afterwards established Bethel A.M.E. Church which was the first African church west of the Allegheny Mountains. In addition, it was a

part of the Underground Railroad and its members assisted African warriors in gaining liberation. On October 4, 1833, Vashon would also organize the Anti-Slavery Society of Pittsburgh that would assist African warriors gain liberation as a part of the Underground Railroad. During the same year, he would open the first bathhouse in western Pennsylvania called City Baths as well as a barbershop named Shaving, Hair Dressing, and Fancy Establishment. A few years later, the first newspaper owned and operated by an African in Pittsburgh, *The Mystery*, would publish its first paper in 1843 (Switala, 2008). The newspaper was owned by the pupil of John B. Vashon and would later be considered “the father of black nationalism”—Martin Delany (Blockson, 2001, p. 224). From 1847 to 1849, Martin Delany would join the African warrior Frederick Douglass in publishing the abolitionist newspaper called *The North Star*. Delany was also a supporter of liberated Africans in the United States of America emigrating to Canada, Central America, and South America. During the Civil War, he would become the first African to be appointed to the rank of major in the United States Army (Blockson, 2001).

By 1838, Africans associated with Bethel A.M.E. Church located within the borough of Carlisle in Cumberland County established a society to promote the abolition of African enslavement as well as teach children. Africans within Carlisle also organized the Toussaint L’Ouverture Club—named after one of the leaders of the Haitian Revolution. The club partook in political and social events as well as the Underground Railroad (Blockson, 2001). Similarly, Africans located near Coatesville in Chester County named its community Hayti in honor of Haiti which was the first country where enslaved Africans successfully liberated themselves through armed resistance and

established an independent nation (Blockson, 1975). However, the Pennsylvania legislature continued to revoke the rights of Africans during the nineteenth century when in 1838 it voted 77 to 45 to not allow liberated African men the right to vote. Pennsylvanians then ratified the legislation with a vote of 113,971 to 112,759 (Hine, 2014). This was a result of Africans in Bucks County being accused of throwing a local election to the Whig Party that was contested by the Democratic Party and taken to court where it was argued Africans were not “freemen” and had no right to vote (Brown, 1970, p. 22).

Another liberated African, Robert Purvis, the son-in-law of James Forten and also a wealthy entrepreneur, professed the law as an act of racism by the Pennsylvania legislature to gain the favor of enslavement states and warned at a large meeting on March 14, 1838, in the written document *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens*, “No amendments of the present Constitution can compensate for the conversion into enemies of 40,000 friends” (Asante, 2002, p. 183). The 40,000 friends mentioned by Purvis were in reference to the number of liberated Africans residing in Pennsylvania at the time. Despite the warning by Purvis, liberated Africans were disenfranchised and would not regain the right to vote in Pennsylvania until 1870 with the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment which continued to exclude females (Asante, 2002). Purvis was an instrumental leader for Africans during the early nineteenth century serving as a Chairman of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee, charter member and President of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, President of the Philadelphia Underground Railroad, and served on the executive committee and later as President and Vice President of the

American Anti-Slavery Society (Brown, 1970). Robert Purvis remained a member and officer of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society as one of its few African contributors even after its participants diminished after a meeting held at the Friends' Meeting House in Kennett Square, Chester County, in 1845 (Brown, 1970). In 1833, he served as corresponding Secretary and Vice President of the Colored Convention Movement that was established in Philadelphia in 1830 by liberated Africans and met annually for five years to discuss abolishing African enslavement (Blockson, 2001). Liberated Africans also would hold the first state convention in Pittsburgh in August 1841 with 147 representatives. From 1841 to 1847, liberated Africans created the Citizens Union of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with a purpose to "obtain for colored people of the State all the Rights and Immunities of Citizenship" (Blockson, 2001, p. 48).

During the early nineteenth century, Africans continually experienced violence as a result of European and European American fear and racism. As abolitionism spread throughout Pennsylvania and the United States of America, European and European American antipathy also increased that led to a multitude of Africans needing to resist in defense of their communities and themselves. Oftentimes, these were labeled by Europeans and European Americans as riots carried out by Africans, but Africans were not the aggressors committing rampage and were instead defending themselves against genocide. At York City in York County in 1803, Africans set fire to buildings in protest of the arrest and imprisonment of several African women who were accused of attempting to poison two European American women. As a result of the fires, 21 Africans were tried and some sent to prison for arson (Blockson, 2001). Although it was

a northern city, Philadelphia, known as “the City of Brotherly Love,” had more acts of violence carried out by Europeans and European Americans against Africans than any other city in the country during the first half of the nineteenth century. Africans suffered random acts of violence that went unpunished from European and European Americans within the city such as a woman being stoned to death in 1819, a stampede taking place at an African church that led to several deaths as a result of suffocating fumes from pepper thrown into a stove in 1825, and a young boy’s legs being cast into boiling water in 1850. As custom during the nineteenth century, European Americans clubbed and stoned Africans on the Fourth of July to drive them away from Independence Square (modern day Independence Hall) because Africans were told they had no part in the founding of the United States of America (Turner, 1911).

Large scale acts of violence by European and European American mobs caused Africans within Philadelphia to suffer from genocide in what has been termed by historians as “riots” in 1820, 1829, 1834, 1835, 1838, 1842, and 1849 (Hine, 2014). On August 12, 1834, an anti-African mob of 500 European Americans attacked an African community located at the Moyamensing district within the city. For three days, the mob looted and burned the African community that included several churches because of a dispute that took place at a carousel house called the Flying Horses that resulted in the structure also being burned down. The mob killed one African male and injured several (Anadolu-Okur, 2016). In October 1834, 45 homes of Africans were also destroyed by anti-African mobs (Jackson, 2019). On May 17, 1838, European American anti-African mobs burned down Pennsylvania Hall shortly after its first meeting that was built by

abolitionists as a place to speak out against African enslavement and discuss economic, political, and social reform. Pennsylvania Hall was burned down not only as a result of racism but also because European American women were allowed to speak to a room with both Africans and European Americans present and the belief European American women were walking arm and arm with African men (Brown, 1970). In addition, the anti-African mob burned down a building that housed the abolitionist newspaper the *Public Ledger*, an African church, the Shelter for Colored Orphans, and Thirteenth Street and Callowhill Street (Blockson, 2001). Another anti-African mob, consisting primarily of Irish immigrants, in 1842 committed violence against Africans who belonged to a temperance society. The Africans of the society defended themselves with muskets, and the anti-African mob retaliated by burning and looting Philadelphia's leading African neighborhood that included the burning down of two African churches (Hine, 2014). Afterwards, a grand jury would blame the Africans for erecting a temperance hall and causing the violence that was stated to be torn down by "commissioners" and not an anti-African mob (Brown, 1970, p. 28). The destruction that took place caused Robert Purvis to leave Philadelphia and reside at his farm in Byberry, Bucks County (Switala, 2008). For other Africans, the violence by anti-African mobs caused them to move closer to African neighborhoods as a display of solidarity which was the case for the Fortens (Anadolu-Okur, 2016). Violence toward Africans by anti-African mobs would also occur in Boston, New York, and Pittsburgh during the nineteenth century (Jackson, 2019).

Additionally, in 1842, an important United States Supreme Court decision was made that negatively affected African warriors known as *Prigg v. Pennsylvania*. It would

be the first of its kind that became a United States Supreme Court case. Because Pennsylvania passed a personal liberty law in 1826, it purposely created conflict with the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. The state law declared enslavers could be responsible for court expenses while the federal law expressed penalties to be enforced on those who hindered African warriors that gained liberation from being returned to enslavement. The conflict between federal and state law came to a head when the African warrior Margaret Morgan gained liberation in Pennsylvania from Maryland in 1832. While in Pennsylvania, she joined her husband in being liberated and gave birth to several children. However, a European American female enslaver from Maryland attempted to re-enslave Margaret Morgan and enslave her children under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 and hired an attorney named Edward Prigg to kidnap them after he could not obtain a warrant from a Pennsylvania justice. Prigg was successful in the kidnapping but was arrested and convicted for the crime by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. However, on March 1, 1842, the United States Supreme Court ruled the Pennsylvania personal liberty law to be unconstitutional. It also declared that no state law could hinder African warriors from being returned to enslavement, but state government officials did not have to participate in the process. This made it possible for Pennsylvania and other northern states to pass more personal liberty laws that forbade state government officials from participating in kidnappings of Africans. Unfortunately, it is not known what happened to Margaret Morgan and her children after the court decision (Delbanco, 2018).

It was not until 1847 when Pennsylvania abolished African enslavement completely by law even though it continued on within the state. Enslavers in Maryland

and Virginia seeking to live in Pennsylvania continued to find ways around the law by changing the status of enslaved Africans to indentured servants which was still legal in Pennsylvania (Wingert, 2016). This created fear amongst African warriors who had gained liberation and resided in Pennsylvania that their children would become indentured servants and be treated to the same atrocities that were associated with African enslavement. Nonetheless, African warriors still continued to seek liberation in Pennsylvania such as the acclaimed Henry “Box” Brown who on March 23, 1849, had himself shipped from Richmond, Virginia, to the office of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia in a box labeled “dry goods” (Delbanco, 2018, p. 215). He was assisted by the liberated Africans James A. Smith in Richmond and William Still in Philadelphia. William Still was the youngest of 18 children raised by his father and mother who were African warriors that gained liberation for themselves from Maryland and settled in New Jersey. During his early twenties, he moved to Philadelphia and became one of the most successful abolitionists in assisting African warriors gain liberation (Brown, 1970).

Once the box containing Henry Brown was shipped, William Still and other abolitionists awaited his arrival. According to Brown’s account to Still, the two foot eight inches deep, two foot wide, and three foot long box held Henry Brown for 26 hours before he emerged as a liberated African. With the success of Brown gaining liberation, James A. Smith attempted to assist in liberating two more Africans from enslavement using the same tactic for Henry Brown, but the popularity of Brown’s story caused kidnappers to be more alert. Thus, Smith’s attempts at trying to liberate more Africans by

having them shipped in a box failed, and he was subsequently arrested, convicted, and sentenced to eight years in prison for assisting African warriors in gaining liberation (Switala, 2008). Afterwards, Brown would tour New England as an orator and singer but would be severely beaten in Providence, Rhode Island, after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 which caused him to flee to England and remain there until 1875 where he continued as a public performer (Delbanco, 2018). The United States Congress continued to make life difficult for Africans across the country when it strengthened the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 with the Compromise of 1850 that included the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (Wingert, 2016). The act made it mandatory that state government officials were to return African warriors who had gained liberation from enslavement back into bondage. In addition, African warriors were not permitted to testify in their own trials and held anyone responsible for “knowingly and willingly” hindering, obstructing, or preventing as well as concealing or harboring African warriors with legal action that would result in a 1,000-dollar fine and six months in prison (Wingert, 2016, p. 118). The passing of this legislation had great impact on all Africans throughout the United States of America, especially within African communities near the Mason-Dixon Line in Chester County and the surrounding area. This led to the creation of a battleground “in a borderland between two nations pretending to be one” (Delbanco, 2018, p. 100).

## **CHAPTER FIVE AFRICAN AGENCY FROM 1850 TO 1865**

### **African Agency And The Fugitive Slave Act Of 1850**

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, The United States of America continued to expand west towards the Pacific Ocean. This expansion created dissension amongst northern legislators and southern legislators in the Senate as to whether African enslavement would be legalized in western territories added to the United States or not. In 1820, The Missouri Compromise attempted to resolve the issue in the Senate between northern legislators and southern legislators by allowing Maine to become a state within the United States under the condition it outlawed African enslavement while Missouri would become a state that legalized African enslavement. However, southern legislators continued to desire the expansion of African enslavement into western territories acquired as a result of the Mexican-American War that lasted from 1846 to 1848, in which the United States gained land almost one third the size of the country today that included the modern day states of Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and western Colorado. In 1848, legislation attempted to keep African enslavement outlawed from the newly acquired western lands, but it was not passed. For those who resided in the territory of modern day California, they wanted to become a part of the United States only if African enslavement was outlawed which caused southern Senators to be displeased (Asante, 2002). By January 1850, a proposal for the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was initiated by Virginia Senator James Mason as it was estimated 1,000 African warriors were gaining liberation from enslavement states per year (Jackson, 2019). His

reasoning for introducing the legislation was to further implement more than the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 had been able to accomplish in the third clause of the second section fourth article of the Constitution of the United States that read:

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.  
(Delbanco, 2018, p. 19)

To resolve the issue in the Senate, the Compromise of 1850 was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Millard Fillmore. The compromise allowed California to become a state in the United States under the condition it outlawed African enslavement; citizens within the western territories gained from the Mexican-American War to decide on whether to legalize African enslavement through local referendum; African enslavement to continue in Washington D.C. but outlawed the sale of Africans there from and after January 1, 1851; and the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 to be passed (Asante, 2002).

When the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, also known as the “Bloodhound Bill” by Africans, was legalized, it created a danger for all Africans in the country (Asante, 2002). Southern legislators were proponents of the law because of the increase in African warriors gaining liberation from enslavement as well as the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 being ineffective against northern communities refusing to institute it. By the mid-nineteenth century, northern states had legalized personal liberty laws that made it illegal for state law enforcement officers to assist in kidnapping African warriors. African vigilance committees had also been created by the mid-nineteenth century to combat the

Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 and assist African warriors in gaining liberation (Hine, 2014). Out of all state populations, Pennsylvania had the highest number of African warriors as residents during the nineteenth century (Jackson, 2019). The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 as a federal laws took precedence over state personal liberty laws and required citizens of the United States as well as marshals and their deputies to assist in returning African warriors who had gained liberation back to enslavement. In addition, the federal legislation denied African warriors the right to a jury trial as well as the risk of fines and penalties imposed on individuals who aided in African warriors gaining liberation from enslavement. The maximum fine for individuals who aided African warriors was 1,000-dollars as well as an additional 1,000-dollars in civil damages for each African warrior assisted to be paid to an enslaver while the maximum prison time was six months (Smith, 2001). Non-consenting individuals who allowed African warriors to escape during a kidnapping also faced additional fines (Jackson, 2019). Moreover, the federal treasury favored claimants who brought to court Africans alleged to be “fugitives” (Slaughter, 1991, p. x). If the federal commissioner believed the claimant, then the commissioner received a ten-dollar compensation; however, if the commissioner believed the African warrior, then the commissioner only received a five-dollar compensation. The reasoning behind the discrepancy in recompense was because there involved additional paperwork when Africans had a ruling in their favor which created bribery against Africans. This type of discrepancy allowed for an unfair balance of justice in favor of the claimant (Slaughter, 1991). Africans were also denied the right to habeas corpus, in which they could not testify in their own defense. Additionally, courts did not allow any evidence to

be presented that proved liberation unless it was emancipation papers signed by a former enslaver (Delbanco, 2018). However, claimants could hire agents and attorneys to represent them in court as well as collect depositions and witnesses who were sometimes reimbursed for their expenses and time. A claimant could also have an African warrior delivered by federal officers to an enslaver's home out of fear of an attempt at liberation (Diggins, 2015). In addition, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 made all Africans vulnerable to being kidnapped and enslaved, especially those of a younger age because of their higher value to enslavers, even if liberated which led to thousands of Africans leaving the United States for other countries like Canada that had outlawed enslavement in 1834 to avoid kidnapers. During the 1850s, it is estimated 15,000 Africans crossed the Canadian border seeking liberation (McDaniel, 2009). It is also estimated a total of 30,000 to 40,000 Africans resided in Canada altogether by the 1850s with almost 2,000 living in the area of Chatham (Forbes, 1998). Just outside of Chatham in Raleigh Township, Kent County, was the Buxton (modern day North Buxton) settlement that was established in 1849 by a European American enslaver from Louisiana named William King and overseen by the Elgin Association. Originally, Buxton was where King sent the formerly enslaved Africans he emancipated, in which the settlement was promoted in England, Ireland, and Scotland to solicit funds as a place for African "moral and social improvement" to prove Africans could support themselves without enslavers (Forbes, 1998, p. 231). The area of Buxton was 9,000 acres divided into farms that were 50 acres a piece valued at two-dollars per acre that was paid in ten equal payments with a six-cent interest rate. The Africans there prided themselves on being self-sufficient and received

no free grants of land, farming equipment, or money from anyone outside of the settlement, especially European Americans. The citizens of Buxton even condemned the raising of funds for African warriors within the community by abolitionists that was referred to as “begging” because it took away from the concept of being self-sufficient and liberated (Forbes, 1998, p. 236). By 1852, there were 70 African families there totaling in 400 residents and 50 houses as well as an additional 25 African families that purchased land adjoining Buxton. The Civil War and emancipation of Africans in the United States caused the population of Buxton to decrease; however, Buxton continued to thrive as an African community even after the Elgin Association dissolved in 1873 (Forbes, 1998). The amount of Africans warriors present in Canada strained the diplomatic relationship between it and the United States because the former would not assist enslavers in kidnapping African warriors and returning them back to enslavement (Jackson, 2019). The abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* reported that by September 25, 1850, 100 African warriors left Pittsburgh for Canada with another 200 leaving by October 1850. The African warriors left for Canada in small groups armed with bowie knives, rifles, and revolvers willing to kill any kidnapper while seeking liberation (Blockson, 2001). Africans who were members of a community named “Liberia” (modern day Sandy Lake) on Freedom Road in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, were also a part of the mass exodus of Africans to Canada as a result of the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (Blockson, 2001). The impact of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 on African communities was felt throughout the South. Within the first 15 months of the act being passed, 84 Africans were remanded, and after ten years of the

act's passing, 332 Africans were enslaved as a result of it. There were only 11 African warriors ruled in favor of by a federal commissioner within the ten years of the law being passed (Slaughter, 1991).

With the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, it immediately impacted all Africans in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area because of the proximity of the Mason-Dixon Line and made it necessary for armed resistance to increase. The Mason-Dixon Line was considered the boundary that separated the North from the South leading up to and during the Civil War, especially when Pennsylvania abolished African enslavement in 1847 while Maryland continued the atrocity (*Slavery in the North, Washington, and Oney Judge*). As a result, Chester County and the surrounding area became a prime target by Maryland enslavers, United States Marshals, and gangs to kidnap Africans (Russo, 2005). In response to the legalization of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Martin Delany, who belonged to an African secret organization that assisted African warriors known as the Philanthropic Society with members that included John B. Vashon, John Peck, and a minister named Lewis Woodson in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, wrote:

My colored brethren, if you have not swords, I say to you, sell your garments and buy one...They said that they cannot take us back to the South; but I say, under the present law they can; and now they say unto you; let them take only dead bodies...I would, my friends, advise you to show a front to our tyrants and arm yourselves...and I would advise the women to have their knives too. (Hine, 2014, p. 199)

On September 30, 1850, the newspaper *Pittsburgh Gazette* published that Martin Delany had delivered a speech in response to the legalization of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 to

a group of esteemed European Americans in Allegheny City (modern day Pittsburgh) and stated:

Honorable, Mayor...I have therein learned that a man has a right to defend his castle with his life, even unto that taking of life. Sir, my home is my castle, in that castle are none but my wife, and my children, as free as the angels of heaven, and whose liberty is as sacred as the pillars of God. If any man approaches that house in search of a slave...if he crosses the threshold of my door, and I do not lay him a lifeless corpse at my feet, I hope the grave may refuse my body a resting place and righteous Heaven, my spirit a home. No! He cannot enter that house and we both live.  
(Blockson, 2001, pp. 225-226)

As a result of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 being passed, Martin Delany endorsed the emigration of Africans from the United States even more stating it as “absolutely necessary” for political elevation in his 1852 publication *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States* (Delbanco, 2018, p. 8). In 1854, he would restate his position on emigration at the National Emigration Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, and published his manifesto “The Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent” which encouraged Africans to relocate to the Caribbean or South America rather than collaborate with European American abolitionists to end enslavement in the United States (Jackson, 2019). By 1856, Martin Delany resided in Chatham, Canada, and held there the second National Emigration Convention and third National Emigration Convention in 1858. At the third convention, Delany and others formulated proposals for Africans living in the United States to immigrate to Africa. The African William Howard Day served as President while Isaac D. Shadd, son of the Chester County African abolitionist Abraham Shadd, was Vice President of the third convention (Forbes, 1998). The African warrior and minister Henry

Highland Garnet also supported emigration prior to and even more so after the legalization of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 writing to the African warrior Frederick Douglass in 1848, “I would rather see a man free in Liberia than a slave in the United States” (Delbanco, 2018, p. 230). By 1850, Henry Highland Garnet had immigrated to England (Forbes, 1998).

Prior to Martin Delany’s speech, *The North Star*, a newspaper Delany joined from 1847 to 1849 with Frederick Douglass, published on July 11, 1850, a group of Africans gathered at Wylie African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church to create resolutions and denounce the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. In addition, the Africans agreed to consolidate their associations to protect Africans from being kidnapped in the Pittsburgh area making the city one of the most active stations on the Underground Railroad in western Pennsylvania (Blockson, 2001). According to the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, one such kidnapping took place in February 1853 when an African named Joseph Walker abducted a young African girl, gave her to a former enslaver, and robbed her of seven-dollars. The Africans of the community were infuriated and sent a letter to Walker demanding he leave the city, but he ignored the warning and remained there. Walker was then apprehended late at night by a group of Africans who placed a bag over his head, brought him about a mile outside of the city, and severely whipped him in a forested area. During the incident, Joseph Walker heard the names Dimmey and Green that lead to a man named Robert Green being arrested for assault and battery and held on 100-dollars bail. It is unknown what became of Robert Green, but the incident serves as an example of

how Africans risked their lives and freedom to protect each other even against other Africans who betrayed the community (Jackson, 2019).

Businesses that were a part of the Underground Railroad in Pittsburgh included John B. Vashon's City Baths located between Ferry Street and Market Street, John C. Peck's Oyster House located on Market Street, and the hotels Monongahela House and Merchant Hotel (Blockson, 2001). Avery Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church located at Avery Street and Nash Street was also a part of the Underground Railroad in the city. It is believed hundreds of African warriors hid at the church before moving onto a tunnel in the basement that lead to a canal where they then boarded a boat on the Allegheny River to continue their journey to liberation. Other African warriors hid at the homes Africans in the African section of Pittsburgh known as Arthurville and Hayti (modern day Lower Hill). Like the town in Coatesville, Chester County, with the same name, there were several African communities that were named Hayti within the United States in honor of the country Haiti and its revolution that had worldwide impact. Africans that used their homes as a part of the Underground Railroad in Pittsburgh included Bishop Benjamin Tanner, George Gardner, Minister Lewis Woodson, and Samuel Bruce. Bishop Benjamin Tanner's wife, Elizabeth Miller, was an African warrior who had gained her own liberation from enslavement in Virginia and resided in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, before getting married. The son of Bishop Benjamin Tanner and Elizabeth Miller, Henry Ossawa Tanner, would go onto be a world renowned painter (Blockson, 2001). Africans that lived in European American areas of Pittsburgh also assisted African warriors on the Underground Railroad. An African woman named Lucinda, who was the family nurse of

the European American abolitionist Thomas Bigham, would watch from the tower of the Bigham home located in Chatham Village for African warriors to assist as well as warn of kidnappers. African warriors seeking liberation around Pittsburgh were at times provided food and other supplies secretly at night by African and European American abolitionists posing as raccoon hunters. Raccoon hunting was popular in the area and rarely brought forth questioning by anyone which allowed abolitionists to assist African warriors more easily (Blockson, 2001).

To the southwest of Pittsburgh in Washington County, the African Howard Wallace lived and described his participation within the Underground Railroad as well as its operation in the county and surrounding area such as Fayette County in the pamphlet *Historical Sketch of the Underground Railroad from Uniontown to Pittsburgh* published in 1903. He listed several Africans by name who assisted African warriors as well as locations on the Underground Railroad. It is one of few accounts provided by an African who was a part of the Underground Railroad in western Pennsylvania. Howard Wallace writes:

There was a black man by the name of Curry who cared for slaves while in Uniontown. Also another black man named John Payne. At Hopwood, a small settlement near Uniontown, the inhabitants were considered very rough, and many of them would have betrayed the escaping slaves. At night, they piloted to Brownsville by John Payne and others. There they were welcomed by other black men, Lloyd Demas, Simeon Artis and Thomas Cain, Andrew Hopkins, James Moffitt, Esq., and others contributed clothing and other means to help them along...We always had plenty of help. (Blockson, 2001, pp. 290-291)

At Uniontown in Fayette County, Africans that assisted African warriors lived in parts of the town called Baker Alley and Turkey Nest. Some of the Africans who were a part of

the Underground Railroad in the county were Cato Webster, Jacob Miller, Joe Black, Joe Ware, John Jackson, Joseph Jackson, Potan McClure, and Thomas Waller.

Martin Delany was not alone in his response to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and the need for Africans to have armed resistance in defense of oneself and family against kidnappings. On October 17, 1850, at an annual Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society meeting in West Chester, Chester County, the African warrior Robert Purvis stated, “Should any wretched enter my dwelling, any pale faced spectre among ye, to execute this law on me or mine, I’ll seek his life, I’ll shed his blood” (Jackson, 2019, p. 59). Later, he would address those who did not believe in armed resistance declaring:

What can I do when my family are assaulted by kidnappers? I would fly, and by every means endeavor to avoid it, but when the extremity comes I welcome death rather slavery, and by what means God and nature have given me, I will defend myself and my family. (Jackson, 2019, p. 59)

For Purvis and many other Africans, nonresistance and nonviolence were not viable options to fight against kidnappers. As a member of the General Vigilance Committee, Purvis and other African members were instrumental in the African warrior William Thomas not being kidnapped in 1853. Members of the committee raised 150-dollars to have William Thomas’ kidnappers prosecuted, and the courts decreed Thomas was by law a liberated African (Blockson, 2001). Robert Purvis was also instrumental in maintaining the liberation of the African warriors and brothers Basil Dorsey and Thomas Dorsey who were kidnapped separately in an attempt to be sold back to enslavement. The Dorsey brothers along with their two other brothers, Charles and William, had liberated themselves from Frederick County, Maryland, and arrived in Philadelphia during the

summer of 1836. Afterwards, all the brothers except Thomas Dorsey resided temporarily at Robert Purvis' farm in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, while Thomas Dorsey remained in Philadelphia. When Thomas Dorsey was kidnapped, Purvis and other Philadelphia abolitionists paid 1,000-dollars to free him from imprisonment in Baltimore that would have led to being shipped to New Orleans and into enslavement. For Basil Dorsey, Purvis helped him escape a courthouse after a case was dismissed to prove he was the property of an enslaver. Before the trial, Purvis and other abolitionists had attempted to purchase Basil Dorsey's liberation like Thomas Dorsey, but the price kept increasing from 500-dollars to 800-dollars and finally to 1,000-dollars. Thus, Basil Dorsey declared there were to be no more offers for his liberation, and that he would cut his throat in the court house rather than to be enslaved again. Before kidnappers secured a second warrant for Basil Dorsey's arrest and retrial, Robert Purvis had him taken by horse to the home of Purvis' mother in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania then to New York, Connecticut, and finally Northampton, Massachusetts, where he maintained his liberation along with his family until he passed away a few years later (Smedley, 2005). The home of Robert Purvis' mother was located on Ninth Street and Lombard Street and was a location on the Underground Railroad that contained a hidden room in the basement concealed by a trap door. Purvis kept records of the African warriors he assisted but later destroyed them like many other abolitionists in fear of his family's safety (Blockson, 1995).

The legalization of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 endangered the lives of all Africans in the United States causing many to risk death rather than to be enslaved. For example, the male African warrior William Smith had gained liberation from enslavement

prior to 1850 and settled in Columbia, Lancaster County, where he became a well respected and industrious member of the community. While at work, he was approached by a group of kidnappers and took off running that resulted in Smith being fatally wounded by the kidnappers (Blockson, 2001). Other African warriors were able to successfully escape from Columbia such as the female African warrior Mary Epps who traveled from the docks in Richmond, Virginia; followed the Susquehanna River by foot or wagon in Columbia; and boarded a train in Elmira, New York, that traveled to St. Catherine, Canada, past the suspension bridge in Niagara Falls. While in Canada, she wrote a letter to the liberated African William Still in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, that she was living in Toronto, Canada, and signed the letter with her liberated new name, Mary Brown. She did not take the train in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, that headed northbound and was 30 miles away from Columbia like other African warriors and was still able to gain liberation (Blockson, 2001). In Columbia alone, it lost 487 of its 943 members of African communities who fled to northern towns or Canada because of the law and threat of being kidnapped (Blockson, 2001). According to the liberated African William Whipper, several African warriors who escaped enslavement from Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia previously stayed in Columbia to work in the coal and lumber yards but fled after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was passed because the area became too dangerous to reside. For the Africans who stayed in Columbia, the town became known for its staunch opposition to kidnappers seeking to place Africans into enslavement. On one occasion, the citizens of Columbia attacked the kidnapper Isaac Brooks by dragging him through the deep snow, stripping him, and beating him with hickory sticks (Blockson,

2001). During another incident in Lancaster County, an African named Benjamin Whipper, brother of William Whipper, sounded an alarm for about seven African men, including William Parker who would lead the Christiana Resistance in 1851, to prevent the kidnapping of a young African girl tied up by three Maryland kidnapers. The kidnapers were tracked down by the Africans to a location called Gap Hill where they were beaten severely and instructed to leave town. Two out of the three kidnapers died in Lancaster County while the final one perished in Maryland (Jackson, 2019). Benjamin Whipper lived in Lancaster County as early as 1834 suffering several losses of children in November 1840, December 1841, and August 1843 as well as his first wife in May 1843. It is possible he was a participant in the Christiana Resistance, but he was never arrested in its aftermath (Forbes, 1998). In 1852, another attempted kidnapping would take place in Columbia when a police officer from Baltimore tried to arrest and kidnap an African warrior. However, the Africans of the town surrounded the officer, and the African warrior who was arrested bit him to escape thus causing the police officer to hurry back to Maryland barely with his life (Jackson, 2019).

African warriors seeking liberation from enslavement in Frederick, Maryland, and Winchester, Virginia, and other areas further south traveled through Columbia to the home of William Whipper as well as the home of European American William Wright on Second Street as a part of the Underground Railroad. Frequently, William Whipper welcomed African warriors during the night and assisted hundreds in gaining liberation which led to two separate attempts to burn down his lumber business he had with Stephen Smith who was also his brother-in-law (Blockson, 1995). William Whipper fed and

sheltered from one to 17 African warriors in a single night as they traveled afterwards along the Underground Railroad by boat to Pittsburgh or using railroad lumber cars to Philadelphia (Blockson, 2001). By 1834, he resided in Philadelphia where he edited a magazine, established a Reading Room Society that focused on literature and reading, and served as the treasurer of the Philadelphia Building and Loan Association (Blockson, 1995). During the 1830s, William Whipper thought that if Africans bettered their moral condition through education, hard work, religion, and temperance, then European American racism would cease to exist. However, by the 1850s and subsequent passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, he changed his mind to believe racism was ingrained and instinctive of European Americans. Thus, William Whipper along with the African Stephen Smith used their lumber business to transport African warriors from Columbia to Philadelphia hiding them in the false end of a boxcar that carried special products that was received by William Still. Whipper also transported African warriors by boat using the Pennsylvania Canal that connected Columbia to Pittsburgh (Switala, 2008).

Others used routes on the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania that journeyed through counties such as Adams County, Allegheny County, Berks County, Chester County, Crawford County Cumberland County, Dauphin County, Erie County, Franklin County, Lackawanna County, Lebanon County, Lycoming County, Mercer County, Philadelphia County, Susquehanna County, and York County. All 67 counties within modern day Pennsylvania have a connection to the Underground Railroad in some form whether it be where a station was located or where agents operated. Some of the cities along routes of the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania where African warriors settled

after gaining liberation were Erie, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, and Pittsburg while towns included locations like Carlisle, Christiana, Gap, Gettysburg, Mercer, Meadville, Montrose, Reading, Waverly, and Williamsport (Blockson, 2001). African warriors traveled secretly by boat, foot, train, and wagon along routes that journeyed through farms and woods where they hid in attics, caves, churches, stables, and storerooms in seeking liberation. African warriors sought liberation primarily during the warmer months of the year for better traveling conditions and supplies of food as well as to circumvent heavy snowfalls, ice jams, and thick fogs near bodies of water. During the journey, African warriors used directional indicators for traveling north such as the celestial Big Dipper and North Star as well as in nature feeling for moss at night which primarily grows on the northern surface of a tree (Kashatus, 2002). While many African warriors enslaved in the United States traveled north to and beyond Pennsylvania, others sought liberation in the Caribbean, Florida amongst the Seminole Native Americans, and Mexico (Blockson, 2001).

Prior to the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Africans had sought liberation from enslavement in Pennsylvania as early as the seventeenth century. Many had established their own methods of gaining liberation before the Underground Railroad had an official name that did not come about until the mid-nineteenth century. African warriors and liberated Africans that participated as a part of the Underground Railroad belonged to a secret organization called the African Mysteries that used codes, handshakes, passwords, riddles, and songs which were developed from Masonic rituals and symbols (Blockson, 2001). As the Underground Railroad became more developed with

its vast networks by the nineteenth century, its most outspoken organizers were male African ministers and women. According to the historian Charles L. Blockson, African ministers assisted African warriors as a challenge to European American churches that taught “a truly religious person was one who was patient” (Blockson, 2001, p. 245). However, for Africans seeking liberation, being patient meant to remain enslaved which for many was worse than death. Near Harrisburg in Dauphin County is the gravestone of an unnamed male African warrior from 1857 that emphasizes this point stating, “He took the North Star as a guide to liberty, yet in a fitful moment in fear of betrayal he took the deadly cup to save himself from bondage by his fellow man” (Blockson, 2001, p. 267). Although this was a choice made by some African warriors, there were several who were able to gain liberation and live. This was true for the African warrior named George Washington that assisted the unnamed African warrior in Dauphin County. George Washington had liberated himself from enslavement in Virginia circa 1851 and months later settled in Dauphin County. He lived by himself in the mountains of the county near a town named Linglestown and built his own home where he remained until passing away in 1863. In circa 1855, the unnamed African warrior sought refuge at the home of George Washington, in which they lived together for two years. However, this was interrupted suddenly when the enslaver of the unnamed African warrior was rumored to be in the area seeking to force him back into enslavement. To avoid being thrust back into the horrors of enslavement and compromising George Washington’s liberation as well as not knowing if he had been betrayed by his friend, the unnamed African took his own life. In 1897, two gravestones were erected at the location of George Washington’s

former home to honor the African warriors who lived there which still remain today (Hanson, 2022).

One of the African ministers a part of the Underground Railroad in Harrisburg, Dauphin County, was William Jones of Wesley Union A.M.E. Church. The church was established in 1829 and had ties to an A.M.E. church located ten miles southeast of Harrisburg in the town of Middletown (Switala, 2008). William Jones assisted African warriors in gaining liberation using two horses and a large wagon loaded with rags to hide them. William Jones was aided by the Africans Abraham Lewis, George Chester, and Joseph C. Bustill with hiding African warriors in a part of the city called Tanner's Hall (Switala, 2008). George Chester along with his wife, Jane Marie Chester, were African warriors themselves. George Chester was transported from Haiti to the United States during the process of gaining liberation for himself while Jane Marie Chester liberated herself from enslavement in Maryland, in which she afterwards lived in New York City then Harrisburg. It would be at Harrisburg on Market Street where she and George Chester opened a restaurant that was used as a part of the Underground Railroad. Later, one of their six children, Thomas Morris Chester, would be born in 1834 and become a renowned attorney, Civil War correspondent, educator, journalist, and pamphleteer (Blockson, 1995). Joseph C. Bustill taught at a school and created the Fugitive Aid Society in Harrisburg. In addition, he received aid from his brothers, Charles Bustill and James Bustill, as well as William Still in helping African warriors gain liberation. Joseph C. Bustill had been an associate of William Still in Philadelphia, in which both helped African warriors gain liberation there before moving to Harrisburg

in 1856. Joseph C. Bustill and William Still communicated via letters using coded language like “hams” and “packages” to mean African warriors and “Reading Road” in reference to the Reading and Philadelphia Railroad that was used to transport African warriors from Harrisburg to Philadelphia and Reading (Switala, 2008, p. 125).

Harrisburg was an active location for Underground Railroad activity largely because of its African population as well as its various routes in and out of the city using different forms of transportation along canals; railways; rivers; roads; and trails to locations like Carlisle; Chambersburg; Columbia; Elmira, New York; Gettysburg; Lancaster; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; and Reading (Switala, 2008). Between Mulberry Street and Third Street was the African community known as “Judytown” that was named after the African male community leader Judy Richards (Switala, 2008, p. 120). Judytown is also where Underground Railroad activity took place with many of its residents acting as agents such as Judy Richards and his daughter Mary Ann as well as her husband Edward “King” Bennett who also owned a chimney sweep business (Switala, 2008, p. 120).

Other Africans in Harrisburg who were agents as a part of the Underground Railroad were Mary Jones and William M. “Pap” (Switala, 2008, p. 120). William M. Pap used covered wagons from his rag merchant business to transport African warriors to Pottsville, Schuylkill County, and Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County (Switala, 2008). By 1859, Harrisburg was one of several locations that established an African military company for armed resistance, collective defense, pride, self-defense, and self-determination against kidnappers called the Henry Highland Garnet Guards. At Reading, Berks County, Africans also established the Douglass Guards, and in Pittsburgh there

were two other African military companies. The Henry Highland Garnet Guards dressed from head to toe in fatigue caps, charcoal colored coats with matching trousers and black stripes on the side, white belts, and muskets marching throughout the city, especially to annually celebrate Emancipation Day of Africans in the British West Indies on August 1. However, Emancipation Day was criticized by the liberated African physician James McCune Smith in an essay that was published in the newspaper *Frederick Douglass Paper* in August 1856 as a farce and incomplete. Smith felt the holiday was a celebration of a poor compromise between Africans and the British government that compensated the British for African liberation but did not fairly compensate the Africans who gained liberation. Smith wrote, “A paltry twenty thousand pounds was appropriated for the education of the freed men...That is all given to the former slave in consideration of the robbery and embruting [*sic*] which has been perpetuated on him for centuries” (Jackson, 2019, p. 1). For McCune Smith, true liberation was not given by enslavers but rather had to be achieved through violent upheaval; therefore, holidays that celebrated given liberation by enslavers like Emancipation Day needed to cease and not be taught to African children. According to him, praise should rather be given to African warriors such as Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, and the African men and women who were a part of the Christiana Resistance. Violence is what James McCune Smith believed was necessary for the survival of Africans living in the United States against enslavement writing, “Our white brethren cannot understand us unless we speak to them in their own language; they recognize only the philosophy of force...They will never recognize our manhood until we knock them down a time or two” (Jackson, 2019, p. 2). By the late

1850s, African military companies were created in the North and West and had over 8,500 male members who marched with weapons that included broomsticks, farm equipment, and rifles to protect against kidnappers (Jackson, 2019).

In Lewistown, Mifflin County, another African minister named William Grimes was an agent of the Underground Railroad and collaborated with the African Samuel Imes in Mifflintown, Juniata County, in helping African warriors gain liberation. Grimes was a circuit minister and traveled to Blair County, Centre County, Huntingdon County, and Juniata County speaking in support of the Underground Railroad and brought African warriors along with him. Other African agents in Mifflin County were Philip Roderis and Samuel Molston located in the town of Milroy (Switala, 2008). African warriors who had gained liberation increased in Lewistown during the 1840s and 1850s and is where Charles Ball settled. Charles Ball's journey of gaining liberation from enslavement in South Carolina, Georgia, and Maryland was published in 1836 with the book *A Narrative of the Life and Adventure of Charles Ball: A Black Man* that was later reformatted and renamed *Fifty Years in Chains or The Life of an American Slave*. Charles Ball was the name he gave himself upon gaining liberation after having the enforced European name Richard Barnes and went on to live in Lewistown past the age of 100 years old (Blockson, 2001).

In Blair County, the African minister named James Graham was an agent of the Underground Railroad in Hollidaysburg. He collaborated with the Africans William Nesbit and Daniel Williams in helping African warriors gain liberation. Prior to residing in Hollidaysburg, William Nesbit lived in Altoona and then moved to Chimney Rock

which was an African area of Hollidaysburg. Daniel Williams was a barber in Hollidaysburg, and his son, Daniel Hale Williams, would later be known for performing the world's first successful heart surgery (Blockson, 2001). In 1855, an African warrior attempting to gain liberation in Canada journeyed through Blair County near Hollidaysburg at Gaysport but was kidnapped by his enslaver from Virginia. Africans led by a barber named Sidney Carr and European Americans who lived nearby attempted to assist the African warrior but were unsuccessful. Other African warriors seeking liberation traveled to nearby Huntingdon County residing in an area known as "Black Log Valley" that was later renamed "Black Valley" (Blockson, 2001, p. 273). North of Huntingdon County in Clinton County African warriors were assisted by about 20 African families. These families lived in the town of West Keating which provided a refuge for African warriors with its mountainous landscape causing several to settle there (Blockson, 2001). Further north in neighboring Lycoming County at the town of Williamsport was also where African warriors found refuge. The African named Daniel Hughes came to Williamsport in 1828 and married the African woman Ann Rotch. As a lumber raftsman, he transported lumber along the Susquehanna River to Baltimore, Maryland, where he would assist African warriors back to his home in Williamsport located on "Freedom Road" that had several caves behind it for hiding (Switala, 2008, p. 129). Daniel Hughes' son, Robert Hughes, aided African warriors at night and guided them north to the town called Trout Run that was also a part of the Underground Railroad. Another African agent of Williamsport was George Roach and used his paddle boats to transport African warriors to the town (Switala, 2008). Later, African warriors of

Williamsport began organizing the Ebenezer Baptist Church in April 1890 and created an organization called the Underground Railroad Club to honor its members who helped Africans gain liberation (Blockson, 1995). Near New York at Towanda, Bradford County, African warriors were assisted by the Africans Douglass Wilson; Henry Black; Jerry Geeder; John Carter, who owned a barbershop on Payne Street; and Sam Berry. Right outside of Towanda at Rummerfield Creek, an African woman named Dinah and her daughter, Peggy, also aided African warriors (Switala, 2008). Africans living in Bradford County strongly resisted kidnappers and declared they would rather die than be enslaved and not have liberation (Jackson, 2019).

In the western part of Pennsylvania, Crawford County is popularly known as where the European American abolitionist John Brown lived and operated a tannery in a town called Randolph (modern day New Richmond) from 1825 to 1835 that had a trap door to conceal African warriors. John Brown came to the county in 1825 and became friends with the African warrior and barber Richard Henderson (Blockson, 1995). Richard Henderson was born in 1801, and he along with his brothers, Edward Henderson and Robert Henderson, and sister whose name is unknown liberated themselves from enslavement in Hagerstown, Maryland circa 1824. During the journey, his sister died of pneumonia after complications crossing a stream. Eventually, Richard Henderson and his brothers settled in Meadville, Crawford County, where he became a barber (Blockson, 1995). Richard Henderson is believed to have been the first African to permanently reside in the town of Meadville (Meadville Tribune, 2020). Richard Henderson along with his brother Edward Henderson assisted around 500 African warriors in gaining

liberation, in which Richard Henderson's home located at 371 Arch Street served as a stop on the Underground Railroad (Blockson, 2001).

During the nineteenth century in Philadelphia, there were several African ministers that assisted African warriors in gaining liberation as a part of the Underground Railroad such as Daniel Scott of Union Baptist Church, John T. Moore of Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Church, Stephen H. Gloucester of the Central Presbyterian Church of Color, Walter Proctor of Mother Bethel Church, and others (Blockson, 2001). African ministers like Walter Proctor also belonged to the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee that was established in August 1837 and assisted African warriors in distress seeking liberation while other ministers aided in organizing the Free Produce Movement that was against the purchase and use of produce made by enslaved African labor. Some of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee's first members were the Africans Jacob C. White, James McCrummell, James Needham, John C. Bowers, Robert B. Ayers, and Robert Purvis (Blockson, 2001). The committee also included European American members until they were voted out in 1840 to showcase support of African self-reliance (Forbes, 1998). Jacob C. White and his son Jacob Jr. used their home in the city as a part of the Underground Railroad as well as an office located at Lebanon Cemetery that additionally issued anti-enslavement newspapers. Members of the committee that issued anti-enslavement newspapers also helped African warriors flee to League Island. During the early nineteenth century, League Island was an isolated section of Philadelphia and served as a temporary stop for African warriors seeking liberation on the Underground Railroad (Blockson, 2001). The committee also created the Vigilance Association to

request donations and membership that used funds to provide African warriors with clothing, employment, homes, medicine, money, and room and board. It also provided information regarding legal rights and protected Africans by having kidnappers prosecuted. Eventually, other African members of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee included Alexander Crummell, Charles H. Bustill, Charles L. Reason, Charles W. Gardiner, Daniel Colly, Daniel Payne, James Gibbons, James Joshua Gould Bias, Jeremiah Asher, John D. Oliver, Joseph C. Ware, Robert B. Forten, Shepherd Shay, W.H. Riley, and William Still. The committee also included African women who were a part of the female branch that included members such as Eliza Bias, Hetty Reckless, Mary Dutrieulle, and Mary Myers. Although not a part of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee, Henrietta Bowers Duterte was also instrumental in African warriors gaining liberation as a part of the Underground Railroad, in which she hid them in caskets and provided disguises as the first African undertaker in Pennsylvania (Blockson, 2001). After the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the committee reorganized and became more involved in African resistance, in which William Still became chairman of the Acting Committee (Forbes, 1998). Several members of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee lived on or near Pascal Alley that was one of the primary locations for African warriors to hide along their journey to liberation. African warriors that gained liberation in Philadelphia included Henry “Box” Brown who was shipped in a box by train from Virginia; Ellen Craft and William Craft who were married but disguised themselves an enslaver because of Ellen’s lighter skin complexion and enslaved as a result of William’s darker skin complexion while riding several trains that began in Macon, Georgia; and

Jane Johnson along with her children who were brought to Philadelphia by their enslaver (Blockson, 2001). In Philadelphia, several Africans encouraged armed resistance against kidnapers. During one incident in October 1850, a month after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was passed, an African named Henry Garnett was arrested in a kidnapping attempt by a deputy marshal on Ridge Road near Poplar Street, and the local African residents supported the shooting of officers of the law. Garnett was imprisoned at the old Pennsylvania State House overnight while awaiting trial the next day there, and Africans gathered in support of him the following morning at Independence Square (modern day Independence Hall). Garnett's trial became the first court case in Philadelphia after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and was quickly dismissed due to a lack of evidence presented by the claimant's attorneys. Afterwards, Henry Garnett sought safe keeping at the home of the African abolitionist Isabella Holmes in Boston. Similar incidents would occur throughout Pennsylvania after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (Diggins, 2015).

African warriors who journeyed through Delaware County seeking liberation from the state of Delaware and the Chesapeake Bay area were, oftentimes, aided by abolitionists in Philadelphia, in which the city of Chester was one of the first stops along the Underground Railroad. It would be at the city of Chester where 12 African warriors successfully fought off ten kidnapers and escaped to Knowles Pine Forest on March 5, 1857, with assistance from abolitionists in Philadelphia. African warriors traveling from Wilmington, Delaware, to Philadelphia seeking liberation were also assisted by Africans who were members of Honeycomb A.M.E. Church in Lima, Delaware County, founded

in 1852 and ministered by the African known as Reverend Hildenbrand (Blockson, 2001). Honeycomb A.M.E. Church is also where the African warriors George Smith, John Peters, and William Spradley became members after liberating themselves as enslaved scouts for the Confederate Army during the Civil War on assignment to survey Lima (Blockson, 1995). Working with the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee as a part of the Underground Railroad in Bucks County was the liberated African Amos Webber. He used his home to assist African warriors gain liberation as well as collaborated with the African minister and warrior Benjamin “Big Ben” Jones of Mount Gilead African Methodist Church located in the town of Buckingham, Bucks County (Blockson, 1995, p. 106). Big Ben Jones earned his nickname standing at six foot ten inches tall and was the church’s first minister when it was built in 1835. He liberated himself from enslavement in Baltimore, Maryland, and later survived a violent attempted kidnapping from his former enslaver; however, Big Ben Jones remained liberated. Mount Gilead African Methodist Church as well as a nearby cave were used to hide African warriors and served as the last Underground Railroad stop in Bucks County before crossing the Delaware River to New Jersey (Blockson, 1995). In 1844, Jane Lewis and John Lewis established Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church in Montgomery County that became a part of the Underground Railroad. Also, in Montgomery County, Dan Ross and his wife used their home to assist African warriors in gaining liberation for 20 years during the nineteenth century. Other Africans a part of the Underground Railroad in the county resided in Norristown such as Benjamin Johnson, an African warrior that gained liberation from Virginia, traveled through Harrisburg, and settled in Norristown; John Augusta; and William Lewis.

African warriors came into the county mainly from Wilmington, Delaware, and southwestern Chester County, Pennsylvania (Blockson, 2001). William Parker also journeyed through Montgomery County on his route to Canada and hid in the basement of an old paint shop on Church Street used as a part of the Underground Railroad after the Christiana Resistance took place at Lancaster County in 1851. He also hid at the home of the European American abolitionist Graceanna Lewis and her sisters called Sunnyside Farmhouse in Chester County (Blockson, 2001).

Within Chester County, African warriors journeyed to several locations a part of the Underground Railroad in towns such as Chadds Ford, Coatesville, Downingtown, Kennett Square, Malvern, Oxford, Paoli, West Chester, and West Grove. There were three main routes as a part of the Underground Railroad to enter Chester County. The first extended from Fulton, Lancaster County and passed north to the towns of East Drumore, Eden, Paradise, and Salisbury before entering Chester County at the town of Honeybrook and continued to Phoenixville as well as Norristown, Montgomery County, and Philadelphia. The second main route went from Wilmington, Delaware, into Kennett Square and throughout other Chester County towns like East Marlborough, Newlin, Downingtown, Lionville, Kimberton, and Phoenixville. The third main route also began in Wilmington and extended east through towns of Chester County such as Kennett Square, East Bradford, West Chester, and Williston and ended in the city of Philadelphia. Kennett Square was one of the most active locations on the Underground Railroad that provided various routes to areas in Chester County and Lancaster County as well as

Philadelphia, Delaware, and New Jersey, in which most African warriors journeyed to Philadelphia (Kashatus, 2002).

In Kennett Square, the African Davey Moore was instrumental in the operation of the Underground Railroad between the town and Wilmington, Delaware. Davey Moore along with other Africans to assist him traveled daily between Kennett Square and Wilmington selling fish, peaches, and other produce. Moore collaborated with the European American abolitionists Bartholomew Fussell and Thomas Garrett to disguise African warriors as workers to take from Wilmington to Kennett Square. The African James Walker also worked with Thomas Garrett and assisted African warriors from Wilmington to Kennett Square. In addition, Walker's home on South Union Street in Kennett Square was a part of the Underground Railroad (Blockson, 2001). Near Kennett Square, at Longwood, an African named Jackson also brought African warriors from Wilmington to the home of European American abolitionists Hannah Cox and John Cox (Switala, 2008). The female African warrior Harriet Sheppard along with her five children, Anna Maria Sheppard; Edwin Sheppard; Eliza Jane Sheppard; John Henry Sheppard; and Mary Ann Sheppard, and five male African warriors gained liberation from enslavement in Chestertown, Maryland, on November 1, 1855. On their journey, they traveled through Wilmington, Delaware, and were assisted by Thomas Garrett who guided them into Kennett Square. The African warriors also traveled to the towns of Downingtown and Kimberton in Chester County. Eventually, they settled in Philadelphia with the assistance of other abolitionists (Maryland State Archives, 2012). Kennett Square was also where the renowned African warrior Harriet Tubman temporarily resided

near the European American abolitionists Dinah Mendenhall and Isaac Mendenhall and worked to save money that was used to fund trips to Maryland and assist other African warriors in gaining liberation (Switala, 2008). Harriet Tubman was enslaved in Maryland prior to gaining liberation for herself in her twenties. She is believed to have taken at least 19 separate trips to the South, oftentimes, armed with a pistol and assisted an estimated 300 African warriors in also becoming liberated (Kashatus, 2002).

In West Chester, 33 of the 132 stations of the Underground Railroad in the town were operated by Africans that included churches and homes, in which most worked together with the Longwood Progressive Friends Meetinghouse in Kennett Square that was also frequented by Robert Purvis as a member of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society. As a result of there being a great amount of Underground Railroad activity in West Chester, it also was a location where kidnappers sought Africans to be abducted and forced back into enslavement even before the legalization of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. For example, the female African warrior Rachel Harris liberated herself from enslavement when she accompanied her enslaver, Henry Waters, from Baltimore, Maryland, to New Orleans, Louisiana. She had recently been sold to Henry Waters from her former enslaver, Mort Cunningham, who was also an enslaver from Maryland. During the trip, Henry Waters, who was sick, passed away which created the opportunity for Rachel Harris to liberate herself. A month later she arrived in Chester County at the home of the European American abolitionist Emmor Kimber in 1838 and gained employment there as a cook. A similar incident took place in the town of Uwchlan, Chester County, when an African warrior named Bob liberated himself after his enslaver,

John Evans, died in July 1784. Although Bob was promised manumission by his enslaver, he did not leave it to chance and gained liberation for himself at the age of 38 as well as with an African woman also enslaved on John Evans' plantation (Kashatus, 2002).

In 1838, Rachel Harris also married her husband, Isaac Harris, and together moved to West Chester to reside there. After years of being liberated, Mort Cunningham, sought to kidnap Rachel Harris by having her arrested and brought before Judge Thomas Bell to claim her as property. While awaiting to see the judge at his office on the corner of Church Street and Miner Street, Rachel Harris asked to be permitted to have some fresh air in the back of the building. Although she was followed by a constable outside, Rachel Harris was able to escape the premises by climbing over a seven foot wall and running to safety. She bolted down Miner Street into a hatter's shop and out the back of the building, jumped over a boiling dye kettle, scaled a wooden fence, and dashed into the home and kitchen of the European American abolitionist John T. Worthington. She had been a laundress for the Worthington household and pleaded with John T. Worthington's wife to assist her from being kidnapped by Mort Cunningham stating, "Oh hide me somewhere, quickly, please! I'd rather be cut to pieces than be returned to slavery!" (Kashatus, 2002, p. 14). Mrs. Worthington then hid Rachel Harris where she was successfully able to avoid being kidnapped. Once Isaac Harris learned of his wife's attempted kidnapping, he sought the assistance of the European American abolitionist Philip Sharples to assist with Rachel Harris escaping from the area. With his assistance as well as that of Benjamin Price and his son Isaiah Price, Rachel Harris was able to be

taken by wagon to Norristown disguised as a man with Mrs. Worthington's help. It was at the home of European American abolitionist William Johnson where Rachel Harris arrived and was reunited the same day with her husband. Afterwards, Isaac Harris and Rachel Harris immigrated to Canada (Kashatus, 2002).

Other African warriors traveled to or through West Chester as well while seeking liberation such as a woman named Mary at the age of 33 and her daughters during the winter of 1854 on their journey to liberation in Philadelphia from enslavement in Georgetown, Delaware (Kashatus, 2002). The African warrior John Price was one of the most prominent operators of the Underground Railroad in West Chester as well as the African entrepreneur Abraham Shadd and an African named John Brown (Blockson, 2001). John Price liberated himself from enslavement in Maryland at the age of 16 and settled in the town of Caln, Chester County. It was there he assisted African warriors at his farm as well as throughout the area because of his occupation as a contract laborer. John Price sometimes used a wagon to help African warriors travel to home of the European American abolitionist Thomas Bonsall that was also a part of the Underground Railroad and often paid for expenses during the journey using his own funds or by borrowing money. John Price assisted African warriors for 40 years and is estimated to have helped over 300 of them gain liberation (Kashatus, 2002). Abraham Shadd was instrumental in assisting the African warrior Josiah Henson gain liberation (Thomson, 1979). By 1830, Henson settled in Canada. In 1842, Josiah Henson along with his wife and children lived in Dresden, Canada, at a settlement called Dawn where he became a minister (Forbes, 1998). Historians debate that it was Josiah Henson's life used as

inspiration for the female European American Harriet Beecher Stowe's title character in her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) (Thomson, 1979). Like the Africans John B. Vashon, John Peck, and Stephen Smith, Abraham Shadd also sold subscriptions for the abolitionist newspaper *The Emancipator*. In addition, he owned eight buildings in West Chester and in 1844 opened the first African school that was also the first public school in the town called Harmony School with the African Benjamin Freeman. Harmony School operated until 1857 and was located across the street from the home of Benjamin Freeman which was also a station on the Underground Railroad in West Chester.

Abraham Shadd's daughter, Mary Ann, was also well known in the area and would later become the first woman in North America to create and edit a weekly newspaper called *The Provincial Freedman* (Blockson, 2001). Mary Ann Shadd was also a teacher and had taught in Wilmington, Delaware, where the Shadd family previously resided before West Chester; Norristown, Pennsylvania; and Trenton, New Jersey, by the age of 21. She was vocal in criticizing the conventions established by the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society and liberated Africans not being able to execute any of the programs it devised in a lengthy letter written to Frederick Douglass in January 1849 that was published in his newspaper *The North Star*. In the letter, she insisted "we should do more and talk less" (Kashatus, 2002, p. 58). Mary Ann Shadd also criticized the A.M.E. Church and its clergy as community leaders and teachers when she wrote, "Their [African clergy] gross ignorance and insolent bearing, together with their sanctimonious garb...the downright degradation of the free colored people of the North" (Kashatus, 2002, p. 58). In her opinion, Africans needed to invest agriculturally as producers rather than just consumers,

have better educational opportunities, and be a part of interracial political organizations (Kashatus, 2002). After the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was passed, the Shadd family moved to North Buxton, Canada, by 1851, in which *The Provincial Freedman* provided news about Africans who immigrated to the country (Blockson, 2001). Mary Ann Shadd was 28 years old when she moved to Canada. She was enticed with the possibilities Canada created for Africans after attending an anti-enslavement society meeting at Toronto in 1851 and later joined the Windsor Anti-Slavery Society. While in Canada, she assisted other African warriors who also arrived to the country (Kashatus, 2002). Mary Ann Shadd believed Canada could be a permanent residence for Africans relocating from the United States and disagreed with the African warrior Henry Bibb's newspaper *Voice of the Fugitive* that viewed Canada as a temporary location (Thomson, 1979). Henry Bibb and Mary Ann Shadd would also disagree about the solicitation of funds for African warriors within the community by abolitionists that became a public feud through their newspapers. Mary Ann Shadd supported African independence and self-reliance like most citizens of Buxton while Henry Bibb did not. In one of Mary Ann Shadd's responses to Bibb's critiques of her, she wrote in *The Liberator* on September 27, 1852:

*Voice of the Fugitive* is not the voice of the colored people of Canada. Few patronize it at all. Its 'position' is calculated to create a spirit of caste...Character, weight, ability, are needed in a journal proclaiming itself the voice of fugitives, in view of the glorious prospects before them Her Majesty's *freemen*. (Forbes, 1998, pp. 238-239)

For Mary Ann Shadd, Henry Bibb did not speak for the Africans in Canada, especially the African warriors he believed she did not understand because of being born liberated. Their difference of opinion was even apparent in the names of their newspapers that

indicated Mary Ann Shadd's desire for Africans to be independent in the provinces of Canada while Bibb's indicated the need for Africans being spoken for by a representative (Forbes, 1998).

William Still was an agent for Mary Ann Shadd's *The Provincial Freeman* and Henry Bibb's *Voice of the Fugitive* and assisted Africans in gaining liberation in Canada (Forbes, 1998). Mary Ann Shadd's aunt, Elizabeth Jackson Schad Williams, living in Wilmington, Delaware, assisted African warriors in gaining liberation to Chatham, Canada, during the middle and late 1850s and moved there herself after 1858 (Forbes, 1998). By 1859, Abraham Shadd became the first African elected to public office in Canada as a part of the Raleigh Town Council in Canada West (modern day Ontario) as well as established Masonic lodges in the area with other African males. Abraham Shadd's other children, 13 in total with his wife Harriet Shadd, were also prominent in their respective fields. Abraham Shadd, Jr. was admitted to the Mississippi bar and became a lawyer; Elizabeth Shadd was a circuit rider; Emmaline Shadd and Eunice Shadd were teachers; Isaac D. Shadd was an editor like Mary Ann Shadd; and Garrison Shadd was a farmer (Thomson, 1979). Isaac D. Shadd and Mary Ann Shadd were also members of the Chatham Vigilance Committee that included other Africans such as Osborne Perry Anderson, James M. Bell, Thomas Cary (husband of Mary Ann Shadd), William Howard Day, Lucy Stanton Day (wife of William Howard Day), Martin Delany, James H. Harris, Harvey C. Jackson, John Pleasant, Mary Ellen Pleasant (wife of John Pleasant), and Amelia Freeman Shadd (wife of Isaac D. Shadd). The Chatham Vigilance Committee assisted African warriors with gaining liberation as well as defended against

kidnappers. In one incident, a liberated African young man named Sylvanus Demarest from Patterson, New Jersey, was kidnapped in Chatham, and 100 armed Africans that included members of the Chatham Vigilance Committee, led by Mary Ann Shadd, boarded a train carrying Demarest and removed him by force which led to Isaac D. Shadd being arrested. Members of the committee also met with the European American abolitionist John Brown in 1858 for his recruitment of individuals to join him in raiding Harpers Ferry. Osborne Perry Anderson was the only African from the meeting to join John Brown and became the sole African survivor of the raid. Anderson previously resided in West Chester and immigrated with the Shadd family to Canada as well as worked for them. Later, Mary Ann Shadd assembled and published his account of the raid on Harpers Ferry in the book *A Voice from Harper's Ferry: A Narrative of Events at Harper's Ferry: With Incidents Prior and Subsequent to Its Capture by Captain Brown and His Men* (2017) (Forbes, 1998). African communities increased in Canada during the middle of the nineteenth century, in which Africans built trade schools and became self-employed. Africans worked as barbers, blacksmiths, brick masons, butchers, cabinet makers, carpenters, coopers, farmers, gardeners, grocers, gunsmiths, lawyers, milliners, millwrights, ministers, painters, physicians, plasterers, seamstresses, shoemakers, tavern keepers, teachers, teamsters, wagon makers, and watchmakers. Canada created better protection for Africans with its laws than the United States and would not assist kidnappers in abducting Africans. Although Africans were able to have a better semblance of liberation in Canada than in the United States, they still remained at the

bottom of the social hierarchy there suffering from racism into the twentieth century (Forbes, 1998).

Concerning the reaction of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 in West Chester and across Chester County, Marianne H. Russo and Paul A. Russo in *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century African-American Village* (2005) write:

Within the first six months following the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, which many northerners deeply resented and many southerners exploited, a flurry of kidnappings took place in Chester County...At the same time, conservative local newspapers such as *West Chester American Republican* and *West Chester Jeffersonian* condoned, even lauded, the actions as a means of ridding the area of Blacks both free and fugitives, whom they considered a burden on the local economy and a threat to the social order. (Russo, 2005, p. 85)

The passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 caused dissension between local Africans and European Americans. As a result of the act, two incidents occurred in 1851 that caused overwhelming concern for Africans—the Christiana Resistance and the Parker sisters kidnappings.

### **Christiana Resistance for African Liberation**

The primary location for the Underground Railroad in Lancaster County for African warriors traveling from Maryland and Virginia seeking liberation was the town of Christiana. Other African warriors from Adams County, Franklin County, and York County, came to the towns of Columbia or Gap (Blockson, 2001). Columbia was an area of Lancaster County that had Africans representing ten percent of the total population in

the county. During the 1850s and 1860s, Africans in Columbia owned property and worked mainly in agriculture as well as in foundries, mills, and mines. In addition, Africans made up ten percent of the total population in the Lancaster County towns of Drumore, Fulton, Little Britain, and Marietta (Forbes, 1998). According to R.C. Smedley's *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester County and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania* (2005), Columbia is where African warriors had been kidnapped and fought against enslavement since 1804 leading to the creation of the Underground Railroad system that he believes originated there. Although Columbia had a large population of Africans, it also contained European Americans who were anti-African that led to mobs of them attacking prosperous Africans there out of economic jealousy in 1834 and 1835 (Forbes, 1998). On August 23, 1834, a preamble with resolutions was unanimously passed by anti-African European American men that expressed outrage against Africans in Columbia stating, "We will not purchase any article (that can procured elsewhere) or give our voice for any office whatsoever, to any one who employs negroes to do that special of labor white men have been accustomed to perform" (Forbes, 1998, p. 199). For anti-Africans in Lancaster County, all Africans should be enslaved and had no rights, especially concerning economic betterment, leading to anti-African mobs to attack Africans in Columbia. The anti-African mobs burned down homes and shops as well as committed violence against Africans, in which Stephen Smith and William Whipper's lumber business was a primary target. As a result, Stephen Smith in September 1834 declared in the newspaper *Columbia Spy* he was going to sell the business but instead stayed in Columbia until 1842 when he moved to Philadelphia and

left the business to the care of William Whipper (Forbes, 1998). Lancaster County is one of several counties in Pennsylvania that borders Maryland, and its southern border is a part of the Mason-Dixon Line that separated both states geographically, morally, and politically in relation to Africans and enslavement as a result of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (McDaniel, 2009). This separation would culminate into what some historians mistakenly call the Christiana Riot and others more accurately state as the Christiana Resistance.

The Christiana Resistance, which should be accurately termed a “resistance” because of the Africans’ fight against oppression and not a “riot” or “tragedy” as recorded by some historians using those pejorative terms, especially in the South, occurred in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on September 11, 1851. These pejorative terms should not be used to describe the incident because they insinuate the Africans involved were committing anarchy and lawlessness instead of exercising their rights of liberation as humans (Forbes 1998). The Christiana Resistance transpired when a Maryland enslaver, Edward Gorsuch, sought to kidnap two of four African warriors who liberated themselves from his Maryland plantation (Forbes, 1998). For two years, Gorsuch tried to apprehend these men. In September 1851, he received a tip from an informant and planned an intended raid of Christiana. On September 11, 1851, Gorsuch and a posse approached the household of the African warrior William Parker in the predawn hours and were met with unexpected resistance from Parker and others who were tipped by an informant of Gorsuch’s approach. Parker and members of his self-defense group killed Gorsuch and

wounded his son. Parker, along with two other Africans, escaped with help from Frederick Douglass to Canada.

As a result of the resistance, the federal government viewed it as an act of treason and indicted 34 African men and five European American men on 117 separate counts of treason. According to Thomas P. Slaughter's *Bloody Dawn: The Christiana Riot and Racial Violence in the Antebellum North* (1991), it is the largest mass indictment of treason in the history of the United States. However, all charges were eventually dropped due to political pressure and weaknesses in the prosecution's case. The Christiana Resistance helped to highlight opposition towards the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and foreshadowed the coming of the Civil War ten years later after the resistance with a headline from a local newspaper called *Lancasterian* that read, "CIVIL WAR, THE FIRST BLOW STRUCK" (Slaughter, 1991, p. ix). The Christiana Resistance also made the front page news for the first issue of the newspaper *The New York Times* on September 18, 1851, overshadowing the failed invasion by anti-Spanish government Cubans and southern enslavers of the United States led by former Spanish general Narciso López to overthrow the Spanish government of Cuba. The plan was to annex Cuba as a part of the United States to keep African enslavement thriving; however, the invasion failed after several attempts that ended in August 1851 (Forbes, 1998).

Edward Gorsuch was a European American farmer who oversaw Retreat Farm in Baltimore County, Maryland. On his farm, he enslaved 12 Africans (Slaughter, 1991). Thomas P. Slaughter described Gorsuch as:

He was a man of honor and liberality in his own eyes and in the eyes of his neighbors, of his church, and of his sons. Neighbors brought him disputes to arbitrate because he was such a fair man. Gorsuch thought that his slaves saw him that way, too. (Slaughter, 1991, p. 5)

Regardless of Gorsuch's own and neighborly interpretation on being honorable and good, he was still an enslaver. There can be no distinction made between a bad enslaver and a good enslaver because both still resort to enslavement to restrict the freedom and liberty of another human. This is something that Gorsuch himself was not able to understand and caused him to be enraged when he learned four African warriors liberated themselves from his establishment.

By the mid-1800s, many enslavers had subscribed to the notion that enslaved Africans who wished to become liberated were suffering from mental illness. A racist European American physician in Louisiana named Samuel Cartwright studied enslaved Africans during the mid-1800s and believed that healthy enslaved Africans labored productively and loved enslavement. In 1851, Cartwright wrote that enslaved Africans who resisted on a plantation were suffering from the mental illness Dysaesthesia. Cartwright insisted most liberated Africans were suffering from Dysaesthesia because they did not have a European American individual to care for them. He also believed enslaved Africans who ran away were suffering from insanity which he called Drapetomania. Pertaining to the subject of Drapetomania, Cartwright offered a cure to enslavers for enslaved Africans who liberated themselves in which he suggested, "They have only to be...treated like children to prevent and cure them" (Kendi, 2016, p. 185). Perhaps,

Edward Gorsuch had a similar notion towards enslaved Africans in trying to understand them wanting to be liberated.

This style of thinking was not unusual for many enslavers during the 1800s nor was the act of liberation abnormal to those enslaved. As the abolitionist Frederick Douglass would suggest, it was to the betterment of an enslaver to be cruel towards those he or she enslaved. In his autobiography entitled *My Bondage and My Freedom* (2018), Douglass wrote:

Beat and cuff your slave, keep him hungry and spiritless, and he will follow the chain of his master like a dog; but, feed and clothe him well—work him moderately—surround him with physical discomfort—and dreams of freedom intrude. Give him a bad master, and he aspires to a good master; give him a good master, and he wishes to become his own master. Such is human nature. (Douglass, 2018, p. 69)

Frederick Douglass does not suggest that he was a supporter of enslavement in any form; however, the excerpt allows insight into the mental attitude of someone who was enslaved. Douglass was one to know this type of mentality because he was enslaved in his youth and witnessed the effects of enslavement on the mind of an individual. This is something that was explored further years later by Carter G. Woodson in his seminal text *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (2005) when he wrote:

If you can control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his action. When you determine what a man shall think you do not have to concern yourself about what he will do. If you make a man feel that he is inferior, you do not have to compel him to accept an inferior status, for he will seek it himself. If make a man think that he is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to the back door. He will go without being told; and if there is no back door, his very nature will demand one. (Woodson, 2005, pp. 84-85)

However, for George Hammond, Joshua Hammond, Nelson Ford, and Noah Buley, this type of mentality was not fitting for themselves. On November 6, 1849, these four African warriors enslaved by Edward Gorsuch took a substantial amount of grain from Retreat Farm. After taking the grain, the four African warriors attempted to sell it in order to raise money and liberate themselves. However, they decided to flee in possible fear of being discovered after an attempt in selling the grain. They travelled together either by train or foot, depending on the source, northbound to Lancaster County (Slaughter, 1991). For Gorsuch and other enslavers, stealing was considered to be a defying act by those who were enslaved; however, the labeling of someone who was enslaved as a stealer is debatable. Those who were enslaved did not necessarily consider it stealing if they were denied the basic necessities of survival such as food and clothing. Frederick Douglass was one such individual when he wrote:

Considering that my labor and person were the property of Master Thomas, and that I was by him deprived of the necessaries of life necessaries obtained by my own labor—it was easy to deduce the right to supply myself with what was my own. It was simply appropriating what was my own to use of my master, since the health and strength derived from such food were exerted in his service. (Douglass, 2018, p. 51)

What Douglass suggests is that there is no guilt in taking what one believes is rightfully theirs. William Parker went even further by pointing out the hypocrisy of enslavement and stealing stating:

The preachers of slave-trading gospel frequently told us, in their sermons, that we should be “good boys,” and not break into master’s hen-roost, nor steal his bacon; but they never told this to these poor white people, although they knew very well that they encourage slaves to steal, trafficked in stolen goods, and stole themselves. Why this difference? I felt I was the equal of these poor whites, and naturally I concluded that we

were greatly wronged, and that all this talk about obedience, duty, humility, and honesty was, in the phrase of my companions, “all gammon.” (Parker, 1999, p. 158)

Perhaps, this same mentality was identical for the four African warriors who liberated themselves from enslavement by Gorsuch. These African warriors were four out of the total 279 enslaved Africans who also gained liberation from enslavement in Maryland from June 30, 1849 to June 30, 1850 (Slaughter, 1991). For two years, Edward Gorsuch pursued the four African warriors and came up empty-handed until a European American informant, William Padgett, tipped him to their possible location in Lancaster County on August 28, 1851 (Slaughter, 1991).

William Padgett was a well-known assistant to kidnapers in the Lancaster area. By trade, he was a clock repairman which allowed him to learn information from his customers through conversation, especially amongst the African community. During the fall months, he pretended to collect sumac tops to dye morocco that was used to disguise his true intentions of surveying Africans to be abducted by the infamous kidnapper Deputy Marshal Henry H. Kline (Forbes, 1998). In addition, Padgett was a supposed member of the terrorizing group known as the “Gap Gang” “Gap Hill Gang,” or “Clemson Gang” (Forbes, 1998, p. 84). The Gap Gang operated from 1845 to 1893 and consisted of European Americans that were criminals, thieves, and of the working class who harassed the Lancaster County African community much like the Ku Klux Klan would later do throughout the South after the Civil War. The name for the terrorizers was derived from the Gap Hills where many of its members resided and labored as well as their local hangout, the Gap Tavern, owned by Amos Clemson. Clemson’s son, Tilghman

Clemson, along with Perry Marsh and William Bear were some of its more infamous members. Along with kidnapping of Africans, the Gap Gang also committed crimes that included beatings of enslaved Africans, highway robbery, horse stealing, murder, and property damage (Forbes, 1998). The Gap Gang took part in several kidnappings of liberated African individuals to a life of enslavement. Most of the incidents went unpunished because of the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. The passing of this act had a devastating effect on the surrounding African community which would lead to the Christiana Resistance. To combat the kidnappings by the Gap Gang and other groups that took place every two to three weeks in the area, William Parker and other Africans created the armed resistance group known as the Lancaster Black Self-Protection Society in 1841 (Jackson, 2019). While conversing with a friend and his wife at their home, Parker vowed to knock down the first enslaver who drew a pistol on him. A short time later while he was still at his friend's home, Parker would live by his words when a group of three kidnapers broke into the home with a gun seeking African warriors. In response, William Parker grabbed a pair of heavy tongs and hit the kidnapper who drew the gun violently across the face and neck that caused the kidnapper to hit the ground and lay there unconscious. When the kidnapper regained consciousness, all of the kidnapers left his friend's home without saying a word in fear of William Parker challenging them without the use of a gun himself. This incident and several others were emblematic of Parker stating, "My rights as freeman were...secured by my own right arm" (Jackson, 2019, p. 54).

The exact age of William Parker at the time of the Christiana Resistance is not known because his enslaver, like many others, did not keep a record of birth dates for enslaved Africans. However, it is believed that Parker was around the age of 29 when the Christiana Resistance took place. Therefore, it is possible that Parker was born around 1822 (Slaughter, 1991). According to his own account, he was born in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, on a plantation named Rowdown (Parker, 1999). Parker does not elaborate on who his father was, but it can be suspected he was a European American man or even his enslaver, Major William Brogden, because Parker was considered a “mulatto” (Slaughter, 1991, p. 47). Major William Brogden passed away when Parker was young, and he became enslaved to Brogden’s son David “Mack” Brogden (Parker, 1999, p. 156). William Parker was raised mostly by his grandmother after his mother, Louisa Simms, passed away at a young age (Parker, 1999). As a child, William Parker lived in a building separated from adults that was 100 feet long and 300 feet wide where he learned to fight in order to be closer to the fireplace for warmth while the other children that were not as strong sat further away (Forbes, 1998). After witnessing several sales of enslaved Africans to other enslavers that divided families, Parker and his friend, Levi Storax, decided to liberate themselves from Rowdown in fear of being sold around the age of ten. However, both African warriors returned to the plantation later on that day because Storax was worried about the sale of his mother who ended up not being sold. Within three years after first seeking liberation with William Parker, Levi Storax was sold to another enslaver. After the sale of Storax and others, including a close uncle named

Henry, William Parker decided he must liberate himself from the horrors of enslavement for good (Parker, 1999).

At around the age of seventeen in 1839, William Parker and his brother Charles Parker liberated themselves from Rowdown following a dispute with David Brogden. The dispute took place when William Parker was ordered to work in the fields by Brogden while it was raining, and he refused out of being tired and frustrated with working without compensation. David Brogden attempted to whip William Parker with a stick because of his refusal, and Parker fought back causing injury to Brogden. Afterwards, William Parker and his brother decided it was time to liberate themselves (Parker, 1999). Their liberation perhaps inspired two other African brothers named John and Wilson to liberate themselves from David Brogden's plantation in 1844 when a 200-dollars reward advertisement was offered for their return to enslavement by Brogden. William Parker shared a similar age with John being about 21 and Wilson 23 when they liberated themselves, so it is possible the Parker brothers knew them (Forbes, 1998). William Parker and Charles Parker shared the same mental attitude that enslavement was wrong, and no person should be subjected to inferiority. William Parker explains:

I felt I was the equal of these poor whites, and naturally I concluded that we were greatly wronged, and that all this talk about obedience, duty, humility, and honesty was, in the phrase of my companions, 'all gammon'...I had broken the bonds that held me so firmly; and now, instead of fears of recapture, that before had haunted my imagination whenever I thought of running away, I felt as light as a feather, and seemed to be helped onward by an irresistible force. (Parker, 1999, p. 158)

Prior to liberating themselves, William Parker bought a forged travel pass from a friend but destroyed it along the journey to liberation with his brother because Charles Parker

did not have one. When William Parker and Charles Parker liberated themselves, they journeyed by night and day to Baltimore, Maryland, first and stayed for a week pretending to be brickyard workers (Forbes, 1998). Afterwards, they made their way to York, Pennsylvania, but encountered a physical confrontation along the way with three European American men who recognized the two brothers and attempted to kidnap them. Before one of the kidnapers could draw his gun, William Parker hit him violently in the arm with a stick he was carrying and broke the kidnapper's arm. William Parker then chased after the kidnapper while the other two kidnapers ran away. William Parker could not catch the kidnaper with the broken arm and thus fled towards York safely with his brother, but they only stayed momentarily and traveled to Columbia, Lancaster County, after being advised it was safer there. While traveling at night to Columbia, the Parker brothers almost encountered another confrontation when they heard voices behind them and hid. When the Parker brothers hid, they recognized one of the voices was that of David Brogden's brother-in-law. William Parker states they were close enough to kill Brogden's brother-in-law and another kidnapper with him but decided to let them live and not engage in a confrontation. After this incident, the Parker brothers traveled to Wrightsville, York County, where they met a female acquaintance before journeying by boat at night across the Susquehanna River to Columbia and arriving there before daybreak (Parker, 1999). After resting in Columbia for four days, William Parker and Charles Parker traveled to the city of Lancaster and looked for work. William Parker decided to settle about five miles outside the city of Lancaster while Charles Parker continued fifteen miles to Bart Township in southeastern Lancaster County. William

Parker visited his brother in Bart Township and decided to work there for thirteen months. It was here where William Parker met the European American abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison and a familiar acquaintance--Frederick Douglass (Parker, 1999). William Parker had met the African warrior Frederick Douglass at a young age when both were enslaved in Maryland. Frederick Douglass would later refer to Parker as “a sober, well-behaved, and religious man of color” as well as “the Preacher” in Christiana (Forbes, 1998, p. 28). When Parker saw Douglass and Garrison in Bart Township, he was thoroughly impressed with the oratory skills of both which had a lasting impact on his life. Regarding Frederick Douglass, Parker states:

I have never listened to words from the lips of mortal man which were more acceptable to me; and although privileged since then to hear many able and good men speak on slavery, no doctrine has seemed to me so pure, so unworldly, as his. I may here say, and without offence [*sic*], I trust, that, since that time, I have had a long experience of Garrisonian Abolitionists...They are, indeed and in truth, the poor slave's friend. (Parker, 1999, pp. 160-161)

While residing in Lancaster County, William Parker was not afraid to confront those he suspected as kidnappers for enslavers. On one occasion, he and a group of individuals attempted to liberate an African man named William Dorsey who was kidnapped and put into a Lancaster jail to await trial. Parker and the group attempted to rescue Dorsey after he was leaving a courthouse with his captors using bricks, sticks, and stones against the kidnappers. However, they were outnumbered, and the rescue attempt failed. During the melee, William Parker was almost arrested three times but fought back. He was also threatened with being shot as well as the African named Williams Hopkins who was a part of the group attempting to rescue William Dorsey. Only one

arrest of a man from the group with William Parker was made, but he later was released after standing trial and not convicted. Nonetheless, William Dorsey gained liberation when purchased after the courthouse incident by friends (Parker, 1999).

Shortly after this incident, William Parker met and married his wife Eliza Ann Elizabeth Howard circa 1846 who was also an African warrior. Years later after the incident with the young girl, Parker and a group of six individuals a part of the Lancaster Black Self-Protection Society were successful again in retrieving an unnamed young African man from kidnappers that came from Maryland and settled at a tavern to rest in Chester County “on the Westchester road” (Parker, 1999, p. 164). Although there were seven members of the self-protection society present, only Parker and one other member went into the tavern while the other five members waited outside in fear of losing their lives. Parker and the other member of the self-protection society were able to retrieve the African man inside the tavern under heavy gunfire, but Parker was wounded when he was shot in the ankle. When the three men came outside together, the other five members of the self-protection society returned gunfire to the kidnappers and successfully made sure there were no more injuries to the Africans as they made their way to safety. William Parker kept the injury he sustained a secret for security purposes and removed the ball bullet from his ankle himself with a knife the next day. While recovering from the wound, William Parker was requested again to take part in the retrieval of yet another kidnapped African named Henry Williams taken from the home of the African named Allen Williams in September 1850; however, this time Parker and the Lancaster Black Self-Protection Society were unsuccessful much to William Parker’s dismay. Parker

suspected there was an informant within the African community who was assisting the kidnappers. He believed Allen Williams was the suspected informant and should be put to death. Thus, Parker and members of the Lancaster Black Self-Protection Society arrived to Allen Williams' house and almost beat him to death, but he was able to escape with his life because the group of men thought someone was approaching the home unexpectedly (Parker, 1999).

In a similar incident, Parker and a group of six individuals burned the house of an unnamed notorious, local African informant responsible for several young African warriors being kidnapped. Parker and the group awaited for the informant to flee from the flames, so he could be shot dead; however, the informant fled in a different direction where Parker and the group were located and escaped to a neighbor's house "as if the spirit of his evil deeds was after him" (Parker, 1999). A month after the Allen Williams incident William Parker attempted to retrieve a kidnapped African man named John Williams. But Parker along with two Africans that later participated in the Christiana Resistance, Alexander Pinckney and Samuel Thompson, were unsuccessful. When the men talked to a doctor in Maryland named Dr. Savington, it was suspected John Williams likely died from wounds inflicted by the kidnappers in which his ankle was dislocated and skull fractured. The injuries were so bad that the female enslaver seeking John Williams did not pay the kidnappers because she believed Williams to be useless. Dr. Savington's description of John Williams would be the last Alexander Pinckney, Samuel Thompson, and William Parker heard about his whereabouts (Parker, 1999). William Parker was a brave individual who was not afraid to stand up for himself and his

community. The bravery he displayed in his earliest years of liberation would continue on September 11, 1851—the day of the Christiana Resistance.

By the time of the resistance, William Parker was one of more than 3,000 Africans residing in Lancaster County (Delbanco, 2018). Parker had been living there for 12 years where he rented a home from his European American Quaker employers, Levi Pownall and Sarah Pownall, which was used as a part of the Underground Railroad to assist African warriors in gaining liberation. Once William Parker was made aware that Edward Gorsuch and his posse were coming to Christiana, Sarah Pownall advised William Parker to not use armed resistance but rather escape to Canada, but Parker did not take heed to her advice replying:

But the laws for personal protection are not made for us, and we are not bound to obey them. If a fight occurs I want the whites to keep away. They have a country and may obey the laws. But we have no country. (Smedley, 2005, p. 115)

Ironically, William Parker states it would be at the home of Levi Pownall and Sarah Pownall where the injured Dickinson Gorsuch, son of Edward Gorsuch, who sustained over 80 buckshot wounds would be cared for three weeks after the Christiana Resistance when he was carried there by a local European American Quaker named Joseph P. Scarlett that had sympathy for him. However, Parker believed Levi Pownall was acting as a Good Samaritan rather than as a sympathizer (Parker, 1999). On September 9, 1851, Edward Gorsuch obtained four warrants in Philadelphia for the detainment of George Hammond, Joshua Hammond, Nelson Ford, and Noah Buley. Edward Ingraham, the European American enslavement commissioner, advised the well-known European

American kidnapper Deputy Marshal Henry H. Kline to assist Gorsuch in his capture. Two European American police officers, John Agan and Thompson Tully, were also advised to help Gorsuch and his associates. However, both officers would not participate in the kidnapping at the last minute. Edward Gorsuch brought along with him from Maryland Dickinson Gorsuch, a nephew named Dr. Thomas Pearce, a cousin named Joshua Gorsuch, and two European American neighbors named Nathan Nelson and Nicholas Hutchings. Although the large group of kidnappers did not initially travel together towards Lancaster County, it was discovered by an African from Philadelphia named Samuel Williams, an informant for William Parker and member of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee called by Parker “The Special Secret Committee” who was spying on Gorsuch’s posse since their coming to Philadelphia, that the kidnappers were approaching the area (Slaughter, 1991, pp. 52-53). At the time, the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee was led by the liberated African William Still. As punishment for informing William Parker about Gorsuch’s posse approaching his home, Samuel Williams would later be arrested, charged with treason, and imprisoned until he was acquitted in February 1852 (Forbes, 1998). William Parker praised Samuel Williams and the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee writing:

The trusty agent of this Special Committee, Mr. Samuel Williams, of Philadelphia,—a man true and faithful to his race, and courageous in the highest degree...Of the Special Committee I can only say that they proved themselves men; and through the darkest hours of the trials that followed, they were found faithful to their trust, never for one moment deserting those who were compelled to suffer...’t [it] is enough to say they were friends when and where it cost something to be friends, and true brothers where brothers were needed. (Parker, 1999, pp. 282-283)

Upon learning that Gorsuch's posse was approaching Lancaster County, Samuel Williams traveled from Penningtonville (modern day Atglen), Pennsylvania, to nearby Christiana and relayed the information to William Parker (Parker, 1999). At 1:00 A.M. on Thursday, September 11, 1851, Edward Gorsuch and his cohorts were led by a paid concealed informant to Christiana. The informant is suspected to have been William Padgett, but the identity of the individual is not known because he disguised himself well to protect his identity. It is even suspected by some historians that the informant was known by William Parker and purposely led the group to his home into a trap. Both theories are logical but cannot be made conclusive (Slaughter, 1991).

In William Parker's account of the Christiana Resistance, he states his knowledge of knowing about Gorsuch and his approaching kidnapers on September 10, 1851, but he was not concerned by the news. Within in the Parker household was himself, Samuel Thompson, Joshua Kite, Parker's wife named Eliza Parker, Eliza Parker's sister named Hannah Pinckney and husband named Alexander Pinckney, and Abraham Johnson. Joshua Kite and Samuel Thompson were two of the suspected African warriors Edward Gorsuch sought to kidnap who had renamed themselves after gaining liberation; however, different accounts of the story are not able to accurately identify the enslaved names of the two individuals. Thomas P. Slaughter states that Joshua Kite and Nelson Ford could have been the same person, but he also writes that Nelson Ford had renamed himself John Beard according to an African resident of Christiana interviewed years after the resistance. An 1850 census recorded John Beard as 23 years old and listed his occupation as a laborer, so it is possible Nelson Ford and John Beard were also the same person

(Slaughter, 1991). According to an African man and participant of the Christiana Resistance named Peter Wood, Alexander Scott, Edward Thompson, and Thomas Wilson were the liberated names of three out of the four Africans Edward Gorsuch sought with the fourth keeping the enslaved name Joshua Hammond. Joshua Hammond lived in the area of Christiana briefly after gaining liberation before leaving the area with several others and was never heard from again (Forbes, 1998).

According to Ella Forbes' *But We Have No Country: The 1851 Christiana, Pennsylvania Resistance* (1998), Abraham Johnson was possibly the same person mentioned in R.C. Smedley's *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester County and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania*. Smedley described Abraham Johnson as an African warrior formerly enslaved in Cecil County, Maryland, by a man named Mr. Wheeler. After hearing he was to be sold the following day, Abraham Johnson informed his mother, and they liberated themselves along with his sister and her child the night before the sale. Along their journey, they received assistance from an African near the Susquehanna River named Robert Loney who ferried them at night to Lancaster County where they received assistance from the European American Underground Railroad agent William Wright in Columbia (Smedley, 2005). Ella Forbes believes Robert Loney also may have ferried Charles Parker and William Parker across the Susquehanna River from Wrightsville, York County, to Columbia, Lancaster County, during their journey to liberation (Forbes, 1998). Afterwards, Abraham Johnson and his family received assistance from a European American cabinet maker, farmer, storekeeper, and undertaker named Jeremiah Moore, in which Abraham Johnson's mother lived with Lindley Coates

and sister with European American abolitionist Thomas Bonsall before moving to Reading and becoming married. After the Christiana Resistance, the entire family went to Canada (Smedley, 2005). Ella Forbes writes that Jeremiah Moore's ledger notes that Abraham Johnson began receiving payment for work from March 1850 until April 15, 1851, with one final payment made in 1853 when Johnson was residing in Canada. Jeremiah Moore also employed other Africans accused of taking part in the Christiana Resistance that were arrested in its aftermath such as Henry Sims, Jonathan Black, Lewis Smith, and Samuel Hanson (Forbes, 1998). In Canada, Johnson bought 50 acres next to the home of William Parker in Buxton and married Clarissa Briscoe who was also an African warrior that had liberated herself from enslavement in New Orleans, Louisiana, at the age of 12. Clarissa Briscoe was brought to Ohio each summer by her enslaver to babysit, and when she became 12, Briscoe's mother told her to liberate herself the next time she went to Ohio and go to Canada. Clarissa Briscoe followed her mother's orders and became liberated in Canada but never saw her mother again, unfortunately. Together, Abraham Johnson and Clarissa Briscoe had 12 children with only four surviving to adulthood. By 1861, an Abraham Johnson and Abraham Johnston were listed in a Canadian census. Ella Forbes believed the families were the same, and Johnston became the preferred spelling used by Abraham Johnson's descendants (Forbes, 1998).

According to William Parker, Joshua Kite informed the Parker household of the approaching Gorsuch kidnapers during the early morning hours on September 11, 1851, after seeing Edward Gorsuch and his posse coming towards the Parker house as he was heading to the home of Joseph Pownall and Phoebe Pownall, which is where Kite was

living at the time (Parker, 1999). Joseph Pownall was the brother of Levi Pownall and Justice of the Peace in Christiana, in which he later gave warrants for participants of the Christiana Resistance (Forbes, 1998). Upon seeing Gorsuch's posse, Joshua Kite came storming into the Parker household to alert those inside, in which they were already prepared for armed resistance against Edward Gorsuch and his armed group (Parker, 1999). The details of what took place precisely at the home of William Parker vary. What is known is that members of both groups were armed with guns. When Edward Gorsuch's posse arrived to William Parker's home, Edward Gorsuch and Deputy Marshal Kline came inside and began to ascend the stairs to the upper floor of the house where the entire Parker household was stationed when William Parker met them on the staircase landing and asked the kidnappers to identify themselves. When Kline replied that he was a United States Marshal, Parker retorted that he did not care for him nor the United States. Edward Gorsuch insisted on ascending the stairs when William Parker declared, "See here, old man, you can come up, but you can't go down again. Once up here, you are mine" (Parker, 1999, p. 283). This warning along with the throwing of a five-pronged fish gig and axe at them from the Africans upstairs caused both kidnappers to retreat. Deputy Marshal Kline then threatened to burn down the Parker home with the Africans inside to which William Parker replied, "None but a coward would say the like. You can burn us, but you can't take us; before I give up, you will see my ashes scattered on earth" (Parker, 1999, p. 284). It is not known which group fired the first shot; however, it is suspected Edward Gorsuch and his group opened fire first after Eliza Parker blew a horn from an upstairs room to alert neighbors and members belonging to the Black Self-

Protection Society of kidnappers (Slaughter, 1991). By this time, William Parker had organized the community to practice armed resistance against kidnappers and to respond to the sound of the horn as warning of intruders. Not knowing the meaning for the horn but suspecting it as a warning to the surrounding community, it is believed the Gorsuch posse then began to open fire on the home of William Parker at the upstairs window where Eliza Parker was blowing the horn down on her knees. Eliza Parker was unharmed because the house was made of stone, and the windows were deep. William Parker leaned out the upstairs window and was fired at by Deputy Marshal Kline. In response, Parker grabbed a gun and intended to kill Edward Gorsuch believing he was the one who instructed Kline to fire at him but was stopped by Alexander Pinckney (Parker, 1999). The gunfire ceased, and William Parker asked Edward Gorsuch to identify who he was looking to kidnap. He asked if it was himself to which Gorsuch responded no then did the same for Alexander Pinckney and finally Abraham Johnson. Edward Gorsuch then began to ascend the stairs inside William Parker's home again and was about to be fired upon by the Africans inside when Dickinson Gorsuch begged his father to come back outside to which he obliged. Outside, Deputy Marshal Kline wrote a note to Joshua Gorsuch and asked him to bring 100 men from Lancaster to help with the kidnapping. William Parker responded by telling the posse to bring 500 because it would take all the men of Lancaster for the Africans inside his home to surrender (Parker, 1999).

Within several minutes of the horn being sounded, several neighbors, both African and European American, arrived armed to the Parker household and surrounded the kidnappers, including the African warrior who liberated himself from Edward Gorsuch,

Noah Buley (Slaughter, 1991). Seeing the amount of European Americans responding to the horn and being talked to by Deputy Marshal Kline to assist the kidnappers, Alexander Pinckney panicked thinking the Africans inside the home were outnumbered and suggested to William Parker that he would surrender himself to the kidnappers. William Parker immediately told Pinckney that if he attempted to surrender then he'd blow out his brains emphasizing, "Don't believe, that any living man can take you. Don't give up to the slaveholder" (Parker, 1999, p. 286). Eliza Parker backed her husband's position threatening to cut the head off the first person who decided to surrender with a corn cutter (Parker, 1999). Eliza Parker was 21 years old at the time of the resistance and had three children with William Parker as well as had other family members in the area who were also African warriors and would not risk losing or never seeing them. To protect their children from the kidnappers, Eliza Parker and Hannah Pinckney's mother, Cassandra Warner, watched after them at a safe location (Slaughter, 1991). It is estimated between 25 to 150 African men and women armed with clubs, guns, scythes, shovels, and swords arrived to William Parker's home individually and in groups on foot and by horse after hearing the horn sounded by Eliza Parker (Hine, 2014). One of the African men named Ezekiel Thompson and described as an "Indian negro" came to William Parker's home armed with a scythe in one hand and a revolver in the other hand (Slaughter, 1991, p. 63). R.C. Smedley states three African men named Charles Long, James Dawsey, and William Howard also participated in the Christiana Resistance and hid afterwards for two weeks under the floor of an unnamed African man's house in Drumore, Lancaster County, before journeying to Canada and arriving there after ten days of traveling. When they made it to

Canada safely with the assistance from European American abolitionist Caleb C. Hood and Eli Hambleton, William Howard wrote a letter to his wife back in United States who immediately sold their household items and went to Canada to join him (Smedley, 2005). Another African man named Samuel Hopkins arrived to William Parker's home armed with a corn cutter. Later, he served in the Civil War as a part of the 32nd United States Colored Troops. In 1896, he was famously photographed next to the African Peter Wood in front of William Parker's home caring the same corn cutter he wielded during the Christiana Resistance. In 1911, an interview by Hugh Fulton for the Lancaster newspaper called *New Era* was published and described Samuel Hopkins as an African warrior who liberated himself from southern Maryland and settled in Columbia, Lancaster County, with the assistance of European American abolitionist Dr. Daniel Gibbons. According to the interview, Samuel Hopkins received his liberated name from Dr. Gibbons and swore never to reveal his enslaved name, in which Hopkins stated he did not to anyone even his wife, children, and grandchildren. However, the interview was meant to depict Samuel Hopkins negatively and deprive him of the corn cutter that was given to his European American executor of his will, Comley Maule, and eventually placed in the Lancaster County Historical Society. Descendants of Samuel Hopkins such as Reverend Ambrose Hopkins of Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church in Atglen, Pennsylvania, and grandson of Samuel Hopkins later disputed that he was never enslaved but instead came to Pennsylvania from Maryland to escape oppression from the South (Forbes, 1998).

The number of Africans present varies with each retelling of the Christiana Resistance, but the aforementioned range accounts for the variations. The newspaper

*Philadelphia Times* even reported in 1893 there were Africans led by Lloyd Parker from an area known as Welsh Mountain that stretches 20 miles from Coatesville, Chester County, to the city of Lancaster in Lancaster County that participated in the Christiana Resistance. Lloyd Parker was described as a United States sailor and was involved in the War of 1812 at the Battle of Bladensburg under the command of European American Commodore Barney. However, Lloyd Parker nor Welsh Mountain were ever mentioned by William Parker in his account of the Christiana Resistance (Forbes, 1998). This is perhaps done for good reason in terms of purposely not mentioning all the participants of the resistance in his account because of the danger it posed to those involved that is emphasized when Parker states:

It is true that some of the things which did occur are spoken of but slightly, there being good and valid reasons why they were passed over thus at that time in these cases, many of which might be interesting to place here, and which I certainly should do, did not the same reasons still exist in full force for keeping silent. I shall be compelled to let them pass just as they are recorded. (Parker, 1999, p. 293)

According to Thomas P. Slaughter, local Africans slept in the fields around the Parker household in preparation of the Gorsuch posse which could account for how so many were able to arrive within an hour of hearing the horn blown by Eliza Parker. It is also estimated 200 Africans lived within eight miles of William Parker's home at the time of the resistance meaning upwards of three-quarters of the Africans in the area were possibly there to defend against Gorsuch's posse (Slaughter, 1991). One of the European American neighbors to arrive first and by horse was Castner Hanway who lived next door to the Parkers and was a miller by trade. Hanway was informed by a European American

Quaker neighbor named Elijah Lewis to follow him to the Parker home. Elijah Lewis came to the Parker home by foot and was warned of kidnappers prior to speaking with Castner Hanway by a nearby African farmer named Isaiah Clarkson. Isaiah Clarkson told Elijah Lewis kidnappers were seeking to kidnap William Parker which caused Lewis to hurry to the Parker home and seek help along the way. En route to William Parker's home, Elijah Lewis also asked an African named Jacob Woods to follow him there to assist. Hanway and Lewis are both believed to have not arrived armed but instead to see what the commotion was all about (Slaughter, 1991). This is something that would be disputed later when Castner Hanway was on trial for his role in the Christiana Resistance.

Deputy Marshal Kline approached Castner Hanway and Elijah Lewis upon their arrival to William Parker's home. Believing Hanway and Lewis to be the leaders of the resistance because they were European American and could not fathom Africans organizing an armed defense, Kline asked for their assistance in kidnapping the two African warriors Edward Gorsuch was seeking inside the home. Hanway and Lewis both declined to help Kline which caused him to become enraged. According to Kline's future testimony to United States District Attorney John W. Ashmead that detailed his interaction with Castner Hanway, Kline stated:

After I had told him my warrants, he read them and handed them back, and he said the colored people had a right to defend themselves, and he was not going to help me, and I asked if he would keep them away, and he said No,—he would not have anything to do with them. (Delbanco, 2018, p. 287)

While the confrontation between Kline and Hanway and Lewis took place, Africans continued to arrive to the home of William Parker and point their weapons at the Gorsuch

posse (Slaughter, 1991). After the confrontation, William Parker and the men inside his home came to the front door and stood in the doorway while stating their intentions on defending themselves. The African men then came outside to where the kidnappers stood and continued their defiance which prompted Dickinson Gorsuch to refer to William Parker as a “nigger” (Parker, 1999, p. 287). William Parker responded that if Dickinson Gorsuch said that again then he would knock his teeth down his throat. Dickinson Gorsuch then fired his pistol at William Parker and missed. According to William Parker, he knocked the pistol out of his hand, and a second pistol dropped to the ground when Dickinson Gorsuch attempted to run to a nearby field. Alexander Pinckney countered with his double barrel gun and shot Dickinson Gorsuch twice (Parker, 1999).

Remarkably, Dickinson Gorsuch would survive the near fatal gunshot wounds (Slaughter, 1991). Samuel Thompson, one of the Africans Edward Gorsuch sought to kidnap, struck Edward Gorsuch in the head with Alexander Pinckney’s gun twice causing it to bend and not be able to fire (Parker, 1999). The kidnappers then began to shoot at the Africans who in return rushed the kidnappers. The Africans were too close to the kidnappers to shoot. Instead, the Africans used their guns to deliver blows to the kidnappers which caused them to run. Three or four other Africans then attacked Edward Gorsuch, in which he sustained gunshot wounds and laid on the ground until the African women completed killing him according to William Parker (Parker, 1999). In other accounts of the Christiana Resistance, Edward Gorsuch is shot first then Dickinson Gorsuch when he goes to assist his father (Slaughter, 1991). William Parker mentions that one account even states Edward Gorsuch shot one of the African warriors he was seeking first before being

shot himself in retaliation, but Parker says that was false. He continues by stating there were only two African men who suffered wounds during the resistance, and the injuries were not crippling or long lasting. One African man was shot in the hand near the wrist and pushed the ball bullet out of the skin himself while the other was shot in the thigh and had the ball bullet extracted (Parker, 1999). The two injured men are believed to have been Henry C. Hopkins and John Long and were treated for their injuries at the home of Dr. Augustus W. Cain where Hopkins resided in Sadsbury, Chester County. Henry C. Hopkins remained in the area after the Christiana Resistance and worked for Jeremiah Moore in 1860 and 1861 by chopping wood, digging gardens, husking shocks of corn, planting corn, and threshing wheat (Forbes, 1998).

While Edward Gorsuch and Dickinson Gorsuch were being attacked, Kline along with the rest of the kidnapers fled the scene to safety. William Parker ran after Nathan Nelson but could not catch him and returned back to his house to see Alexander Pinckney running after Joshua Gorsuch. William Parker was able to strike Joshua Gorsuch on the side of the head that lead to Alexander Pinckney also hitting him and forcing Gorsuch to the ground where he was beaten by others until blood came out of his ears (Parker, 1999). His injuries were significant enough that he was concussed and sustained brain damage as well as suffered from severe headaches for the rest of his life (Slaughter, 1991). Nathan Nelson and Nicholas Hutchings ran faster than anyone William Parker had ever seen he remarked and escaped unharmed. Deputy Marshal Kline and Dr. Thomas Pearce also escaped (Parker, 1999). According to William Parker, Dr. Pearce would have been killed by one of the Africans a part of the resistance had it not been for Castner Hanway

getting in the way of the attack while trying to protect the kidnapper. Hanway was riding his horse in between the African and kidnapper and was warned to move or risk being killed. Castner Hanway moved out of the way, and the African shot at Dr. Pearce but missed (Parker, 1999). However, Dr. Pearce would later testify that during the resistance his skull was grazed by a bullet causing scalp burn, another bullet struck him in the wrist, two bullets struck him in the spine, and a fifth bullet hit his shoulder blade (Slaughter, 1991). Perhaps, all of the kidnappers would have been shot dead had it not been for most of the guns used by the Africans being bent so badly during the melee that only two or three worked properly according to William Parker (Parker, 1999). William Parker claims in his account that Edward Gorsuch was still alive after being attacked, and the women at the scene put an end to his life (Parker, 1999). Although William Parker does not say how the women killed Edward Gorsuch, it is theorized they beat and hacked at his body with corn cutters (Slaughter, 1991). The women then supposedly took three hundred dollars out of the coat pocket of Edward Gorsuch and divided it amongst themselves according to one account. Another account of the role of the women in the death of Edward Gorsuch goes even further by stating they severed his penis ceremoniously. The severing of the penis was never reported in recounts of the Christiana Resistance in the North but was widely believed in the South as factual (Slaughter, 1991).

William Parker and his family hastily devised a plan to leave Lancaster County following the two hour incident of the Christiana Resistance for Canada. He decided the best option for a safe escape was for himself to travel ahead of his wife and children to

decrease the chances of being discovered. William Parker fled with Abraham Johnson and Alexander Pinckney while the African warriors enslaved at Edward Gorsuch's Retreat Farm escaped together safely towards liberation in Canada (Slaughter, 1991). According to Parker, after the armed resistance at his home, Parker and his cohort immediately fled to a friend's house in Downingtown, Chester County, until nightfall on September 11, 1851, after first passing through the Chester County towns of Penningtonville and Parkesburg (Parker, 1999). The home was possibly that of European American Dr. J.K. Eshleman (Smedley, 2005). The group then were on their way to Philadelphia when a pastor from the city advised them to go to Norristown, Montgomery County, instead for better safety. After a day of rest in Norristown, Parker's group went to north to Quakertown, Bucks County (Parker, 1999). The home they visited there was possibly that of the European American Quaker Richard Moore who assisted African warriors in journeying to New York from Quakertown and is believed to have helped William Parker in fleeing to Canada. Coincidentally, Richard Moore was the son-in-law to the Mayor of Quakertown, Edward Foulke, whose relatives came to Pennsylvania with William Penn—an African enslaver (Blockson, 2001). After Quakertown, William Parker and his group traveled to Wind Gap, Northampton County, then to Tannersville, Monroe County. After Tannersville, they journeyed to Friendsville, Susquehanna County, then to Jefferson, New York, and finally Rochester, New York (Parker, 1999). William Parker's group made the 500 mile trek north towards Rochester, New York, by foot, train, and horse carriage to the home of Frederick Douglass on Alexander Street (Blockson, 2001). The home was well designed for assisting African warriors to Canada because it

was located on a hill with a private road and inside had a complex network of secret closets and panels for hiding (Anadolu-Okur, 2016). The African warrior and businessman William C. Goodridge is also believed to have assisted Africans in fleeing to Canada who participated in the Christiana Resistance, in which Goodridge used special railroad cars he owned to transport them. Prior to living in York County, Goodridge previously resided in New York, so it is possible he also assisted Abraham Johnson, Alexander Pinckney, and William Parker along their route to Canada through New York (Blockson, 2001). In *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881), Douglass writes about William Parker's group stating, "I could not look upon them as murderers. To me, they were heroic defenders of the just rights of man against manstealers and murderers. So I fed them, and sheltered them in my house" (Jackson, 2019, p. 57). Douglass continues by writing:

The work of getting these men safely into Canada was a delicate one. They were not only fugitives from slavery but charged with murder, and officers were in pursuit of them... The hours they spent at my house were therefore hours of anxiety as well as activity. (Slaughter, 1991, p. 78)

According to Nilgün Anadolu-Okur's *Dismantling Slavery: Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, and Formation of the Abolitionist Discourse, 1841-1851* (2016), the European abolitionist from Britain Julia Griffiths also assisted William Parker's group in escaping to Canada from Rochester in collaboration with Douglass. Upon Douglass' instruction, Griffiths guided Parker's group to the landing on the Genesee River after speaking to an African agent there who allowed the group to board a British boat headed for Canada (Anadolu-Okur, 2016). Douglass waited with the three men on the ship

before takeoff towards Kingston, Canada, at 8:00 P.M. (Parker, 1999). Before undocking, Parker expressed his gratitude to Douglass by handing him the pistol of Edward Gorsuch that fell from his hand when he died; it was a gesture that was greatly appreciated by Douglass (Slaughter, 1991). Frederick Douglass would later visit William Parker's home in Buxton, Canada, in 1856 as well as visited Buxton in 1852 and Chatham in 1854 (Forbes, 1998). As the boat undocked, a friend of William Parker's onboard pointed out kidnapers looking for him and his group on the shore. William Parker stated the kidnapers looked like fools as he yelled to a friend on the shore to write to Deputy Marshal Kline that he was in Canada, in which the boat arrived to Kingston at 6:00 A.M. on September 21, 1851 (Parker, 1999). After William Parker's escape to Canada was difficult but masterful, in which several means of concealment were used to avoid kidnapers. According to Charles L. Blockson's *Hippocrene Guide to the Underground Railroad* (1995), William Parker at one point even disguised himself as a Quaker woman along his journey to Canada, but this is never mentioned by Parker in his recollection of what took place.

Abraham Johnson, Alexander Pinckney, and William Parker arrived to Canada safely and settled in Ontario where they were welcomed by the African warrior Henry Bibb and his second wife, Mary Bibb. Parker's group went from Kingston to Toronto where William Parker was reunited with his wife after two months of separation. It was difficult to find work and basic necessities for survival because Parker's group left Lancaster County with no money. The group planned to travel to Windsor and Chatham en route to Buxton while William Parker's family went to Buxton without him as he

attended matters in Windsor. During the journey from Windsor to Chatham, Parker's group lacked funds for the travel and were assisted by Henry Bibb. After three weeks, William Parker was able to successfully find temporary employment in Detroit while traveling with Henry Bibb. In Detroit, Henry Bibb and William Parker assisted three African warriors who were arrested under the suspicion of being horse thieves with escaping from jail and to liberation in Windsor. Parker was instrumental in the escape when he was threatened with being arrested by the sheriff of the jail, in which Parker told him to do it. Parker saying that allowed for the jail door to be opened as the African warriors escaped because of the large crowd there in protest. Even while wanted by authorities in Pennsylvania, William Parker showcased his heroism by risking his life for other Africans that sought liberation. After working in Detroit, Parker split the five-dollars he earned with Abraham Johnson and Alexander Pinckney before heading to Chatham where Alexander Pinckney eventually became a peddler and broke off from the group. Hannah Pinckney also was able to make it successfully to Canada. Eventually, both Abraham Johnson and William Parker arrived to Buxton (Forbes, 1998).

Eliza Parker and her children, Cassandra Parker, John T. Parker, and Maria L. Parker, had a more difficult time escaping to Canada. Eliza Parker was apprehended twice during her journey but escaped, and on the third time an attempt was made to catch her, she decided to leave the children behind with her mother, Cassandra Warner (Slaughter, 1991). Cassandra Warner was harassed heavily by European Americans seeking the whereabouts of Eliza Parker and William Parker as well as others involved in the Christiana Resistance that were inside their home. According to Thomas P. Slaughter,

Warner was so distraught because she was not informed where they had gone that she became depressed and hopeless. Cassandra Warner then submitted herself back to enslavement to her former enslaver in desperation, in which she never saw her family again afterwards and lived the rest of her life in Maryland (Slaughter, 1991). However, Ella Forbes suggests a different interpretation of Cassandra Warner submitting herself back to enslavement as a form of protection to her children and grandchildren because it was something she had done previously for her two daughters and sons according to an article in the newspaper *Frederick Douglass' Paper* published on October 16, 1851, that was reprinted from the newspaper *Independent*. According to the article, prior to gaining liberation, Cassandra Warner's sons liberated themselves from enslavement in Maryland by traveling to Havre de Grace, Maryland, then taking a boat across the Susquehanna River into Pennsylvania. Shortly afterwards, Cassandra Warner's daughters, Eliza Parker and Hannah Pinckney, liberated themselves and reunited with their brothers in Christiana. Because of her children's liberation and refusing to provide their whereabouts, Cassandra Warner was whipped and thrown off her enslaver's plantation which led to Warner joining her children in Christiana. If Cassandra Warner protected her children previously, then it is likely she did the same for her daughters, grandchildren, and sons-in-law after the Christiana Resistance by submitting to being re-enslaved rather than seeing them suffer that fate. It is the ultimate sacrifice she as a mother made to re-enslave herself knowing the horrors of enslavement to protect her children and grandchildren (Forbes, 1998). Similarly, an African warrior named Abraham Hall submitted himself back to enslavement after he was arrested several days after the Christiana Resistance. Abraham

Hall had liberated himself in 1847 from enslavement in Maryland out of fear after he injured his enslaver's grandson. Hall made several attempts to return back to enslavement after gaining liberation but was stopped by his neighbors with the threat of physical harm if he did. Abraham Hall returned to enslavement because he did not want to remain imprisoned or killed as a result of the resistance (Slaughter, 1991). Eventually, William Parker was reunited with his wife and children after he reached Canada where they resided in Buxton, home of other African warriors from Pennsylvania like the Shadd family, for the rest of their lives liberated from the horrors of kidnappers (Slaughter, 1991).

In Canada, William Parker became a farmer and the Kent County reporter for Frederick Douglass' newspaper *The North Star*, which was significant because reading and writing were forbidden when Parker was enslaved, but he learned how to do both while in Canada (Anadolu-Okur, 2016). Parker also was elected to the Court of Arbitration and became the Buxton representative on the Raleigh Township Council that Abraham Shadd also joined previously as the first African elected to public office in Canada. It would be Abraham Shadd along with Abraham Johnson, Joseph Shadd, and Osborne Anderson who assisted William Parker in March 1858 with the manuscript of his life that would be published in 1866. William Parker and Abraham Shadd also belonged to Buxton's Mount Carmel Lodge Number Ten of the Prince Hall Freemasons that was combined into the Canadian Grand Lodge and united all the African lodges in the area into one in 1872. According to the fellow Christiana Resistance participant Peter Wood, Alexander Pinckney and William Parker joined the Union Army during the Civil War,

and he met with both men while serving as a part of the 3rd Regiment of the United States Colored Infantry (USCT) in South Carolina. However, historical records do not indicate Alexander Pinckney nor William Parker were a part of the Union Army, but it could have been possible (Forbes, 1998). In February and March 1866, William Parker's account about his life and what took place during the Christiana Resistance was published in two parts for the magazine *Atlantic Monthly* entitled "The Freedman's Story."

It is also around 1866 when Benjamin Whipper, the brother of William Whipper who led a group of about seven African men that included William Parker in preventing a kidnapping of a young African girl in Lancaster County previously, immigrated to Chatham, Canada. Benjamin Whipper along with his brother, Alfred Whipper, sister, Mary Ann Whipper, and second wife, Sophia Whipper, emigrated to Chatham to join his nephew, James Whipper Purnell, already residing in Chatham. It would be Alfred Whipper and James Whipper Purnell along with members of the Chatham Vigilance Committee that would meet with European American abolitionist John Brown in Chatham in 1858 for his recruitment of individuals to join him in raiding Harpers Ferry. John Brown, Jr. would meet with William Parker in 1859 at his home in an attempt to recruit him but was not able to convince him. In Chatham, Alfred Whipper became a teacher, joined Martin Delany's emigration movement, and acted as an agent for Mary Ann Shadd's *The Provincial Freeman*. Mary Ann Whipper moved to Dresden, Canada, where she married James Hollinsworth who managed a warehouse there owned by William Whipper and Stephen Smith (Forbes, 1998). By 1871, William Parker and Eliza

Parker along with their seven children, Alfred Parker, Cassandra Parker, Cynthia Parker, Francis Parker, Mary Parker, Samuel Parker, and William Parker, Jr., were members of the British Methodist Episcopal Church. Two of the three children, John T. Parker and Maria L. Parker, that were alive during the aftermath of the Christiana Resistance died at a young age. Another child named Charles H. Parker also died young in Canada.

William Parker came back to Pennsylvania temporarily in 1872 to speak at a political rally for African Republicans of Chester County and Lancaster County and stayed in the state from June to August visiting friends. The Chester County newspaper *Oxford, Pennsylvania Press* reported William Parker also attended the Lincoln University graduation ceremony held on June 19, 1872. Upon his return to Canada, William Parker brought with him the widow of fellow Christiana Resistance participant Henry Sims. She lived in Buxton until her death at age 82 on May 27, 1899. The African William Howard Day was also in attendance at the political rally attended by William Parker and gave a speech. William Howard Day immigrated to Canada in 1856 and lived in Dresden, St. Catherine's, Chatham, and Buxton. At Buxton, he was a teacher and possibly taught William Parker. In 1863, William Howard Day returned to the United States and lived in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as well as became involved in politics there. After 1872, there are no records of William Parker, but the Buxton property was transferred to Eliza Parker in 1889 that perhaps indicates when he died even though he is not buried with her in Buxton (Forbes, 1998).

As a result of the Christiana Resistance, the President of the United States, Millard Fillmore, sent 45 United States Marines to Pennsylvania to help arrest and jail in

Philadelphia's Moyamensing Prison the 34 Africans and five European Americans who would be indicted on 117 separate counts of treason for their roles in the incident (Hine, 2014). In addition, 50 men deputized by Lancaster officials, armed gangs from Maryland, and 40 Philadelphia police officers sought to arrest and jail anyone associated with the Christian Resistance in Chester County and Lancaster County (Diggins, 2015). Included in the deputized men was the infamous European American kidnapper John Egan that belonged to an anti-African gang called "Killers" in Philadelphia that was responsible for the attempted genocide of Africans there in 1849, in which an African community was violently attacked, property was damaged, and one African was killed (Forbes, 1998, p. 15). About 40 of the men deputized by Lancaster officials were Irish railroad workers from Lancaster County who hated African laborers that competed with them in gaining employment similar to the anti-African mobs in Philadelphia causing genocide labeled as "riots" by historians during the 1800s. Every African in the area of Lancaster County was in danger of being arrested or kidnapped and sold into enslavement whether accused of being a participant of the Christiana Resistance or not (Slaughter, 1991). Some of the Africans arrested included: Joseph Benn, Jonathan Black, Tamsy Brown, William Brown, William Brown Jr., Daniel Caulsberry, Lewis James Christman, Elijah Clark, Susan Clark, Isaiah Clarkson, John Dobbins, Mifflin Flanders, John Holiday, Samuel Hanson, Francis Hawkins, Robert Johnston, Wilson Jones, John Morgan, Elizabeth Mosey, John Norton, Eliza Parker, Hannah Pinckney, Benjamin Pindergrast, George W.H. Scott, Emanuel Smith, Lewis Smith, Benjamin Thompson, Miller Thompson, Ezekiel Thomson, and Peter Woods. Although arrested, some of these

Africans denied being present during the Christiana Resistance such as Tamsy Brown who lived with her grandmother in Penningtonville and testified she was at school during the time of the incident, and Lewis Christmas who was released when his European American employer and owner of Sadbury Forges, George Steele, wrote to a man in Elkton, Maryland, upon Christmas' request and advocated knowing him. According to George Steele, the man in Elkton stated Lew Christmas was a liberated African as well as his father, Jerry Christmas, who was a fiddler and got his last name because of being an entertainer at dance parties. Daniel Caulsberry also worked for George Steele as a forgerman and was provided money owed by Steele while imprisoned (Forbes, 1998). Ultimately, the 34 Africans officially indicted and charged with treason included no women even though Eliza Parker, Hannah Pinckney, and others were active participants. Thomas P. Slaughter believes the reasoning for this is because the prosecution thought it would be difficult to convince a jury of 12 men to convict young mothers of treason, or that the women were viewed by European American men as not being intelligent enough to willingly participate and were only acting under the direction of men (Slaughter, 1991). Abraham Johnson and Alexander Pinckney were also not indicted. The 34 Africans indicted and charged with treason were: John Berry, William Berry, William Brown, William Brown 2d, Thomas Butler, Nelson Carter, Daniel Caulsberry, Elijah Clark, Isaiah Clarkson, Lewis Clarkson, Henry Curtis, Nelson Ford, Lewis Gates, Henry Green, Josh Hammond, John Holliday, Charles Hunter, John Johnson, Benjamin Johnson, Jacob Moore, John Morgan, William Parker, Alson Pemsley, Benjamin Pindergrast, George Reed, Henry Sims, William Thomas, Ezekiel Thompson, George Williams,

Samuel Williams, Washington Williams, William Williams, Collister Wilson, and Peter Woods. Other Africans that participated in the Christiana Resistance but were not indicted included William Dorsey, John Thomas, and John Williams. William Dorsey is possibly the same man who was assisted by William Parker when he was kidnapped years prior. The five European Americans indicted and charged with treason were Caster Hanway, Elijah Lewis, Jacob Townsend, James Jackson, and Joseph Scarlett. Although not usually included in historical accounts of the Christiana Resistance, Ella Forbes states Jacob Townsend was indicted because he handed an African a gun during the resistance but is only mentioned briefly in court records (Forbes, 1998).

Southern European Americans, especially in Maryland, were enraged that Edward Gorsuch was killed by the participants of the Christiana Resistance, and the main partakers had escaped. Because the Parker family had escaped, the blame for the resistance was placed on Caster Hanway and Elijah Lewis, who did not assist Deputy Marshal Kline in acquiring the African warriors Gorsuch sought. Gorsuch's posse conspired with the government of Maryland to see that Hanway was convicted for treason (Slaughter, 1991). Maryland's Governor, Enoch Louis Lowe, also threatened President Fillmore that if he did not try and convict those who participated in the Christiana Resistance with treason then Maryland would secede from the Union (Diggins, 2015). Treason was the charge chosen as best to enact capital punishment because first degree murder would be too difficult to prove in court, and second degree murder did not carry a punishment of death. In response to the charges of treason, Frederick Douglass wrote on September 25, 1851:

This is to cap the climax of American absurdity, to say nothing of American infamy. Our government has virtually made every colored man in the land an outlaw; one who may be hunted by any villain who may think proper to do so, and if the hunted man, finding himself stripped of all legal protection, shall lift his arm in his own defense, why forsooth, he is arrested, arraigned, and tried for high treason, and if found guilty, he must suffer death. The basis of allegiance is protection. We owe allegiance to the government that protects us, but to the government that destroys us, we owe no allegiance. (Russo, 2005, p. 87)

The trial was considered personal as much as it was political in Pennsylvania because of a gubernatorial election in October 1851. European Americans belonging to the Democratic Party accused the Whig Party Governor, William F. Johnston, of not supporting the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and he, therefore, was the cause for the Christiana Resistance. Governor Johnston also traveled by train through Christiana en route to Philadelphia shortly after Edward Gorsuch died and never got off the train to view the body even though other passengers did because he was not interested. This was viewed by Democrats as a show of disrespect. After the Christiana Resistance, Governor Johnston offered a reward of 1,000-dollars for the arrest and conviction all participants of the Christiana Resistance that was later increased to 2,000-dollars for William Parker's group. On September 25, 1851, *The New York Times* reported that Governor Johnston was assaulted and shot at by Democratic Party supporters during a Whig meeting in Tamaqua, Schuylkill County. The pro-enslavement Democrats propagandized these incidents, and Johnston later lost the gubernatorial election to the Democratic nominee William Bigler by a landslide (Forbes, 1998).

The trial for the Castner Hanway would take place in a federal courtroom at Independence Hall in Philadelphia for several weeks from November 25, 1851, to

December 12, 1851 costing the United States federal government 50,000-dollars (Blockson, 2001). In a display of support for William Parker and others who fought against kidnapers at Christiana, the African warrior Henry Bibb wrote in his newspaper *Voice of the Fugitive* that Parker deserved the admiration of previous great African leaders such as Hannibal and Toussaint L'Ouverture (Delbanco, 2018). The prosecution believed in having separate trials for the accused individuals to increase the chances of a conviction, and Hanway would be the first to be tried (Slaughter, 1991). The witnesses for the prosecution appeared to be stacked against the defense at first. However, upon cross-examination by the defense led by European American abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens, who had once represented an enslaver and had an African warrior named Charity Butler and her two children returned to enslavement, witness accounts changed often as well as discrepancies on who actually was present during the resistance. Also, two key African witnesses, John Clark and Josephus Washington, of the prosecution that were imprisoned at Moyamensing Prison escaped without a trace. The two Africans were forcibly being used by the prosecution because they possessed a written notice with the names of the African warriors the kidnapers were seeking a day prior to the Christiana Resistance. The notice also contained a warning to the Africans in the local area to prepare for armed resistance against Gorsuch's posse which the prosecution could use as proof of intentions to break the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 purposely. If John Clark and Josephus Washington were able to testify, then it also could have revealed Samuel Williams and his role in letting the Africans know of the arrival of Gorsuch's posse. It is not known how Clark and Washington escaped because no lock was broken, but it is

theorized their escape had outside assistance (Slaughter, 1991). Another African that was forcibly used by the prosecution was George Washington Harvey Scott who took the stand on December 4, 1851. Scott was born enslaved in Drumore, Lancaster County, in 1811 before gaining liberation in 1830 after his enslaver, John Barkley, died without a will. In 1833, he resided in the city of Lancaster where he worked as a carter and got married. However, by 1837, his business closed because of Irish immigrants (Forbes, 1998). Scott then spent much of his life homeless being arrested for petty larceny and vagrancy while traveling around Chester County and Lancaster County from 1837 until his death in 1859. The prosecution wanted him to lie about being present during the Christiana Resistance to identify participants, but he denied being there during trial. The prosecution tried to take advantage of Scott because he possibly suffered from mental health issues, and it believed paying him one-dollar and a quarter as well as providing a new suit would be enough for him to lie about being present during the resistance; however, the prosecution was embarrassingly mistaken (Slaughter, 1991). Ella Forbes writes Scott was confronted by William Brown the day before testifying as well as communicated with several other Africans that were imprisoned for the Christiana Resistance which also may have contributed to him not lying for the prosecution out of fear of retribution (Forbes, 1998). The defense stated there were no grounds to convict any of the Christiana Resistance participants of treason because Africans had been defending themselves against kidnapers prior to the incident which never resulted in charges of treason. An example of a kidnapping that had taken place prior to the Christiana Resistance in January 1851 was used by the defense to showcase the atrocity

of kidnappings in the area. The example kidnapping was that of the African warrior John Williams who was kidnapped from the farm of Henry Chamberlain by the Gap Hill Gang. The gang was notified an African warrior had liberated himself from a widow in Elkton, Maryland, a few years prior. Two kidnapers from the Gap Hill Gang arrived in the middle of the night to Chamberlain's farm, in which Henry Chamberlain was not home at the time, seeking any African and kidnapped John Williams without even taking the time to identify who he was by Thomas Pennington, Chamberlain's father-in-law; Thomas Pennington answered the door when the kidnapers knocked. Williams was injured and threatened with being shot if he resisted during the kidnapping, and it is not known what happened to him as the kidnapers took him to Maryland. By legal standards, this was an illegal act and was used to justify why Africans needed to defend themselves against kidnapers like Edward Gorsuch (Diggins, 2015). It took only 20 minutes for a federal judge to come to a verdict and find Castner Hanway not guilty (Blockson, 2001). Eventually, all charges were dropped against the indicted 39 individuals, and they were all released. While awaiting his release, one of the Africans indicted named George Williams was arrested and kidnapped by Deputy Marshal Kline and a man claiming to be Williams' enslaver at midnight in January 1852. Previously, George Williams was identified as an African warrior and had his cell opened to be further identified, but the kidnapers were stopped by the African Ezekiel Thompson who was imprisoned in a cell with George Williams awaiting trial for treason. Ezekiel Thompson threatened to beat the brains out of any kidnapper who entered the cell causing them to back away; however, George Williams was later kidnapped after Ezekiel Thompson's release.

Thompson would later voice his displeasure for Deputy Marshal Kline even further saying if he could get hold of him then he should kill him and go to the gallows in peace. The kidnapers were en route to Philadelphia with George Williams when they decided to stay the night in Parkesburg, Chester County. The kidnapers stopped at a tavern, got drunk, and fell asleep which created the opportunity for George Williams to escape who pretended to be asleep beforehand. George Williams was cold and handcuffed when he escaped on foot and made it to the home of William Williams, who was also indicted for the Christiana Resistance, located 15 miles away. The handcuffs were attempted to be removed but only one side broke free (Parker, 1999). Instead of resting and possibly being caught, George Williams continued partially handcuffed towards Philadelphia about 40 miles away where he was assisted by the African Dr. James Joshua Gould Bias to liberation in Canada (Forbes, 1998).

Although found not guilty, the 39 individuals indicted for the Christiana Resistance accrued large lawyer fees during their defense that put them in debt. To relieve the debt, African vigilance committees from Philadelphia, New York City, and Rochester paid the fees for the Africans indicted while the Sadsbury Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends in Lancaster County paid the fees for the European Americans (Slaughter, 1991). While imprisoned for 97 days under harsh conditions such as a lack of heat and ventilation, the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee led by William Still also provided clothing for the Africans indicted and funds for their families (Forbes, 1998). After the trial, Castner Hanway joined the Progressive Friends of Longwood in Kennett Square, Chester County, even though he never became a Quaker (Slaughter, 1991). The

Christiana Resistance was an occurrence the South never forgot and wanted revenge for during the Civil War. If the Confederate Army won the Battle of Gettysburg, then the plan was to burn Christiana to the ground out of vengeance for the killing of Edward Gorsuch, but this did not happen as a result of the Confederacy losing that battle (Slaughter, 1991). After the trial of Castner Hanway ended, the battle for African liberation continued on stronger than ever in Pennsylvania. As the Africans involved in the Christiana Resistance were being released from prison in December 1851, two incidents in Chester County took place involving the kidnappings of the African sisters Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker that would continue the fight for African liberation.

### **Parker Sisters' Fight for Liberation**

Although the liberated African sisters Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker shared the same last name as the African warrior William Parker, they were not related to him. However, sharing the same name created an association, especially for anti-Africans in Maryland angry about the Christiana Resistance and death of Edward Gorsuch. On December 30, 1851, Rachel Parker, who was at the age of 17 as well as lived and worked as a domestic in the household of European American Joseph C. Miller in West Nottingham, Chester County, was abducted by the infamous European American kidnapper Thomas McCreary (Kashatus, 2002). McCreary was a kidnapper from nearby Elkton, Maryland. McCreary was pursued by Miller and local residents from Nottingham, in which Thomas McCreary was arrested upon his arrival to Baltimore, Maryland, with Rachel Parker. Succeeding in having Thomas McCreary arrested, Joseph

C. Miller returned back to Nottingham by train; however, during the trip, he mysteriously disappeared. Four days later, Miller's body was found hanging from a tree not far from Baltimore at Stemmer's Run, Maryland. Maryland authorities ruled Miller's death a suicide but was proven false by a Chester County autopsy that revealed he died by poison after his body was exhumed four separate times (Russo, 2005). According to Thomas P. Slaughter's *Bloody Dawn: The Christiana Riot and Racial Violence in the Antebellum North*, it is suspected that Joseph C. Miller was murdered as a result of anti-African European Americans residing in Maryland taking the law into their own hands because it had failed them during the Christiana Resistance (Slaughter, 1991). McCreary was released shortly afterwards while Rachel Parker remained in jail for more than a year, in which she was released in January 1853 with the assistance of legal representation funded by European American Quakers in West Chester, Chester County.

Two weeks prior to Rachel Parker's kidnapping, her ten-year-old sister, Elizabeth Parker, who resided in the home of European American Mathew Donnelly in East Nottingham, Chester County, had also been kidnapped by Thomas McCreary. McCreary gagged and handcuffed Elizabeth Parker and had her held captive at Campbell's enslavement chamber in Baltimore where within a few weeks she was sold to an enslaver in New Orleans, Louisiana, for 1,900-dollars; Elizabeth Parker remained enslaved for six months (Kashatus, 2002). While enslaved in New Orleans, Elizabeth Parker insisted she was a liberated African which resulted in her being whipped by her enslaver. However, Elizabeth Parker would later come into contact with a watchman who listened to her story of being kidnapped. Afterwards, a magistrate had Elizabeth Parker sent back to

Baltimore because her enslaver could not prove she was enslaved (Russo, 2005). While Rachel Parker was awaiting release from jail, European American Quakers in West Chester paid 1,500-dollars for Elizabeth Parker's manumission (Kashatus, 2002). European American Reverend John Miller Dickey, founder of Ashmun Institute that would later be renamed Lincoln University, was instrumental in raising funds for Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker to be released even though Dickey was not an abolitionist but rather a believer in colonization as a supporter of the racist organization American Colonization Society. The kidnappings of the Parker sisters as well as his support of the American Colonization Society would be some of the reasons he founded Ashmun Institute as the first degree granting Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in the United States of America which was located in Chester County. In addition, John Miller Dickey's brother, Ebenezer Dickey, was one of the physicians that performed two autopsies on Joseph C. Miller's body in Chester County on January 17, 1852, and January 20, 1852, to determine his cause of death as arsenic and not suicide (Maddox, 2016). Both Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker returned to Pennsylvania as liberated Africans after being released on January 13, 1853. Thomas McCreary was ordered to be extradited for trial and charged with kidnapping by Pennsylvania Governor William Bigler, but the Governor of Maryland, Enoch Louis Lowe, would not surrender McCreary to Pennsylvania authorities. McCreary would never be punished for the kidnappings of the Parker sisters (Russo, 2005). Like the Christiana Resistance, the kidnappings of the Parker sisters became a national news story. Concerning the kidnappings and their significance, the liberated African William Still stated in his

seminal book *The Underground Railroad: Authentic Narratives and First-Hand Accounts* (2005):

It may be said, without contradiction, that Chester county [sic], at least, was never more aroused by any one single outrage that had taken place within her borders, than by these occurrences. For a long while the interest was kept alive, and even as lately as the past year (1870), we find the case still agitating the citizens of Chester county. (Still, 2005, “Kidnapping of Rachel and Elizabeth Parker,” para. 2)

In a little over a year after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the Christiana Resistance as well as the kidnappings of Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker brought more urgency to Africans in Chester County and the surrounding area to resist against kidnappers.

East Nottingham and West Nottingham were two towns where Africans passed through but did not reside in large numbers possibly because of its close proximity to the Mason-Dixon Line that was located about five miles away. The Mason-Dixon Line separated Maryland and Pennsylvania geographically, morally, and politically in relation to Africans and enslavement, especially after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. By 1850, West Nottingham had a total population of 728 people with only 33 of them being African. Four out of the 33 Africans in West Nottingham were children that resided in European American homes which included Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker (Maddox, 2016). Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker were the offspring of Edward “Ned” Parker and Rebecca “Beck” or “Little Beck” Parker (Maddox, 2016, p. 46). Rachel Parker was born in West Nottingham in 1834, and Elizabeth Parker was also born in West Nottingham in 1841. In addition, the Parker sisters had a sibling named James

Parker and possibly three other siblings when their mother lived with an African man named George Glasgow (alternate spelling Glasco) after Edward Parker and Rebecca Parker's marriage ended; however, historical records do not confirm the exact number of siblings besides James Parker. Residents of the area during the mid-nineteenth century believed George Glasgow and Rebecca Parker had at least two children with the possibility of four (Maddox, 2016). According to Marianne H. Russo and Paul A. Russo's *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century African-American Village*, George Glasgow was accused of bigamy by his wife, Nancy Glasgow when he and Rebecca Parker began dating. It's possible George Glasgow was also the brother of Samuel Glasgow from the African community called Hinsonville located in Upper Oxford, Chester County (modern day Lincoln University), but records are not able to confirm it. However, there is strong evidence that indicates they were related because Nancy Glasgow's daughter, Sylvia Glasgow, sailed with Samuel Glasgow and other Africans to Liberia in 1859. But it is possible Sylvia Glasgow went to Liberia because she assisted John Miller Dickey's mother and knew him personally; she was baptized by Dickey and accepted into the Oxford Presbyterian Church in 1854 (Russo, 2005). But according to Ella Forbes' *But We Have No Country: The 1851 Christiana, Pennsylvania Resistance* (1998), Rebecca Parker's family was related to the Glasgows in Hinsonville (Forbes, 1998).

Rebecca Parker was born in Lancaster County in 1813 and resided with her mother, Rebecca Chandler, at a Quaker family home that had the last name Milner. According to Lucy Maddox's *The Parker Sisters: A Border Kidnapping* (2016), Rebecca

Parker's father is not known. In 1818, Rebecca Chandler was brought to the Lancaster County almshouse where she died shortly afterwards. After her mother was admitted to the almshouse, Rebecca Parker lived at the home of European American William Brown in Lancaster County where she began working at the young age of five years old as a domestic. During the nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for African children, particularly females, to reside with and work for European American families in Chester County, especially on farms. By 1820, 44-percent of all Africans in Chester County and Delaware County lived with and worked for European American families (Maddox, 2016). In 1828, Rebecca Parker left the home of William Brown when he moved west, and she lived with and worked for the European American farmer John Kirk in Lancaster County for five years. After five years, John Kirk moved as well, and Rebecca Parker worked for a European American named Dr. Webster. On November 13, 1833, she married Edward Parker and lived with him in East Nottingham. Edward Parker was originally from West Nottingham and was raised by his grandfather. In addition, he was about twice the age of Rebecca Parker. While married, Rebecca Parker earned an income doing laundry at local boarding houses and farms as well as resided at those locations short term to complete the work. By circa 1844, her marriage with Edward Parker ended when he moved to East Marlborough, Chester County, to be with a woman named Kitty Hun, in which he took James Parker with him while Rebecca Parker kept Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker. The relationship with Kitty Hun was short lived, and by 1845 Edward Parker resided with a European American farmer named William Chalfant that hired James Parker as an apprentice at the young age of ten. Eventually, Edward Parker

lived in West Chester, Chester County, and died there in 1892 (Maddox, 2016). Rebecca Parker resided with George Glasgow from circa 1844 to 1848. She later would marry a man named Samuel Miller and reside back in Lancaster County where she is listed in historical records until 1860. It is not known what year she died (Maddox, 2016).

Similar to her mother, Elizabeth Parker was living with and working for European Americans at around the age of four while Rachel Parker began doing the same around the age of ten. Both sisters began work around the time their parents' marriage came to an end, and most likely they began to work because Rebecca Parker could not support them on her own. By 1851, Rebecca Parker was working for the European American John Anderson in Lancaster County for 50 cents a week that included room and board and was visited by her two daughters occasionally. However, in late November 1851, Elizabeth Parker and Rebecca Parker had a disagreement that resulted in them not being on speaking terms until the former's kidnapping trial over a year later. Shortly after Elizabeth Parker's disagreement with her mother, she began to work at the home of Matthew Donnelly where she was kidnapped. Prior to working for Matthew Donnelly, Elizabeth Parker had lived with and worked for five different European American families, in which she left her last employer before Donnelly without notice.

Unbeknownst to Elizabeth Parker, the Donnelly family was suffering a financial crisis that began in 1849 that likely led to Matthew Donnelly's participation in the kidnapping for monetary purposes. It was never proven Matthew Donnelly participated in the kidnapping of Elizabeth Parker but was believed by the Africans in Hinsonville that he did participate and received assistance from an African who lived in Hinsonville rumored

to be a kidnapper as well (Maddox, 2016). The African is referred to as “Farmer X” in Pauli Murray’s *Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family* (1999) (Murray, 1999, p. 98). According to Pauli Murray:

Farmer X lived near the west branch of Big Elk Creek a mile south of the Fitzgerald farm. On moonlit nights he would follow the creek bank until he reached the woods on top of a hill near Donnely’s house where he met with Donnely and a gang of Maryland kidnappers. He supplied them with information on any colored folks around the locality whose descriptions correspond with those of wanted fugitives or who would have difficulty proving their free status if kidnapped. (Murray, 1999, p. 98)

Farmer X is believed to have been George Walls although there has been no evidence to prove its truth. However, some of his descendants believe it to be true because it is unknown how he accumulated his wealth that allowed him to invest a substantial amount of stock in an Oxford, Chester County, bank and will each one of his children a home after his death (Forbes, 1998). It is possible William Parker also referenced George Walls in his narrative of the Christian Riot stating:

Awhile before this occurrence, there lived in a town not far away from Christiana a colored man who was in the habit of decoying fugitives fresh from bondage to his house on various pretexts, and, by assuming to be their friend, got from them the name of their master, his residence, and other needed particulars. He would then communicate with the master about his slave, tell him at what time the man would be at his house, and when he came at the appointed hour, the poor refugee would fall into the merciless clutches of his owner. (Parker, 1999, p. 166)

Although William Parker never named George Walls as the culprit, Ella Forbes believes it is possible. Other Georges Walls descendants believe he assisted African warriors rather than kidnapped them because his home had a trapdoor and was still standing after the

time period William Parker and other Africans took action against the African kidnapper whose house was burned down (Forbes, 1998).

The kidnapping of Elizabeth Parker happened on a December 1851 evening when Matthew Donnelly asked her to retrieve a slop bucket even though he had just come inside from being outside for 15 minutes. The request was considered odd to Elizabeth Parker that further adds to the likelihood Matthew Donnelly was a participant in her kidnapping. Elizabeth Parker was cleaning up dishes from dinner between Matthew Donnelly and European American John Merritt when she went outside to bring in the slop bucket. John Merritt was Donnelly's brother-in-law and was a kidnapper that was associated with Thomas McCreary. According to Lucy Maddox, Merritt also belonged to a gang that was most likely the Gap Gang that terrorized Africans in Chester County and Lancaster County and was fought against by William Parker and other Africans a part of his self-defense group—the Lancaster Black Self-Protection Society (Maddox, 2016). When Elizabeth Parker went outside, she was gagged and tied up by two kidnappers, Thomas McCreary and an unknown “whiskered man” according to Elizabeth Parker, and taken to Baltimore by McCreary (Maddox, 2016, p. 65). All four men were suspected to have been active participants in her kidnapping. Along the journey to Baltimore, Elizabeth Parker was held captive and still gagged at McCreary's home in Elkton while awaiting for a train to come the following night after the kidnapping. Elizabeth Parker was ordered at gunpoint by Thomas McCreary to refer to herself as Henrietta Crocus and lie that she was an African warrior from Baltimore that was previously enslaved by a European American named Hannah Dickehut. In Baltimore, Hannah Dickehut was

represented by her son-in-law Luther Schoolfield to confirm Elizabeth Parker's identity as Henrietta Crocus. The real African warrior Henrietta Crocus along with her African warrior mother, Juno Crocus, and African warrior sister, Eliza Crocus, liberated themselves with their liberated African father, Allan Crocus, in April 1847. McCreary would lie again when he kidnapped Rachel Parker two weeks later claiming she was Eliza Crocus (Maddox, 2016). Eliza Crocus and Henrietta Crocus were around the same ages of Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker as well as labored at homes of European Americans in their youth. Allen Crocus worked at the North Point lighthouse in Baltimore and maintained the lights there. At the age of eight, Eliza Crocus was bound out for enslavement to a woman named Susannah Martin from December 1844 until April 1847. While there, she was visited by both her mother and father on occasion. On one Sunday night, Juno Crocus approached the home of Susannah Martin with an emergency that Allen Crocus had a broken blood vessel and was dying, so she needed Eliza Crocus to see her father before he passed away. Susannah Martin agreed to the request that allowed Eliza Crocus and Juno Crocus to liberate themselves together while Allen Crocus assisted Henrietta Crocus with liberation from Maryland (Maddox, 2016).

Elizabeth Parker was held captive in Baltimore for two weeks at one of the largest enslavement chambers in the United States owned by the European American brothers Bernard Campbell and Walter Campbell where she was sold to the latter for 600-dollars. By the 1840s, Baltimore had one of the largest domestic ports that exported enslaved Africans to the South, particularly New Orleans. Elizabeth Parker along with about 20 other Africans were shipped from Baltimore to New Orleans on December 18, 1851,

aboard the enslavement ship named *Henry A. Barling* headed by the Campbell brothers. After about a month journeying across the ice filled sea that caused the enslavement ship to be frigid, she arrived in New Orleans on January 12, 1852, and was sold again at an auction two weeks after her arrival there for 900-dollars to a female enslaver with the last name Churo. She was one of 1,279 enslaved Africans shipped by the Campbell brothers to enslavers in New Orleans between 1844 and 1853 (Maddox, 2016). The Campbell enslavement chamber at Baltimore did not cease to exist until the Union Army released the Africans held there as well as at other locations in the city in July 1863 during the Civil War. While enslaved in New Orleans for five months, Elizabeth Parker labored at the market selling flowers, milk, and molasses candy from morning until night as well as completed domestic work. One night in June 1852 she was stopped by a watchman for being out past 8:00 P.M. which was not permitted without an approved permit for enslaved Africans. Being out past 8:00 P.M. as an enslaved African in New Orleans without an approved permit, oftentimes, resulted in being jailed then punished by a magistrate with physical labor or being whipped (Maddox, 2016). Elizabeth Parker stated at first to being enslaved by Mrs. Churo but was not believed by the watchman that lead to revealing her true identity as a liberated African that was kidnapped from Pennsylvania. The watchman arrested Elizabeth Parker and had her jailed until the next morning to be seen by a magistrate to decide her fate. On the following morning, the magistrate sent for Bernard Campbell to prove her identity with a bill of sale which he could not produce. This lead to the magistrate visiting Mrs. Churo at her home that

resulted in Elizabeth Parker being ordered back to Baltimore a month later (Maddox, 2016).

In Chester County, no one outside of Elizabeth Parker's kidnappers knew of her abduction until Rachel Parker was kidnapped two weeks later. The Parker sisters' mother was the first to notice when she checked on Elizabeth Parker after finding out Rachel Parker was kidnapped. It would take about six months for a connection to be made between Baltimore and New Orleans on Elizabeth Parker's true identity. Upon this discovery, Elizabeth Parker was ordered by a magistrate to be returned to Baltimore from New Orleans by Walter Campbell under the charge of kidnapping but only on the agreement that he be compensated 1,500-dollars as collateral in case she really was Henrietta Crocus. It is not known for certain who raised the finances, but John Miller Dickey was recognized for gathering the funds to pay Walter Campbell although the Chester County newspaper *Village Record* credits seven or eight unnamed citizens of Baltimore with raising the money (Maddox, 2016). However, records indicate John Miller Dickey conducted a meeting on February 6, 1852, in Chester County to secure funds for Rachel Parker's trial and Elizabeth Parker's return even though it had not been discovered where she was at the time of the meeting. After the money was collected and received by Walter Campbell, Elizabeth Parker was held at the Campbell enslavement chamber in New Orleans until circa July 1852 before boarding a ship and making a two week journey back to Baltimore. In Baltimore, Elizabeth Parker was held captive amongst about 40 other Africans at the Campbell enslavement chamber in Baltimore and forced to labor as a cook even though she was sick and had no shoes while her proof of

not being Henrietta Crocus was argued against by Luther Schoolfield. When it was discovered Elizabeth Parker was in Baltimore, a group of male individuals from Chester County came to the city to argue her identity as not being Henrietta Crocus to Walter Campbell. These individuals were named James Hutchinson, James Mullen, and Robert Hughes. James Hutchinson was also the European American family physician of Joseph C. Miller who conducted two autopsies with Ebenezer Dickey to find out the cause of Miller's death. To test the group of individuals in identifying Elizabeth Parker, Walter Campbell allowed them to enter the yard of the enslavement chamber where 25 African girls and women waited, but none of the Chester County men greeted any of the women as Elizabeth Parker. A second smaller group of African females was let into the yard a short time later by Campbell with Elizabeth Parker amongst them, in which the group of individuals from Chester County greeted her and vice versa thus confirming her identity. Walter Campbell then released Elizabeth Parker from the enslavement chamber to officials that put her in the city jail where Rachel Parker was also being held at the time.

After regaining her liberation on January 13, 1853, Elizabeth Parker was interviewed by a European American man named Toby of *Village Record* to tell her story of being kidnapped on January 22, 1853, which was later published on January 25, 1853, and February 1, 1853. At the time of the interview, Elizabeth Parker was living with Rebecca Parker and Samuel Miller in Lancaster County. Samuel Miller was described as a 50 year-old man that owned a two story log house on 20 acres of land. Also, living in the home was an African woman named Haney, and Samuel Miller's daughter named Hiekiah (Maddox, 2016). In the interview, Elizabeth Parker acknowledged that Matthew

Donnelly and John Merritt were in the home of Donnelly when she went outside to grab a slop bucket and was grabbed, gagged with a thick stick, tied up, and put into a wagon headed for Baltimore by Thomas McCreary and an unknown whiskered man. She continued with stating the gag was painful and cut her mouth that took weeks to heal as well as injured her teeth. It was not removed when she was at McCreary's home but only when she arrived at the Campbell enslavement chamber. It was there that Thomas McCreary pulled out a six barreled rifle and threatened Elizabeth Parker to agree to whatever name referred to her by Luther Schoolfield which ended up being Henrietta Crocus. If she did not do it, then McCreary warned he would shoot her down on the floor of the room (Maddox, 2016). While at the Campbell enslavement chamber, Elizabeth Parker stated there were about 30 other Africans there, and they remained at the chamber for about two weeks. The Africans had to secure their own food that ended up being corn cakes, potatoes, and rice. About 20 Africans were aboard the enslavement ship headed for New Orleans with half enslaved by Bernard Campbell and Walter Campbell and the others by an unnamed man. In New Orleans, the Campbell enslavement chamber was operated by another Campbell brother where Elizabeth Parker stated there were 50 Africans in one room with men on one side and women on the other. Elizabeth described the activities at the enslavement chamber revealing the Africans were able to walk around the premises unless an enslaver came to make a purchase, in which the Africans then had to stand and be examined, especially their teeth for scars as an indicator to determine if they resisted being fed. Because Elizabeth's teeth were damaged during her kidnapping, she was not purchased by the first male enslaver who examined her which was two weeks

after her arrival at the enslavement chamber. However, about two days later an unnamed African man on the behalf of his enslaver, Mrs. Churo, purchased Elizabeth Parker for 900-dollars. The sale was approved because Walter Campbell would not sell Elizabeth Parker to a male enslaver, especially one from the country though no reason was provided by Elizabeth Parker as to why. Elizabeth described Mrs. Churo as an African herself but used the term “Creowl [sic]” with two daughters (Maddox, 2016, p. 206). While enslaved by Mrs. Churo, Elizabeth Parker confirmed she was tasked with selling flowers, milk, and molasses candy at the market. Elizabeth Parker started her days by selling milk early in the morning and being sold out by 10:00 A.M. Then she sold the molasses candy until 4:00 P.M. and afterwards would go back to her enslaver’s home to grab flowers and sell those inside a local theatre. She even sold flowers to Africans at the theatre when they held dance parties there on Saturday nights; however, she always stayed to herself and never built a relationship with anyone in New Orleans. It would be after selling flowers at a dance party that a watchman at midnight asked if Elizabeth Parker had a pass that led to her confessing she was a liberated African that was kidnapped and enabled her to return back to Baltimore. The interview ended abruptly when Elizabeth Parker was describing being a cook while sick at the Campbell enslavement chamber in Baltimore because she still was ill and coughing badly that caused the interview to stop. The interview was one of two where Elizabeth Parker was able to voice her experience of being kidnapped and enslaved that detailed her own agency rather than that of the European Americans attached to the story (Maddox, 2016).

After Elizabeth Parker lived with her mother in Lancaster County, she resided in northern Chester County. By 1880, she was a widow with the last name Miller and living in West Chester working as a housekeeper, but it is unknown who she married. In West Chester, she lived on East Marshall Street with her two children and an additional child named Lottie J. Miller that may have been her daughter. By the early 1890s, Elizabeth Parker still resided in West Chester but at a different address that was 427 East Barnard Street where she was interviewed for a second time about being kidnapped, and her story was published in the newspaper *Daily Local News* and later republished in 1941. In the second interview, Elizabeth Parker stated that she was beaten and tortured in New Orleans, was on board the *Henry A. Barling* with 259 other Africans rather than 20, and was sold in New Orleans for 2,000-dollars as opposed to the 900-dollars originally reported (Maddox, 2016). Lucy Maddox dismisses the alteration in Elizabeth Parker's story as fabrication; however, much of her kidnapping experience is told through European American voices which dismisses Elizabeth Parker's African agency as insignificant. It is important to recognize the significance in Elizabeth Parker telling her own story to acknowledge her African agency rather than the dis-agency that is projected by Lucy Maddox throughout her text. Pauli Murray also confirms that Elizabeth Parker was sold for around 2,000-dollars (Murray, 1999). By 1900, Elizabeth Parker still lived in West Chester with her two children. However, by 1920, she lived in the city of York, York County, where she owned a home on Salem Avenue. It is not known when she died (Maddox, 2016).

Because Rachel Parker was older than Elizabeth Parker, she did not begin to work until around the age of ten when their father left the home. Her first employer was a European American farmer named James Y. Smith who coincidentally was married to the niece of her future kidnapper—Thomas McCreary. While living with and working for the Smiths, Rachel Parker took care of the Smiths' daughter and left the home after about a year of employment. Afterwards, the Smiths found Rachel Parker employment at the home of Joseph C. Miller in West Nottingham where she worked for the next seven years before being kidnapped. While living with the Miller family, Rachel Parker sometimes attended school with Joseph C. Miller's children but never became literate (Maddox, 2016). Unlike Elizabeth Parker, Rachel Parker was kidnapped in the morning around 11:00 A.M. Thomas McCreary knocked on the door of Joseph C. Miller's home and asked Miller's wife, Rebecca Miller, for directions. Upon hearing someone at the door, Rachel Parker looked to see who Rebecca Miller was talking to which caused McCreary to push past Rebecca Miller and grab Rachel Parker while John Merritt waited outside in a buggy. While Rachel Parker was being apprehended, she and Rebecca Miller began to scream which alarmed Joseph C. Miller who was outside working near his home. Joseph C. Miller was able to grab the harness of the buggy as it was taking off but retreated when a Bowie knife was swung at him by McCreary. Along the route to Maryland, the kidnappers came across the European American James Pollock and his son Samuel Pollock that were cutting wood near a schoolhouse called Pine Grove, in which their wagon blocked the road. McCreary ordered the Pollocks to move their wagon, and James Pollock was able to recognize Rachel Parker in anguish. Suspecting Rachel Parker was

being kidnapped, James Pollock grabbed an axe to assist her but was held at bay by McCreary's knife to his throat. Joseph C. Miller was quickly approaching the scene which caused the kidnapers to hurry off to Perryville, Maryland, with Rachel Parker. Before arriving to Perryville, the kidnapers and Rachel Parker stopped at a tavern in Maryland where she informed the owner that she was a liberated African being kidnapped. The owner of the tavern's wife then provided food for Rachel Parker and attempted to persuade the kidnapers to leave her there to no avail. John Merritt stayed behind while Thomas McCreary and Rachel Parker continued to Perryville to board a train there for Baltimore. At the train station, Rachel Parker informed several individuals she was a liberated African being kidnapped but was not able to receive any assistance again, unfortunately. While Rachel Parker was en route to Baltimore, Joseph C. Miller and the Pollocks gathered two groups of men on horseback to pursue McCreary and assist Parker (Maddox, 2016). Like Elizabeth Parker, Rachel Parker was taken to the Campbell enslavement chamber in Baltimore. This led to McCreary being arrested and charged with kidnapping before she could be sold. The pursuit after Thomas McCreary would cost Joseph C. Miller his life while the former would never be convicted for either kidnapping of Elizabeth Parker or Rachel Parker (Maddox, 2016).

Eventually, Rachel Parker was moved to a Baltimore jail where Elizabeth Parker would also later be imprisoned. Rachel Parker and Elizabeth Parker were two of four young African girls jailed there in 1852 and two of three young African girls held for "safe keeping" which was essentially false imprisonment (Maddox, 2016, p. 147).

During that same year, 148 adult African women were also imprisoned at the city jail

with eight of those being held under false imprisonment (Maddox, 2016). The Baltimore jail was often overcrowded with only 12 rooms available to house upwards of 140 prisoners, in which many were only being held to await trial like the Parker sisters. Rachel Parker would be imprisoned for a year that began with her being falsely identified by several European Americans gathered by Luther Schoolfield as Eliza Crocus on January 1, 1852, for the upcoming kidnapping trial of Thomas McCreary. Some of the identifiers had never met Eliza Crocus nor knew what she looked like but still lied about Rachel Parker being her (Maddox, 2016). When the McCreary trial began on January 7, 1852, one of the prosecution lawyers that represented Rachel Parker, William Henry Norris, paradoxically was an enslaver from Maryland. Another paradox was that one of the key witnesses called to the stand by the prosecution was Susannah Martin that had Eliza Crocus bound out to her for enslavement and refused to misidentify Rachel Parker as Eliza Crocus during the trial. The defense's weak argument for Thomas McCreary was that Rachel Parker resembled Allen Crocus and Juno Crocus; therefore, she must have been Eliza Crocus. Because of public outcries by newspapers that supported anti-African European Americans such as Elkton's *Cecil Whig* and West Chester's *American Republican* acknowledging the defense's case was weak which would result in a conviction for the prosecution, McCreary's lawyers called a last minute surprise witness—the kidnapper John Merritt. He convincingly lied that Joseph C. Miller was involved in the kidnapping of Rachel Parker that resulted in his alleged suicide out of guilt for taking part in it. It was enough to convince the biased Maryland judge, Augustine Pennington, to have all charges against Thomas McCreary dropped, and he was released.

As a result, Rachel Parker was to remain imprisoned for another year until her trial began.

Following Thomas McCreary's trial, Luther Schoolfield began preparing as a defendant in Rachel Parker's trial against her by having it moved from the Baltimore city courthouse to the Baltimore County courthouse to receive a more favorable outcome. Moving the courthouse location also caused a delay in its scheduling that would not begin to be viewed by the county court until mid-April 1852 at the earliest. If the trial stayed in the city, then it would have begun sooner. In addition, there was a higher prevalence of anti-African European Americans near the county courthouse that were still outraged about the Christiana Resistance and would favor Luther Schoolfield. The trial not being held in Pennsylvania where Rachel Parker was kidnapped also was done purposely to keep African witnesses from testifying. Like the Thomas McCreary trial, the enslaver William Henry Norris again represented Rachel Parker as a part of the prosecution during her own trial. Rachel Parker's legal representation was dealt a blow though when her other lawyer, Davis H. Hoopes, who also represented her during the Thomas McCreary trial resigned from her case in April 1852 as he grew tired of the politics between Maryland and Pennsylvania surrounding Parker's case that kept it from taking place fairly and in a timely manner. In July 1852, the Pennsylvania legislature approved for the state to hire and employ lawyers to represent both Elizabeth Parker and Rachel Parker. The state lawyers were European Americans James Campbell and Thomas S. Bell. At the time, Campbell was the Pennsylvania Attorney General and Bell was a retired Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice living in West Chester. Neither were regarded in

Chester County as great legal representation (Maddox, 2016). The first trial date month that was agreed on between the prosecution and defense was for July 1852 but was later changed to August 1852. However, the presiding judge overruled the August date because of it being harvesting season and would not schedule the trial until after it passed because Baltimore County was largely a farming community. There was no regard made for Rachel Parker being kidnapped and wrongfully imprisoned amongst actual criminals. Some of which were accused of murder and theft according to the abolitionist newspaper *The Pennsylvania Freeman* (Maddox, 2016).

Rachel Parker's trial did not begin until January 4, 1853, which was more than a year after her kidnapping in December 1851. At the trial, there were large number of Africans in attendance to support her. Elizabeth Parker, Rachel Parker, and Rebecca Parker were all in attendance from the beginning of the trial but were not permitted to testify because Africans were not legally allowed to in Maryland. James Parker and Edward Parker began to attend the trial on the sixth day of court. Testimony in support of Rachel Parker lasted for seven days with 49 witnesses mostly from Chester County. Among them were James Hutchinson, James Pollock, and Rebecca Miller. Another 30 witnesses were also set to testify when the trial ended. The number of witnesses was so overwhelming that the defense announced to the courtroom on January 12, 1853, that Luther Schoolfield had withdrawn his case, but not without indicating that the actions against the Parker sisters was meant to vindicate for anti-African European Americans in Maryland what they viewed to be an injustice during and after the Christiana Resistance. The newspaper *Frederick Douglass Paper* went even further by stating the trial for

Rachel Parker was staged by friends of the enslaver Edward Gorsuch as retaliation for the Christiana Resistance (Maddox, 2016). It was also indicated by the presiding judge and defense that a deal was made with the prosecution to withdraw the case, but the terms were never revealed. That was until a letter written by Maryland Governor Enoch Louis Lowe to Pennsylvania Governor William Bigler was later summarized and published by the Philadelphia newspaper *Public Ledger* on June 17, 1853, that the case was withdrawn to in return protect the kidnapers John Merritt and Thomas McCreary from being prosecuted in Pennsylvania with charges of kidnapping. Governor Lowe stated in the letter that it was an agreement reached between the prosecution lawyers and defense lawyers. John Merritt and Thomas McCreary were indicted by Governor Bigler for kidnapping but were never surrendered by Governor Lowe for prosecution (Maddox, 2016). According to Pauli Murray, Thomas McCreary was never heard of again after Rachel Parker's trial, and the kidnappings of Africans were continued on by Matthew Donnelly and Farmer X from Hinsonville (Murray, 1999). James Campbell declared to the courtroom he and Thomas S. Bell were enlisted to represent Rachel Parker because Governor William Bigler wanted to build a better relationship with Maryland to showcase Pennsylvania authorities would be forthcoming in enforcing the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 by requiring its citizens to assist in the kidnappings of African warriors. This led to James Campbell being immediately rebuked in Chester County because of his statement. After James Campbell's declaration, Rachel Parker was released followed by Elizabeth Parker who were both escorted by Campbell through York County and Lancaster County before arriving in Chester County (Maddox, 2016). The trial cost Pennsylvania 3,000-

dollars with an additional 1,000-dollars raised by John Miller Dickey to assist Rachel Parker (Murray, 1999).

After being released from jail on January 13, 1853, Rachel Parker returned to Joseph C. Miller's home in West Nottingham. She stayed at the home with Rebecca Miller for a few weeks before moving to a farm owned by Hart G. Coates in Lancaster County. Rachel Parker resided there with his family for 12 years before marrying. In 1865, she married the African George Wesley who was a Civil War veteran a part of the 13th United States Colored Infantry. George Wesley was originally from Maryland before settling in Chester County where he became one of 500 Africans that served in the Civil War that was a resident of the county (Maddox, 2016). While married, George Wesley and Rachel Parker lived at the home of Hart G. Coates for eight years, in which Wesley's sister, Mary Wesley, also worked for the Coates family. Eventually, George Wesley and Rachel Parker gave birth to four children: Lucinda (Lucy) Wesley in 1865, Joseph Wesley in 1868, Elizabeth Wesley in 1869, and Judith Wesley in 1872. In 1873, George Wesley and Rachel Parker separated, in which Rachel Parker continued to live with and work for the Coates family. Rachel Parker's two children Elizabeth Wesley and Judith Wesley remained with her. It is unknown why Rachel Parker's other two children did not live with her. However, it is known that Joseph Wesley began working for a farming family in Little Britain, Lancaster County, at the age of 12. By 1888, he was married and later had three sons and later one daughter named Charlotte Wesley. Rachel Parker would live with and work for the Coates family for another 25 more years after her separation from George Wesley, but by 1900 she was residing with her daughter

Lucinda Wesley and husband, James R. Jones, in Lower Oxford, Chester County. In 1910, Charlotte Wesley was eight years old and living with Rachel Parker and Lucinda Wesley in Lower Oxford. Another child named John Jones that was two years old also resided at the home of Lucinda Wesley and James R. Jones; he was the nephew of the latter. In addition, an unnamed six year-old boy and unnamed 16 year-old girl lived at the home. Rachel Parker lived with Lucinda Wesley until she died in 1918 from “infirmities of age” (Maddox, 2016, p. 192). Rachel Parker’s obituary mentioned all of her children as surviving except Judith Wesley who may have died before adulthood (Maddox, 2016). Although convoluted with European Americans as a part of their story, the Parker sisters’ fight for liberation is an important one that showcases the horrors of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and its effect on the Africans living in Chester County and the surrounding area. The combination of the Christiana Resistance and kidnappings of the Parker sisters months apart from each other would have everlasting impact on the Africans residing in Chester County and Lancaster County, particularly within the African community Hinsonville.

### **Hinsonville—An African Liberated Community**

Both the Christiana Resistance and Parker sisters’ kidnappings shocked many residents of Hinsonville. Although there was a possibility of the community suffering the same fate as the Christiana Resistance or Parker sisters’ kidnappings, residents remained resilient during those times of extreme danger. The Parker sisters’ kidnappings helped towards the creation of Ashmun Institute by the European American John Miller Dickey

which, although beloved by the residents of Hinsonville, was a major factor in the town's decline. According to Horace Mann Bond, the first African President of Lincoln University, the Parker sisters' kidnappings were essential in the growth of the relationship between the local African community and John Miller Dickey (Russo, 2005). Like his father, Ebenezer Dickey, who also was an enslaver, John Miller Dickey had long been a supporter of colonization through his entire education, including the years attending Princeton Theological Seminary which was considered the center for the theological rhetoric of colonization in the United States of America at the time. For many years, John Miller Dickey argued against the abolitionist position towards ending enslavement and even supported enslavement as God's plan to Christianize and enlighten African people (Gooch, 2018). However, the Christiania Resistance and Parker sisters' kidnappings lessened his dislike of the anti-enslavement sentiment according to Horace Mann Bond. The changes in attitude towards enslavement "began to manifest themselves in new ways for him, eventually leading to his founding of Ashmun Institute" (Russo, 2005, p. 92).

The story of Hinsonville, written by Marianne H. Russo and Paul A. Russo in *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century African-American Village*, is one of community, resistance, and triumph. The nineteenth century African community that existed in southern Chester County, Pennsylvania, is not well known to local nor non-local historians and residents. Hinsonville only existed a short time from 1830 until the late 1860s. Although Hinsonville did not survive long, its impact on the surrounding community still stands today. Many of Hinsonville's original

families continue to live in the area today as well as the continuance of the town's educational institution Lincoln University, formerly known as Ashmun Institute. With its focus on the strength of the family as an institution, the importance of the church, and resilience during times of turmoil, Hinsonville serves as a paragon for community in the African diaspora that should be mentioned more often and remembered in nineteenth century historical analyses of African communities in the United States.

Hinsonville derives its name from an African man named Emory Hinson who purchased 18 acres of land in 1830 in Upper Oxford, Chester County. Edward Walls purchased land on what would be considered Hinsonville in 1829 as well, but he did not reside in the area at first. Both land purchases were sold by a European American Quaker farmer and landowner named John Leeke (Russo, 2005). Some of the town's earliest residential families were the Hinsons, Wallses, Amoses, and Glasgows. These families settled in Hinsonville after leaving parts of Chester County and crossing the Mason-Dixon Line from Maryland. Some of the town's residents were born liberated Africans, others were manumitted, and a few were African warriors (Russo, 2005).

Emory Hinson was born in Maryland in 1792. It is not known if he was a liberated African or liberated himself as an African warrior. When he purchased the 18 acres of land that would become Hinsonville in 1830, he paid 250-dollars. Upon purchasing the land, he was accompanied by his wife, Maria Hinson, and two sons, Emory Hinson, Jr. and Jesse Hinson. Emory Hinson's source of income prior to settling in Hinsonville is unknown; however, he dedicated himself to farming while residing there. Hinson was a successful farmer noted for his ownership of 92 contiguous acres by

1838. In 1841, Maria Hinson passed away, and Emory Hinson remarried a woman from Delaware named Keziah Hinson in February 1844. Keziah Hinson was born in 1795 and bore no children with Emory Hinson (Russo, 2005). As a result of the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Emory Hinson immigrated to Canada in 1851 (Forbes, 1998). In 1852, Emory Hinson passed away, and shortly afterwards, Emory Hinson, Jr., Jesse Hinson, and Keziah Hinson left Hinsonville and disappeared from local records (Russo, 2005). Later, one of Emory Hinson's descendants was the African explorer Matthew Henson who surveyed the Arctic and made his first trip to the North Pole in 1909 (Forbes, 1998).

The brothers Edward Walls, George Walls, and William Walls were the most influential community members of Hinsonville. All three brothers were the offspring of Patrick Walls and Rachel Walls; in addition, the three brothers had three sisters named Hannah Walls, Lydia Walls, and Rachel Walls (Russo, 2005). Although it is unknown when Edward Walls was born, all three brothers were born in Maryland; however, Edward Walls arrived to Hinsonville first and invited George Walls and Williams Walls to settle there as well after purchasing several properties in the town. Prior to purchasing land in what would become Hinsonville, Edward Walls lived in other areas of Chester County. In 1827, he purchased properties in Kennett Square and East Nottingham. Although he purchased property in what would become Hinsonville in 1829, he chose to live in Pennsbury between 1829 and 1834. Edward Walls earned most of his income from real estate rather than farming like Emory Hinson (Russo, 2005).

George Walls, the youngest of the brothers, arrived to Hinsonville in 1837.

George Walls was born in Maryland in 1808 (Russo, 2005). He married a woman named Rachel Walls who bore him ten children—Edward Walls, Eliza Walls, George D. Walls, Hannah Walls, James Walls, Lydia Walls, Mary Walls, Rachel Walls, Susanna Walls, and William Walls (Russo, 2005). Like his brother Edward Walls, George Walls acquired wealth through real estate which would eventually make him the wealthiest community member of Hinsonville. In addition, George Walls was like his brother Edward Walls because both resided in Chester County prior to settling in Hinsonville. George Walls purchased properties in Kennett Square and London Grove before residing in Hinsonville. After purchasing properties to the north and west of Oxford, by 1870, George Walls owned a farm of 180 acres. During that same year, the United States Census estimated his 180 acre farm to be worth 19,000-dollars (Russo, 2005). The amount of wealth George Walls accumulated was staggering in comparison to other Africans both local and national during the nineteenth century. According to Marianne H. Russo and Paul A. Russo, this caused disdain and jealousy amongst some Hinsonville residents and local European Americans who accused him of being a possible kidnapper to accumulate his wealth. However, it was never proven true although some of his descendants believe he was a kidnapper (Russo, 2005).

William Walls, the second oldest brother, was born in Maryland in 1801. Edward Walls assisted William Walls with settling in Hinsonville in 1841 with his wife Rachel Walls and seven children—Albert Walls, Charles Walls, George W. Walls, Mary Walls, Sarah Walls, Susanna Walls, and William F. Walls (Russo, 2005). Unlike his brothers,

William Walls did not acquire income from real estate; instead, he was a farmhand to local European American farmers. William Walls was not as financially successful as Edward Walls and George Walls; however, with the importance of the strength of the family as an institution in the Walls family, Edward Walls assisted his brother financially on several occasions (Russo, 2005).

Another essential family that resided in Hinsonville were the Amoses. Similar to the Walls brothers, the Amos family also consisted of three brothers—James Amos, Samuel H. Amos, and Thomas Amos as well as one sister named Esther Amos. All three brothers were born in Pennsylvania and spent their early childhoods in West Whiteland, Chester County. Samuel H. Amos, the eldest of the brothers, was born circa 1823 and purchased property in Hinsonville at a young age in 1840. James Amos, the second oldest brother, was born circa 1823 as well, and the youngest brother, Thomas Amos, was born circa 1827. By 1843, James Amos and Thomas Amos joined their brother in Hinsonville by purchasing nine acres of property that was contiguous with Samuel Amos' farm. All three brothers struggled as farmers and accumulated much debt while residing in the town. In 1846, the then 18 acre farm of the Amos brothers was seized by the local sheriff for nonpayment. Afterwards, Samuel Amos resettled in London Grove, Chester County, Thomas Amos stayed in Hinsonville, and James Amos moved within two miles of Hinsonville to a farm owned by Edward Walls. All three brothers would remain connected to Hinsonville after losing their farm. James Amos temporarily became the pastor of the town church, Hosanna Church, as well as was influential, along with Thomas Amos, in the creation of the first degree granting Historically Black College and

University (HBCU), Ashmun Institute, in 1854. After graduating from Ashmun Institute, both James Amos and Thomas Amos left Hinsonville as missionaries for the American Colonization Society in Africa (Russo, 2005).

The last early residential family of Hinsonville were the Glasgows. In 1844, Samuel Glasgow purchased a 22 acre property in Hinsonville and moved to the town with his wife, Elizabeth Glasgow, and seven children. It is unclear when and where Samuel Glasgow was born, but it is believed he was born in Pennsylvania and resided in Chester County prior to settling in Hinsonville, in which he owned property in Kennett Square and Upper Oxford. Samuel Glasgow earned his income prior to and during his residence in Hinsonville as an artisan in brick making; he established his own brickyard in Hinsonville after settling there. With his successful skilled trade, Samuel Glasgow contributed to the building of Hosanna Church in 1845 as well as Ashmun Institute in 1854. In 1849, Samuel Glasgow relocated his brickyard from Hinsonville to local East Nottingham. Afterwards, he and his family moved to East Nottingham in 1851, but remained an intricate part of the Hinsonville community. Samuel Glasgow was able to sell his original property in Hinsonville for twice the value he originally purchased it for at 1,000-dollars. From the success of his brickyard, eventually, he was able to purchase other properties in East Nottingham as well as Elk, Chester County, and accumulated about 265 total acres of land which he sold to move him and his family to Liberia as a part of the American Colonization Society in 1859 (Russo, 2005).

The strength of the family as an institution was one of the economic and social pillars that allowed for Hinsonville's brief survival. Hinsonville maintained its economic

stability through farming by members of families within the community (Russo, 2005). Social cohesiveness was important in the town when individuals suffered from financial problems. All families of the town helped each other during times of financial despair (Russo, 32). In addition, the proximity of familial households symbolized the strong relationship between families in the community. Marrian H. Russo and Paul A. Russo write:

While the Hinsonville family members did not build their houses in a cluster in the center of the tract, as was the custom in many West African nations, the closeness of their homes and the intertwining of their lives reflect the interdependence they experienced over the years. (Russo, 2005, p. 31)

In addition, marriage was a key factor in maintaining the strength of the family as an institution in Hinsonville. It was not uncommon for community widows and widowers to remarry with others in the town. Emory Hinson remarried as well as Rachel Walls, William Walls' widow. Later, William F. Walls, the son of William Walls and Rachel Walls, would remarry. According to United States Census records, a typical Hinsonville nuclear family household was patriarchal and consisted of a father, mother, and unmarried children. Married children created their own nuclear family households. Occasionally, a widowed parent or elder relative dwelled in some households. Additionally, a few joint households of married siblings existed such as the shared household of some of William Walls' children after he passed away (Russo, 2005).

Although Hinsonville had strong communal relationships amongst themselves, the town did not necessarily have the same relationship with other predominantly European American local communities, especially nearby Oxford, Pennsylvania. Oxford

was established in 1754, not long after William Penn “founded” Chester County in 1682. Oxford derived its name from Oxford, England. Some the town’s earliest residents were of Irish and Scottish origins, seeking refuge from poor economic conditions and religious persecution. Oxford served as a midway point for many travelers headed to Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington D.C., and New York City (Jacob, 1980).

Although African communities were present in Oxford during Hinsonville’s existence, relationships between Africans and European Americans from both towns was not always harmonious or welcomed outside of business interactions. Marianne H. Russo and Paul A. Russo write:

Despite the superficially acceptable relations that the citizens of the area enjoyed in their various business dealings, the white citizens of Oxford made it quite clear that the blacks had to know their place. Some of those very whites who were willing to employ and do business with residents of Hinsonville or let their children mingle in schools did not welcome their own pastor’s [John Miller Dickey] plan to establish an institution of higher learning for blacks in the 1850s...More importantly, the white racism that prevailed in the 1850s cast a dark shadow and shaped local attitudes for many, many decades... (Russo, 2005, pp. 68-69)

A major rift between Africans in Hinsonville and European Americans in Oxford was with the establishment of Ashmun Institute. Ashmun Institute, named after Jehudi Ashmun who was a European American missionary, early governor of Liberia, and colonizationist, was founded in 1854 by John Miller Dickey. John Miller Dickey was a minister of the local Oxford Presbyterian Church from 1832 to 1856 as well as was a part of the American Colonization Society. After President Abraham Lincoln’s assassination, Ashmun Institute became Lincoln University to honor the former President of the United States (Russo, 2005). Ashmun Institute was the first institution of higher learning to be

established specifically for the education of male Africans. African women would not be admitted to the institution until 1953. John Miller Dickey's hope was to create a school to train "colored youth of the male sex" to become missionaries in Africa (Russo, 2005, p. 96). Although Ashmun Institute is considered the first degree granting HBCU, its association with colonization in Liberia was not for liberation but rather subjugation of African people. John Miller Dickey was inspired to create Ashmun Institute as a result of the Parker sisters' kidnappings, his 15 year-old daughter's death, and James Amos' desire to be educated and be a part of the Christian ministry (Russo, 2005). James Amos and Thomas Amos were some the university's first students. The establishment of Ashmun Institute drew other families to settle in Hinsonville such as the Fitzgeralds and Hiltons. There is little direct evidence to the role Hinsonville had in bringing Ashmun Institute into existence, but it is assumed residents of Hinsonville were glad to have the first institution of higher learning for Africans in the United States nearby (Russo, 2005). The establishment of Ashmun Institute created much ire with European Americans residing in nearby Oxford. According to Marian H. Russo and Paul A. Russo:

Except for the founder, no one in Oxford wanted the school located in the town or even in the vicinity...the white residents of Oxford...were strongly opposed to a Negro college in their midst. Indeed, circumstantial evidence seems to support this view, most particularly because of the ultimate choice of a site in the relatively isolated black community of Hinsonville some four miles away, rather than in Oxford itself. (Russo, 2005, p. 102)

This unfortunate type of relationship between Africans and European Americans from both Oxford and the area that used to be Hinsonville still continues today.

The American Colonization Society was founded in 1816 on the premise of the Presbyterian Church and the European American Presbyterian minister Robert Finley who was also the president of the Princeton Theological Seminary at that time. Members of the American Colonization Society primarily consisted of European American Southern enslavers. Many of them were also well known politicians such as Andrew Jackson, Francis Scott Key, Henry Clay, James Madison, James Monroe, and John Tyler. A branch of the American Colonization Society was established in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in 1824, in which John Miller Dickey's father, Ebenezer Dickey, who was minister of the Presbyterian Church in Oxford at the time, was elected to the organization's board of managers (Russo, 2005). The premise of the American Colonization Society was to encourage liberated Africans to immigrate voluntarily to Liberia. The organization believed Liberia would become "a haven for free blacks" and allow for the Christianization of Africa (Russo, 2005, p. 74).

Jehudi Ashmun was a United States agent for the American Colonization Society and governor of Liberia. He is often incorrectly considered by historians as the "founder" of Liberia. His account of how Liberia was established by the American Colonization Society from 1821 to 1823 in *History of the American colony in Liberia* (2015) demonstrates the cruelty and violence he used against the native African people as an agent for the organization. When faced with an army of 800 native Africans who intended on destroying the Monrovia settlement of the European American colonizationists on November 11, 1822, he wrote:

Imagination can scarcely figure to itself a throng of human beings in a more capital state of exposure to the destructive power of the machinery of modern warfare! Eight hundred men were here pressed shoulder to shoulder...and all exposed to a gun of great power, raised on a platform, at only thirty to sixty yards distance! Every shot literally spent its force in a solid mass of living human flesh! A savage yell was raised, which filled the dismal forest with a momentary horror. It gradually died away; and the whole host disappeared. (Ashmun, 2015, pp. 28-29)

Jehudi Ashmun continued his description of the African genocide in Liberia when writing on December 2, 1822, that a second attempt was made by the native Africans to destroy the Monrovia settlement but was put down in less than two hours. Ashmun wrote:

Their loss, although from the quantities of blood with which the field was found drenched, certainly considerable, was much less than in the former attack...In an instant, were seen hundreds of the fugitive wretches running from their hiding-places and throwing themselves into the water. (Ashmun, 2015, pp. 36-37)

After the second attempt, Ashmun and armed British soldiers met with the local native African leaders and forced them to cede their land at gunpoint (Gooch, 2014). European American abolitionist and non-supporter of African emigration Giles Badger Stebbins remarked of the second attempt in 1853:

This second battle is still celebrated by the colonists with military parade, as the day on which they won a firm foothold on African soil; a terrible baptism of blood with which to consecrate a continent to Christian peace and love! (Stebbins, 2015, p. 172).

This man, Jehudi Ashmun, John Miller Dickey chose to paradoxically name the first HBCU after—a murderer that committed genocide. John Miller Dickey admired Jehudi Ashmun and his devotion to colonization which Dickey supported as well as Ashmun's conservative Presbyterianism. This assertion caused Andrew Murray to write, "The founding of Ashmun Institute (the forerunner of Lincoln University) did not grow directly

from the problems of American Negroes, but rather was a response to the needs of the Protestant foreign missionary activities, especially in Africa” (Murray, 1973, pp. 397-398). It is not known to what extent John Miller Dickey knew about Jehudi Ashmun’s cruelty and violence in Liberia; it can only be assumed.

In 1853, the year before Ashmun Institute was established, John Miller Dickey delivered a sermon to his congregation at the Oxford Presbyterian Church entitled “Ethiopia Shall Soon Stretch Out Her Hands Unto God.” In the sermon, he declared, “The colored people of this country seem to have been sent here by Divine Providence that they might be Christianized and employed as laborers for the evangelization of Africa” (Gooch, 2014, p. 1). Dickey, like other colonizationists, referenced the biblical verse Psalm 68:31 to emphasize God’s plan for Africans as evangelists in Africa. The verse reads, “Envoys will come from Egypt; Cush will submit herself to God” (*Holy Bible*, 1984). Colonizationists like Dickey believed the American Colonization Society would inspire enslavers to emancipate enslaved Africans in the United States and send them to Liberia. However, many abolitionists believed it was a plan to protect enslavement by sending liberated Africans overseas to diminish the demand for emancipation.

Giles Badger Stebbins, who attended Hinsonville church meetings at Hosanna Church on the matter of colonization, wrote on the eve of John Miller Dickey’s sermon in 1853:

The Colonization Society claims a high rank among the philanthropic movements of the day; but in reality, its highest idea of philanthropy toward the colored man (the class it especially professes to regard) is to

mark him as the Pariah of our American civilization, to degrade him here, and send him to Africa that we may be rid of his unwelcome presence... white Americans shall ever 'mark the people of color, bond or free, as subjects of a degradation inevitable and incurable,' while they remain here. (Stebbins, 2015, pp. 5-7)

Giles Badger Stebbins's critique of colonization is similar to *David Walker's Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (2014). In Article IV entitled "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Colonizing Plan," Walker states:

Let no man of us budge one step, and let slaveholders come to beat us from our country. America is more our country, than it is the whites—we have enriched it with our blood and tears. The greatest riches in all America have arisen from our blood and tears:—and will they drive us from our property and homes, which we have earned with our blood... Do the colonizationists think to send us off without first being reconciled to us... Surely, the Americans must think that we are brutes, as some of them have represented us to be. (Walker, 2014, p. 68 and pp. 71-72)

Both Stebbins and Walker state the true intentions of the American Colonization Society as disposing of Africans in the United States because of racist ideology and nothing more. Even though many Africans in the United States, especially in the North, were against colonization, the idea still found favor amongst some such as James Amos and Thomas Amos. After graduating from Ashmun Institute, James Amos, along with his wife, Isabella Amos, and adopted son, Elwood Burton, as well as Thomas Amos, along with his wife, Susanna Amos, and their children, Emma Amos, Georgianna Amos, and James Amos sailed to Liberia on May 12, 1859. In addition, the Amos brothers were joined by other fellow Hinsonville residents Samuel Glasgow, the brick maker who helped build Hosanna Church and Ashmun Institute; his wife, Elizabeth Glasgow, and eight family members; and fellow Ashmun Institute graduate Armistead Miller and his wife. The

families of Hinsonville destined for Liberia were among 150 emigrants aboard the *Mary Caroline Stevens* leaving from the Baltimore, Maryland, harbor. The American Colonization Society provided 420-dollars per family for passage costs to Liberia (Gooch, 2014, pp. 7-9).

On June 15, 1859, James Amos wrote John Miller Dickey for the first time expressing his excitement as an evangelist. From the first letter onward, it was apparent what the Amos brothers' attitudes were towards the native Africans in Liberia. In the letter, James Amos wrote, "The people come to hear the word of God. Morning and evening prayers find many in attendance. We have access to many thousand heathens" (Gooch, 2014, p. 13). The use of the word "heathen" is problematic in terms of understanding African agency and liberation. In *The Afrocentric Idea: Revised and Expanded Edition* (1998), Molefi Kete Asante states:

It is clear, however, that if African agency and therefore freedom are to exist, we must find language that is not antithetical to our source and to ourselves, and we must create that language from circumstances of our historical lives. We can never accept the use of terms such as 'primitive,' 'pygmy,' 'tribe,' 'Black African,' 'hut,' 'Bushmen,' and scores of others in relationship to Africa and Africans. (Asante, 2010, pp. 43-44)

Unfortunately, the Amos brothers did not have an understanding of this ideology which is reflected in their short time in Liberia.

Generally, Presbyterian Board missionaries were paid an annual salary that varied depending on the country one was located as well as an allowance for each child under the age of 18. It is estimated the Amos brothers earned between 400-dollars and 500-dollars annually (Gooch, 2014). Additionally, the Presbyterian Board provided a house

or paid house rent as well as periodic shipments of food and supplies. Some missionaries were given their own land to farm by the Presbyterian Board; however, the Amos brothers were not given this option but did assist in training native Africans to farm. James Amos and Thomas Amos would find out quickly that the provisions promised by the Presbyterian Board often did not come in the time of dire need, especially when the Civil War began in 1861 that caused shortages of supplies able to be shipped. A mission at Niffau is where the Amos brothers were first instructed to settle. By December 1859, Thomas Amos wrote the Presbyterian Board seeking shipments of food and other supplies (Gooch, 2014).

Additionally, in December 1859, James Amos wrote the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions corresponding secretary John Leighton Wilson. James Amos addressed Wilson in hopes of creating an agricultural training school to teach the native Africans farming and literacy as well as assert Christian conversion, especially among children. However, his letter contained malicious diatribe towards African cultural traditions that is problematic. James Amos wrote:

I have seen...more than one that could not speak the English language, read and write...and have gone back into the habits of heathenism again. Not because it was preferable, but because they were not prepared to enter upon civilized life, and...never will be while the principles initially of the arts and sciences are excluded from them....They know not how to acquire their living; only by following those rude habits...Some however may doubt the susceptibility of the African heathen of the high attainments of civilization. (Gooch, 2014, pp. 19-21)

Where does such abhorrence for African culture come from by the Amos brothers? Was Christianity or the teachings of Jehudi Ashmun and or John Miller Dickey to blame? Perhaps, it was James Amos's education at Ashmun Institute.

While attending Ashmun Institute, James Amos as well as Thomas Amos had a curriculum that encompassed church history, composition, elocution, English grammar, general history, geography, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, mathematics, penmanship, reading, spelling, and theology (Gooch, 2014, p. 60). It can be surmised that the Amos brothers also studied the thinkers of the Enlightenment Period. The Enlightenment Period was a seventeenth century and eighteenth century intellectual movement in Europe concerning topics such as God and reason. European philosophers during the period such as Immanuel Kant and Voltaire were regarded as some of the greatest thinkers of their time; however, what is not often mentioned often is their disdain for African culture.

Immanuel Kant in particular declared:

The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the trifling. Mr. Hume [David Hume] challenges anyone to cite a single example in which a Negro has shown talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks...although many of them have been set free, still not a single one was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praiseworthy quality...Humanity is at its greatest perfection in the race of the whites. (Monteiro-Ferreira, 2014, p. 26)

It can be theorized that while attending Ashmun Institute the Amos brothers were exposed to such dislike for African culture by thinkers like the European Immanuel Kant of the Enlightenment Period. This is evident in a letter James Amos writes to John

Leighton Wilson on July 19, 1861, in which he describes the native African people of Niffau's reception to Christian missionaries. He states:

The bush people...They are more ignorant and more simple in their manners. Very few of them saw the face of a civilized person before... These people seem to be entirely ignorant of the existence of God. Their knowledge extends to that only which concerns their daily life. The following questions they were unable to answer. Who made the earth? The sun? The moon? The waters? Themselves? It appears that they have not read the first lessons taught by the 'light of nature.' Neither have they ever reason 'a priori.' (Gooch, 2014, p. 43).

A priori is a form of deductive reasoning of how things work independent of experience. This type of reasoning was popularized by Immanuel Kant in his 1781 publication entitled *Critique of Pure Reason*. James Amos asserts that the native African people of Niffau did not have an ability to conduct this type of reasoning because they were uncivilized. It can be surmised that James Amos had come across Immanuel Kant during his studies at Ashmun Institute. It is also possible that the disdain of African culture expressed by the thinkers of the Enlightenment Period such as Kant had an influence on James Amos and Thomas Amos's attitudes towards the native Africans of Liberia as well.

Before the completion of the training school at Niffau in December 1860, Thomas Amos alerted the Presbyterian Board that his eight year old son, James Amos, had passed away from stomach spasms as a result of "Acclimating Fever," known today as malaria, on January 15, 1860 (Gooch, 2014, p. 31). Even though James Amos, Thomas Amos' only son, passed away, he stayed committed to the mission along with his brother. In February 1861, Thomas Amos wrote the Presbyterian Board expressing his brother's desire to leave the mission because his wife, Isabella Amos, was critically ill and having

an obligation to settle debts with creditors in the United States (Gooch, 2014). By October 1861, both Amos brothers expressed a desire to return to the United States and abandon the mission for two years as a result of illness, lack of supplies, and safety amongst the native Africans at Niffau who resisted their presence in the region (Gooch, 2014). James Amos was granted a health furlough by the Presbyterian Board and returned to the United States in July 1862 while Thomas Amos remained at the Niffau station after his brother's urging. The Presbyterian Board planned to sponsor the construction of a new high school named Alexander High School in Monrovia, Liberia, but decided to instead have it built at Harrisburg, Liberia. James Amos consulted with the Presbyterian Board to oversee the construction which was granted in 1862 (Gooch, 2014). James Amos returned to Liberia in late December 1862 to begin the construction of Alexander High School with the assistance of Samuel Glasgow who set to provide the bricks for the school (Gooch, 2014).

In January 1863, Thomas Amos and his family were forced to abandon the Niffau mission after being driven out by the native Africans, thus drawing a conclusion to the colonizationist settlement there. Before Thomas Amos and his family were forced to flee, the American Colonization Society's publication *African Repository* published the Niffau mission's failure in September 1862. The failure of the mission was placed wrongly on the native African resistance to the mission when the publication stated:

They [Amos brothers] describe the natives as outlaws, thieves and robbers-fraudulent, perfidious, and avaricious; and that even the traders cannot live among them, and seldom call at the settlement. Later accounts state that not a single headman was friendly to them or to their work, and

that the children were all taken away from the school. (Gooch, 2014, p. 71)

Contrary to this belief, the failure of the mission can solely be blamed on the Amos brothers themselves. There was never an attempt made by either James Amos or Thomas Amos to understand the culture of the native African people in Liberia. Cheryl Renée Gooch notes the Amos brothers were instructed by the Presbyterian Board to learn the language of the native Africans in Liberia, Kru, but neither made an honest attempt to complete that task. Alexander Priestley Camphor, an African missionary in the United States associated with the Methodist-Episcopal Church who missioned in Liberia from 1896 to 1907, noted the various problems missionaries created for themselves by not attempting to understand the native African culture. One of the problems was language, in which he blamed missionaries for only using English which did not allow native African interpreters to properly communicate sermons. Camphor understood this and took the time to publish sermons in the native African language (Gooch, 2014).

Another problem missionaries created was not understanding the power and use of native African music. The Amos brothers complained, “Our ears are saturated almost daily with the sound of the war-horn and the furious yells of the naked savages” (Gooch, 2014, p. 75). Contrarily, Alexander Priestley Camphor described the native African dancing as, “The natives are fond of dancing and music...The horn and drum are favorite musical instruments. To the ear of the stranger it is more noise than music, but by the native nothing more is desired” (Camphor, 2012, p. 108). Camphor also had a better

understanding of native African religion and names within African culture when he wrote:

Religiously, the African is the child of some 'charmed influence.' To him the universe is controlled by spirit, and his creed is to be in perfect harmony with the world of spirits...Names of native places and persons are not haphazardly given in Africa...The native name of Monrovia, 'Dru-Kau,' the capital of Liberia, is derived from its nearness to an abundance of water...The names of persons are similarly given...Missionaries, in changing children's names indiscriminately, destroy their identity...As a rule they ought not to be changed. Christian names may easily be added to the native name. (Camphor, 2012, p. 109 and pp. 288-290)

Even though his last statement is problematic in denying Africans of their agency, Camphor at least had a better understanding and appreciation of African culture than the Amos brothers in regards to naming, but all three men were problematic in asserting African dis-agency. Cheryl Renée Gooch notes:

While James and Thomas were clearly committed to educating children whom they described as the heart of their mission, their letters seldom refer to those children by name. The few who are mentioned have Anglicized names and are praised for their 'civilized' conduct and willingness to embrace Christianity (Gooch, 2014, p. 77).

From the beginning of 1863 to the middle of the summer that year, James Amos struggled to complete the construction of Alexander High School in Harrisburg, Liberia, citing a lack of materials and food the Presbyterian Board was supposed to provide. James Amos insisted to the Presbyterian Board the need for the school to be completed as he was supposed to serve as the principal once the construction was finished. However, James Amos was informed, much to his surprise, by European American Walter Lowrie of the Presbyterian Board that it was not agreed upon that he would indeed be the principal of Alexander High School. In a November 10, 1863, letter to Lowrie, James

Amos informed the Presbyterian Board his plans to resign from the mission and return to the United States after the completion of Alexander High School citing being deceived that he was going to be the principal of the school (Gooch, 2014). The Presbyterian Board accepted James Amos' resignation, and Alexander High School was completed by early 1864. However, James Amos wrote to the Presbyterian Board on March 14, 1864, detailing the collapse of the roof for the school. James Amos regarded the incident as an omen for why he should leave the mission. He left Liberia between May 1864 and July 1864 and returned to working as a pastor of First Colored Presbyterian Church in Reading, Pennsylvania. On November 17, 1864, James Amos passed away from hectic fever (Gooch, 94).

After fleeing the Niffau mission in January 1863, Thomas Amos and his family settled at a community in Marshall, Liberia, which was a port city 45 miles south of Monrovia. By April 1863, he and his wife, Susanna Amos, had become ill, and Thomas Amos requested to the Presbyterian Board a return to the United States on a health furlough. The request was granted; however, Susanna Amos passed away before they were able to leave. Thomas Amos' health furlough lasted a year from 1864 to 1865. In the United States, he worked as a pastor for his brother's former church at First Colored Presbyterian Church. Thomas Amos remarried while on his health furlough in 1865 and agreed to return to Liberia as a pastor for the First Presbyterian Church in Monrovia. Edward Wilmot Blyden, an African born in Saint Thomas who would later become a leading proponent for Pan-Africanism and was a Presbyterian minister at the time, preached the sermon at Thomas Amos's installation as pastor of the First Presbyterian

Church in May 1866. However, Thomas Amos would later have animosity towards Edward Wilmot Blyden for what he believed to be undermining his own influence as a pastor because Blyden was against colorism and elitism (Gooch, 2014, pp. 95-96).

Thomas Amos' mission at Monrovia struggled much like the one at Niffau. He became ill, lacked supplies, and struggled to convert the native African people; however, his support for colonization and use of pejorative terms about the native Africans never wavered even after emancipation of enslavement had taken place in the United States. In a July 11, 1868, letter to John Miller Dickey, he wrote:

My opinion is that American Blacks will never be fully enfranchised in the United States of America. They are weak when compared with the whites, numerically, intellectually and pecuniarily. They therefore must submit to their condition, right or wrong. Why not advise them to seek a home where they can be happy, and enjoy all the rights of free men and be a means of glorious end in this heathen land and not think themselves an end; but a means in the civilization and Christianization of the multitudes of our benighted brethren. (Gooch, 2014, pp. 114-115)

After battling illness, Thomas Amos passed away between Friday evening, July 9, 1869, and Saturday morning, July 10, 1869. Thomas Amos' daughter from his first marriage, Emma Amos, remained in Liberia after his death when she married a teacher from an early settler African emigration family named Henry Cooper. Thomas Amos' second wife, Sarah Amos, and their children that included Thomas Hunter Amos, along with the other daughter from Thomas Amos' first marriage, Georgianna Amos, returned to the United States. Later, Thomas Hunter Amos would follow in his father's footsteps by attending Ashmun Institute, renamed Lincoln University (Gooch, pp. 96, 120-122).

A question that cannot be fully answered is why did James Amos and Thomas Amos have disdain towards native African culture and people? As Cheryl Renée Gooch notes, James Amos and Thomas Amos were an embodiment of contradictions that many African missionaries had during that time period—“a belief of the supremacy of Euro-American Christian values and lifestyles” (Gooch, 2014, p. 49). She continues that prior to the Amos brothers attending Ashmun Institute both were considered leaders within the African Methodist Church. The African Peter Spencer, founder of the African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church (AUMP) in Wilmington, Delaware, was a staunch anti-colonizationist. The prominent church of Hinsonville, Hosanna Church, became an AUMP church in 1866 and has remained one currently (Gooch, 2014). Even though Hosanna Church did not become an AUMP church until 1866, many African churches in Delaware and Pennsylvania associated with each other regardless of denomination.

There is a strong possibility James Amos and Thomas Amos were exposed to Peter Spencer’s denunciation of colonization. On August 6, 1831, Spencer along with Abraham D. Shad and William S. Thomas’ speech “Address of the Free People of Color of the Borough of Wilmington, Delaware” was published in the newspaper *Delaware Free Press* and stated:

We therefore particularly invite their attention...leave the evangelizing of Africa, and the establishing of a Republic at Liberia to those who conceive themselves able to demonstrate the practicability of its accomplishments by means of a people, numbers of whom are more ignorant than even the natives of that country themselves. (Gooch, 2014, p. 51)

Why did Spencer's denunciation of colonization not resonate with James Amos and Thomas Amos? Maybe it was the contradictory hymns of the AUMP church authored by Spencer that describes native Africans using pejorative terms was what influenced James Amos and Thomas Amos in which one reads:

On Afric's [sic] lands our fathers roam'd,  
A free but savage race;  
No word of light their minds inform'd,  
Of God's recovering grace,  
He led us o'er the Atlantic flood,  
That we might learn his ways.  
The children of that very race,  
Who gave our Father's pain... (Gooch, 2014, p. 49)

There is not a clear answer as to why James Amos and Thomas Amos viewed native Africans negatively, but maybe it was a combination of their education at Ashmun Institute and teachings as leaders in the African Methodist Church.

Like many African communities during the nineteenth century, one of Hinsonville's most important institutions was the church. In 1843, the residents of Hinsonville decided to build Hosanna Church which completed construction by 1845 (Russo, 2005). George Walls and William Walls oversaw the building effort; however, all residents contributed to the building of Hosanna Church, most importantly James Amos, Samuel Amos, and Samuel Glasgow. George Walls and William Walls requested to their brother Edward Walls on behalf of the residents in Hinsonville to build a church on a one half acre area of a seven acre plot of land he had purchased in 1841. Edward Walls agreed to allow the residents build Hosanna Church on his property which enabled for the planning of raising funds for its construction from local African and European American

communities. By 1845, Hosanna Church was constructed and seated up to one hundred congregants (Russo, 2005). Samuel Glasgow is believed to have been the organizer of Hosanna Church's construction because he had an affiliation with the African Methodist Church movement, in which he was a founding trustee for Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church near Unionville in East Marlborough, Chester County, in 1839. James Amos and Thomas Amos both became ministers during Hosanna Church's early establishment (Russo, 2005). Hosanna Church like many African churches was not only an institution for worship but also operated as a center for social activities such as celebrations for births, deaths, and marriages. In addition, the church was a location for self-government, in which building committees and fair committees with elected officers created plans to raise money and settle disputes. The women of Hinsonville used the church for a sewing organization that made clothes for the annual fair, and as the years passed, the women of Hinsonville took on greater church roles (Russo, 2005).

Like other African churches during the 1800s, one of the major decisions for Hosanna Church was deciding its denomination. When Hosanna Church was completed in 1845, Geoffrey Golden, who dedicated the church, and the African James Alexander Shorter were assigned by the Baltimore Conference to minister the church. James Alexander Shorter later became a founder of Wilberforce University located in Wilberforce, Ohio. As a member of the Baltimore Conference, Hosanna Church belonged to the Penningtonville (modern day Atglen) Circuit located 15 miles away in Chester County. This affiliation lasted until 1850 when Hosanna Church departed from the African Methodist Episcopal Connection by declining to have Reverend William H.

Waters, who was assigned by the Baltimore Conference, minister its congregation. Instead, Adam Driver, who had refused to comply with being silenced by Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore and thus became affiliated with the First Colored Methodist Protestant Church, was chosen as minister of Hosanna Church. However, by 1856, the members of Hosanna Church had grown frustrated with Adam Driver because of his lack of availability and petitioned to rejoin the Baltimore Conference and its affiliation with Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (Russo, 2005). In 1870, Hosanna Church parted for a second time with the Baltimore Conference and Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church for again not wanting a minister suggested by the conference to be pastor of the church. Instead, Hosanna Church became affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church which lasted until the 1880s when the church became affiliated with the African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church. There are no surviving records to explain why Hosanna Church left its African Methodist Episcopal affiliation, but the church remains affiliated with the African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church today (Russo, 2005). Many of Hosanna Church's current and past members through oral tradition claim it was a stop on the Underground Railroad and was where speeches from Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and other abolitionists were conducted. This is likely true because of several Underground Railroad locations in Chester County and within Hinsonville itself (Russo, 2005).

Pauli Murray, whose grandfather, Robert Fitzgerald, was a community member of Hinsonville states the community's residents believed African warriors who were able to

get to the Hosanna Church while anti-enslavement meetings were in progress on Saturdays would “mingle with the congregation and would drive away in a wagonload of free Negroes who hustled them on to the next Underground station” (Murray, 1999, p. 95). Robert Fitzgerald was born in New Castle County, Delaware, on October 24, 1840, and was the third oldest of 12 children although six of his siblings passed away at young ages. His father was an African named Thomas Fitzgerald, and his mother was a European American named Sarah Ann Fitzgerald (Murray, 1999). In early 1855, the Fitzgerald family moved from New Castle County to Hinsonville, in which they bought a 25 acre farm for 1,632-dollars in cash that took 20 years to save through farming and selling their produce. Thomas Fitzgerald sold the produce at first, but Sarah Ann Fitzgerald began to do it out of fear of her husband being kidnapped. Every Wednesday Sarah Ann Fitzgerald sold produce in Wilmington and did the same in Philadelphia on Saturdays. Because of the proximity to the Mason-Dixon Line and the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, Thomas Fitzgerald taught his sons how to shoot a gun to defend themselves against potential kidnapers. Sarah Ann Fitzgerald was weary of peddlers that traveled from door to door selling wares in Hinsonville as possible kidnapers because Africans were abducted, oftentimes, afterwards. Every night the Fitzgerald family went to bed only after their door was heavily locked and a loaded musket was within reach for defense against kidnapers (Murray, 1999). Sarah Ann Fitzgerald and Thomas Fitzgerald did not have an official station on the Underground Railroad but allowed their barn in Hinsonville to be used by African warriors to rest before heading to their next location. African warriors rested often at the barn and were

never turned away by the Fitzgeralds. If the African warrior carried a pipe and tobacco or matches, then Thomas Fitzgerald would ask for it before sending the African warrior to the loft of the barn to sleep for the night. This was done as a precautionary measure to avoid fires and burning down his barn. Thomas Fitzgerald would then tell the African warrior that if he or she left before sunrise then the pipe and tobacco would be on the ledge near the barn door. If the African warrior stayed into the next day, then he would request the African warrior assist Sarah Ann Fitzgerald with cutting firewood, in which she would feed the African warrior breakfast. The children of Sarah Ann Fitzgerald and Thomas Fitzgerald were instructed to never ask about the African warriors who slept in the barn. Pauli Murray states Thomas Fitzgerald never asked an African warrior his or her name or where he or she was going next (Murray, 1999). According to Murray, residents of Hinsonville also believed African warriors came to Hosanna Church en route to Christiana, Lancaster County (Murray, 1995). It is believed by current members of Hosanna Church there is an underground tunnel that was placed beneath the pulpit of the church to hide African warriors before continuing north. Unfortunately, this claim and the true involvement of Hosanna Church with the Underground Railroad cannot be investigated fully because the building structure of the church is unstable.

The community members of Hinsonville displayed profound resilience during times of turmoil pertaining to enslavement. With the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, it immediately impacted Hinsonville's residents. All Africans in the surrounding area of Hinsonville as well as the town itself felt threatened by the passage of the act because of the proximity of the Mason-Dixon Line. The Mason-Dixon Line was

considered the boundary that separated the North from the South leading up to and during the Civil War, especially when Pennsylvania abolished African enslavement in 1847, while Maryland continued the atrocity (Wingert, 2016). Hinsonville and the surrounding area became a prime target by Maryland enslavers, United States Marshals, and anti-African posses to kidnap Africans (Russo, 2005). The Christiana Resistance also had great impact on Hinsonville with many residents discussing the event as if they had been a part of it according to Pauli Murray (Murray, 1999)

The expansion of Ashmun Institute and the Civil War were two major events that caused significant changes and eventual cease of existence to Hinsonville with a large number of its original citizens departing either for Liberia, military service, the South, or urban centers (Russo, 2005). When the Civil War began, many of Hinsonville's young men volunteered their services to the Union Army's United States Colored Troops (USCT). This was not an easy task, but 18 men were successful in volunteering: Samuel Henry Blake, 127th; Charles William Cole, 24th; James Cole, 54th Massachusetts; Josiah Cole, 54th Massachusetts; Amos Daws, 127th; George W. Duffy, 22nd; Robert G. Fitzgerald, 5th Massachusetts; William B. Fitzgerald, 41st; Hugh Hall, 25th; Isaac Amos Hollingsworth, 127th; George Jay, 54th Massachusetts; Wesley Jay, 54th Massachusetts; William Jay, 54th Massachusetts; Lewis Palmer, 25th; Stephen J. Ringgold, 22nd; Lewis W. Ringold, 25th; Abraham Stout, 41st; and Albert G. Walls, 54th Massachusetts (Gooch, 2018). Albert G. Walls was the son of William Walls and Rachel Walls and was one of two casualties from Hinsonville during the Civil War. The other casualty was Albert G. Walls' brother-in-law Hugh Hall. During the war, Robert Fitzgerald assisted in liberating

Africans from plantations in Virginia. His brother, William B. Fitzgerald, along with Samuel Henry Blake, Isaac Amos Hollingsworth, and Abraham Stout were present at Appomattox, Virginia, when the European American Confederate Army General Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865, that led to the end of the Civil War shortly afterwards (Gooch, 2018). According to Lucy Maddox, 500 Africans from Chester County participated in the Civil War (Maddox, 2016). Their listed occupations included farmers, farm laborers, fiddlers, laborers, shoemakers, and wagoners with ages of 18 to 63 (Kashatus, 2002). Africans from Chester County to join the Union Army's USCT included the brick maker John W. Brown from West Chester who served in the 6th USCT as well as Tillman Valentine Jr. who was the first cousin of Robert Fitzgerald and served in the 3rd USCT. The 3rd USCT was the first regiment to train at Camp William Penn near Philadelphia that was created specifically for African troops. Tillman Valentine Jr.'s father, Tillman Valentine Sr., was one of the original inhabitants of Hinsonville but moved with his family to West Chester, Chester County, by the time of the Civil War (Gooch, 2018).

Ten of the 18 men from Hinsonville who fought during the Civil War are buried at the cemetery of Hosanna Church (Gooch, 2018). The disabilities suffered by most Hinsonville returning soldiers caused the community to be less productive because its members were dependent on farming and managing family businesses. Hinsonville's Civil War veterans were impoverished because they could not receive their pensions and lost the ability to work as a result of their injuries. African Civil War veterans across the United States as well as African activists such as Frederick Douglass fought for pensions

as well as equal pensions to that of European American Civil War veterans into the 1880s, in which many Africans never received their pensions. The average monthly pension for Civil War veterans was eight-dollars but was hard to receive because of the pension application process that asked for birthdate, details of one's personal life, disabilities and illnesses that happened during military service, military service, and place of birth, (Gooch, 2018). This was difficult for many African Civil War veterans such as George W. Duffy and Stephen J. Ringold because they were born enslaved and did not have access to birthdates and places of birth. Even if the information requested for pension applications was provided, African Civil War veterans were still denied and often misdiagnosed by examining physicians. This was the case for Isaac Amos Hollingsworth when an examining physician misdiagnosed him many years with diarrhea which really was stomach cancer (Gooch, 2018). Eventually, the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) demanded African Civil War veterans receive equal pensions to that of European American Civil War veterans that lead to the enactment of the Dependent Pension Act of 1890. The act increased coverage to all Civil War veterans who were disabled and unable to do manual labor even if disabilities were sustained not from the war (Gooch, 2018). The Dependent Pension Act of 1890 assisted Robert Fitzgerald with receiving his pension as he slowly became completely blind because of an injury during the Civil War, but others like George Jay and Samuel Henry Blake never received their pensions nor remuneration for injuries that occurred during the war (Gooch, 2018).

Although Ashmun Institute was a great addition to Hinsonville, the university's expansion caused the community to suffer. The university was not a community

institution, and the residents of Hinsonville had no role in Ashmun Institute's institutional policies, especially in hiring African faculty, even though its residents helped to build the university and enrolled there such as James Amos, Robert Fitzgerald, and Thomas Amos. Robert Fitzgerald attended Lincoln University before the Civil War and after but never graduated and instead chose to build and teach African schools in North Carolina and Virginia (Gooch, 2018). The university's founder, John Miller Dicky, opposed the hiring of African faculty when alumni and students sought to have them employed stating in 1873:

My friends you need all the results of 100's of years which have accumulated within the white race. It is no fault of yours that you are far back in education, in science, in wealth, in power over the people of the world; you have had no opportunity, you are just emerging from a sleep of ages and you are nobly grasping the means offered you of placing yourselves on a high plane... You desire the best instructor(s)... whose very presence with you and daily intercourse in the class room and the pulpit and in social intercourse will bring you up to their level. (Gooch, 2018, p. 136)

John Miller Dicky was a racist and never sought to educate Africans at all, particularly in their own history on subjects he believed they lacked. The Christiania Resistance and Parker sisters' kidnappings may have lessened his anti-enslavement sentiment as stated by Horace Mann Bond, but it did not alleviate his racism. Lincoln University's refusal to hire African faculty led to Africans such as William Still, who attended graduation ceremonies from 1866 through the 1880s, as well as his son and university alum William Wilberforce Still and classmate of the latter Francis Grimke to become alarmed. Grimke graduated from the university in 1870 and in response to the non-hiring of African faculty stated, "Lincoln University alone of Negro institutions shuts colored men out of its

trustee Board and out of its professorships” (Gooch, 2018, p. 132). Frederick Douglass also voiced his disapproval of the university and support of the alumni wanting to hire African faculty in the *Alumni Magazine* in 1885 stating:

I am...entirely with you in your effort to counteract the tendency in colored institutions...to repress and discourage the colored man’s ambition to do and to be something more than a subordinate when he is qualified to occupy superior positions. It is a part of the old spirit of caste, a legacy left us by slavery, against which we have to contend, and it is all the more difficult to meet because in colored institutions under white control where it is usually the guise of religion, and a pious regard for the happiness of the objects of its disparagement... (Gooch, 2018, p. 133)

Hinsonville residents were dismayed to learn the university it helped to create was racist and addressed them unfairly much like the pension system that denied the community’s Civil War veterans in receiving fair compensation (Gooch, 2018). By the late 1860s, Hinsonville ceased to exist as a geographical location, becoming a part of Lincoln University Village that adjoins the educational institution of Lincoln University. The only remnants of Hinsonville are the Hosanna Church and families who continue to live in the area (Russo, 2005).

## CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION

The thematic structure for this dissertation is Afrocentricity. It is vital in assessing African agency in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865 by employing two important concepts of the theory—agency and Location Theory. Using Afrocentricity to analyze the agency of Africans allows them to be central and not secondary within their own history as agents who gained liberation for themselves. Locating Africans as the subjects of action within their own historiography eliminated the dis-agency created by Eurocentric negations of African culture. As asserted by Molefi Kete Asante, the use of marginality dismantles the material and spiritual personality of African people, in which the worst form is to be marginal within one’s own story (Asante, 2008). The concept of African agency and agents are important to this work because numerous of the oral and written accounts concerning Chester County and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865 focus on the contributions of European American agents driven by economic issues and moral repentance and create a narrative of enslaved Africans being saved by these individuals rather than the Africans themselves whether enslaved or liberated being the main agents of acquiring their own emancipation and freedom.

The critical problem this dissertation addresses is the lack of subjectivity of African agency within much of the literature that has been produced about Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865 such as R.C. Smedley’s *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania* (2005), William J. Switala’s *Underground Railroad in*

*Pennsylvania, Second Edition* (2008), Cooper H. Wingert's *Slavery & the Underground Railroad in South Central Pennsylvania* (2016) and *Abolitionists of South Central Pennsylvania* (2018), Andrew Delbanco's *The War Before the War: Fugitive Slaves and the Struggle for America's Soul from the Revolution to the Civil War* (2018), and Lucy Maddox's *The Parker Sisters: A Border Kidnapping* (2016). Unfortunately, this is a problem that still exists when analyzing literature about African communities in the United States of America during the nineteenth century and throughout the Diaspora as a whole no matter the time period. This dissertation is an attempt to end the Eurocentric analysis of African communities within Chester County and the surrounding area and to produce an Afrocentric examination of the subject that is one of few that has been executed since Ella Forbes' *But We Have No Country: The 1851 Christiana, Pennsylvania Resistance* (1998). In addition, by using an Afrocentric analysis, this dissertation expands on existing literature such as Forbes' book and develops new knowledge pertaining to African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865.

The contributions of African agents to Chester County and the surrounding area from 1850 to 1865 are in large part ignored but not forgotten. African agency exists within the aforementioned books and many others but is purposely ignored to exaggerate and perpetuate a myth of enslaved Africans being saved by European Americans rather than the Africans themselves whether enslaved or liberated being the main agents of acquiring their own liberation. This is commonly done in the retelling of the Christiana Resistance, in which the Africans involved, including William Parker, are coopted or

eliminated from the story altogether while the European Americans Castner Hanway and Elijah Lewis are elevated as heroes even though they are marginal within the events that took place. At best, Castner Hanway was neutral during the resistance and even protected one of the kidnapers from being killed by the Africans, yet he was still considered, oftentimes, as the hero of the Christiana Resistance by local historians, the newspaper *Philadelphia Times*, and European American abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison who visited Christiana in October 1858 and described his experience in the October 15, 1858, issue of the newspaper *The Liberator* writing:

On returning from the meeting, we passed near the spot—hereafter to be historically famous, and ever an object of curiosity to the passing traveler—where the Methodist slave-hunter, Gorsuch, from Maryland, was shot dead by one of his slaves whom he was attempting to arrest and who succeeded in making their escape to Canada. It was Bunker Hill and Lexington on a limited scale. I had the satisfaction to place my feet upon the threshold and to sit down in a room of the dwelling of ELIJAH LEWIS, a most blameless and worthy member of the Society of Friends, who, with CASTNER HANWAY, was ruthlessly seized and conveyed to prison on the charge of ‘TREASON,’ where he remained ‘in durance vile’ for several months. Posterity shall place both of these sufferers among ‘those of whom the world was not worthy.’ (Forbes, 1998, p. 253)

Garrison never mentions William Parker as the leader of the Christiana Resistance, the African participants, nor the Africans imprisoned. Perhaps, this was done purposefully as suggested by Kellie Carter Jackson in her book *Force and Freedom: Black Abolitionists and the Politics of Violence* (2019) because of William Lloyd Garrison’s stance against violence and support of moral suasion and nonviolence. She writes:

During the antebellum period, nonviolence could not be separated from the belief in black subordination. In other words, for many black abolitionists, moral suasion was predicated on people’s acceptance of black inferiority. Activism or protest against slavery were only acceptable to white abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison so long as it did not

interfere or threaten their authority. Black abolitionists understood this dynamic well and used the power of violence to challenge it. A San Francisco correspondent for *Frederick Douglass' Weekly* claimed, "The friends of the colored people took part in antislavery work as a matter of duty...but they were no more likely to believe that Negroes were naturally equal to whites than they were to believe that chalk was cheese. (Jackson, 2019, p. 161)

For Africans, moral suasion and nonviolence were not an option after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 as well as the Dred Scott case in 1857, in which the United States Supreme Court denied all citizenship rights of Africans in the country whether enslaved or liberated (Jackson, 2019). Eliminating Africans as the agents of their own liberation allows a myth to thrive and leads European Americans today to believe their ancestors and descendants were mostly honorable and moral people, especially if they were Quakers. This is a common myth and often believed particularly in Chester County and the surrounding area because of their abundance that all Quakers were against enslavement, believed in equality, and were "Friends" of Africans when that is also not true. In fact, Africans were denied admittance to the Society of Friends as Quakers in Pennsylvania from the seventeenth century into the nineteenth century. If Quakers did assist African warriors, then they would provide clothing, food, and shelter but rarely would break the law or physically fight against kidnapers (Kashatus, 2002). Charles L. Blockson's *Hippocrene Guide to the Underground Railroad* (1995) continues, "Overemphasis on the Quakers' role as aides in the Underground Railroad has led to ignorance about the participation of other religious groups who equally participated in the operation" (Blockson, 1995, p. 12). The religious groups Blockson references include Africans a part of Christian denominations whose participation in the Underground Railroad helped thousands of African warriors gain liberation and are often overlooked.

Furthermore, Chester County is the location where one of the most heinous lynchings in United States' history occurred almost 60 years after the Christiana Resistance. On August 14, 1911, the African Zachariah Walker was lynched in Coatesville after defending himself against a European American police officer the day before which resulted in the officer dying. To escape a lynch mob, Zachariah Walker attempted to commit suicide to no avail that resulted in him having surgery for the wound to his head at a local hospital and being strait-jacketed as well as chained to a hospital bed. Afterwards, the lynch mob broke into the hospital, dragged Walker outside while still chained to the bed, and tortured and burned Walker alive amongst a cheering crowd of 4,000 spectators, in which his bone fragments were sold as souvenirs throughout Coatesville. No one was ever convicted of Zachariah Walker's murder, and it's an incident that lives in infamy with a Pennsylvania historical marker that stands today (Forbes, 1998). The lynching of Zachariah Walker terrified local Africans and disrupted the 1911 commemoration of the Christiana Resistance, in which an African participant of the resistance, Peter Wood, received a medal and the African Reverend R.F. Wright of Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in Atglen, Chester County, were the only Africans present. African members of the church were also set to attend but were too afraid because of the lynching. To add further insult to the Africans of the Christiana Resistance and those in fear of their lives because of Zachariah Walker's murder, songs that were played at the 1911 commemoration were "Dixie," "My Old Kentucky Home," and "Swanee River"; all of which were a celebration and representation of African enslavement (Forbes, 1998, p. 255).

The insults continued during the 100 year anniversary celebration of the Christiana Resistance in 1951 hosted by the Lancaster County Historical Society at Pownall Farm and attended by 800 people, in which Edward Gorsuch and his descendants were celebrated along with the other European American participants of the resistance while the Africans were marginalized. The only exception was when the first African President of Lincoln University, Horace Mann Bond, spoke at the commemoration and declared William Parker as a “Man Without a Country” and “a man who loved Freedom passionately, and who used violence to get it for himself and for others” (Forbes, 1998, p. 261). It is important Bond declared that William Parker used violence to liberate himself and others to destroy the depiction of Africans being frightened, helpless, and passive victims awaiting assistance from European American abolitionists. According to Kellie Carter Jackson, “One of the deadliest tools against white supremacy was unapologetic black self-defense. No greater action demanded the rights and respect of black humanity than physical resistance” (Jackson, 2019, p. 161). Oddly, Horace Mann Bond does not refer to William Parker in his book *Education for Freedom: A History of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania* (1976). The African community of Hinsonville existed prior to the university’s construction on the same land years later and was affected by the Christiana Resistance. Hinsonville is mentioned by Bond in the book even though it is in a negative manner, yet it is peculiar William Parker and the Christiana Resistance were excluded because Bond knew about their significance enough to speak at the 100 year anniversary celebration (Forbes, 1998). Although William Parker was mentioned by Horace Mann Bond at the celebration, the Africans of the Christiana Resistance and those present at the commemoration were still disrespected by

the playing of enslavement songs such as “Carry Me Back to Old Virginia,” “My Old Kentucky Home,” and “Old Black Joe” (Forbes, 1998, p. 259). The 1911 commemoration and 1951 commemoration both took place in Pennsylvania and not the South which further highlights the racism that still existed in 1951 locally even though the state is located in the North.

Yet it is still believed by local residents that Chester County and the surrounding area was a place of moral European American citizens because Quakers inhabited the area in large numbers. This is false and infuriating to perpetuate, especially when combined with the ignored agency of Africans. Furthermore, according to William C. Kashatus’ *Just Over the Line: Chester County and the Underground Railroad* (2002), in 1890, West Chester, Chester County, established laws that did not allow Africans to compete for city council seats or vote an African mayor into office that were not overturned for several decades. West Chester also began segregating schools in 1856 and did not fully desegregate them until 1977. During the time of segregation, African children suffered from a lack of African teachers and inadequate bussing and facilities. In addition, the anti-African European American terrorist organization the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) staged cross burnings and terrorized Chester County during the early twentieth century that forced families to flee and even marched through downtown West Chester as late as on January 12, 1991. Events such as this still remain well in the memories of Africans in the area. The march of the KKK would help lead to the community organizing to finally create and dedicate a historical marker to the town’s native African Civil Rights Movement activist Bayard Rustin in 1995 at Henderson High School (formerly West Chester High School) where he graduated (Kashatus, 2002). Chester

County may have been a safer environment for Africans as opposed to enslavement prior to the enactment of the Thirteenth Amendment that ended African enslavement in the United States, but the county was far from being free of racism and inhabiting an over abundance of moral European American residents. As the African warrior Frederick Douglass stated:

Until it is safe to leave the lamb in the hold of the lion, the laborer in power of the capitalist, the poor in the hands of the rich, it will not be safe to leave a newly emancipated people completely in the power of their former masters, especially when such masters have ceased to be such not from enlightened moral convictions but irresistible force. (Jackson, 2019, p. 162)

African liberation was a result of their own agency and not the morality of Quakers and other European Americans. Almost 150 years after the Christiana Resistance, African agency continued to be diminished. At the Conference of Black History in Millersville, Lancaster County, held on April 24, 1998, to April 25, 1998, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission dedicated a state historical marker to the Christiana Resistance where it took place on modern day Lower Valley Road. However, the Christiana Resistance is incorrectly referred to as a “riot,” and the problematic terms “runaways” and “slaves” are used within the description which makes the marker European-centered (Forbes, 1998, pp. 266-267).

This dissertation exhibits that a reliance upon European American benevolence for liberation was not the case for a multitude of Africans. Many were able to independently attain their own liberation in the best interests of themselves in situations of un-freedom and racial oppression and are the primary focus for this work. Again, this does not mean there were no European American agents who contributed to the effort of

emancipation and freedom for African people in Chester County and throughout the United States of America. However, focusing primarily on the contributions of European American agents and excluding African agents creates dis-agency. Throughout Chester County and the surrounding area's history, Africans have been present and primary contributors to their own economic, political, and social change with heroes such as Abraham Shadd, Charlotte Forten, Benjamin Freeman, Eliza Parker, Emory Hinson, James Forten, Mary Ann Shadd, Robert Purvis, Stephen Smith, William Parker, William Whipper, and many others. To exclude or ignore one let alone all of these African heroes, it is a major disservice to not only them but history. Without the contributions of Africans in Chester County and the surrounding area, one must ask how does history change? For example, exclude Emory Hinson and the African community of Hinsonville, and how does one efficiently tell the history of the institution and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)? Furthermore, does the institution exist at all without Hinsonville? If not, then does that affect the history of well-known graduates such as Kwame Nkrumah, Langston Hughes, Nnamdi Azikiwe, and Thurgood Marshall or even Pauli Murray whose family lived within Hinsonville and grandfather, Robert Fitzgerald, attended the institution? Exclude William Parker and the Africans of Christiana, Lancaster County, and how does one accurately describe the events that lead to the Civil War, in which the Christiana Resistance is one of the earliest times a newspaper used the term "Civil War" in the United States ten years before it actually takes place? These are only a few examples to emphasize the importance of African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area.

African agency must be acknowledged and celebrated not ignored. As Ella Forbes emphasizes, racial polarization that plagues the United States as well as the Diaspora is a result of continued ignorance concerning the role of Africans in history (Forbes, 1998). This continued ignorance is a result of European-centered myths that create dis-agency for African people. To debunk these myths, an Afrocentric analysis of history must be utilized within books and curricula to bring attention to the importance of African agency and African contributions to the foundations of not only the United States but also the world. Employing an Afrocentric analysis to historiography will accomplish what Molefi Kete Asante suggests as Afrocentricity's desire to "obliterate the mental, physical, cultural, and economic dislocation of African people by thrusting Africans as centered, healthy, human beings in the context of African thought" (Asante, 2014, p. 18). Additionally, Ella Forbes suggests that the production of more literature that uses an Afrocentric analysis will assist to not distort African history which can then be used by scholars and students to educate themselves and others (Forbes, 1998).

As stated by Marianne H. Russo and Paul A. Russo in *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century African-American Village* (2005), "We are always in need of good local history. Local histories of African-American communities in the antebellum era largely remain to be written, if they are discoverable at all" (Russo, 2005, p. xi). This dissertation is a contribution to the local history of Africans in Chester County and the surrounding area during the antebellum period. African agency did exist in abundance prior to 1850 and well beyond 1865 in Pennsylvania, and the great thing is that much of this history is accessible through books,

journals, maps, newspapers, oral histories, etc. The issue that remains is not African agency being “discovered” but rather acknowledged. During the research and writing of this dissertation, several local speaking engagements were attended as well as tours taken by me that discussed the Underground Railroad in Chester County and the surrounding area. This included a tour conducted by the Kennett Square Underground Railroad Center in Kennett Square, Chester County; a tour guided by the Chester County History Center in West Chester; and in-person as well as online Zoom presentations by local historians about the Christiana Resistance, Hinsonville, Lincoln University, and Parker sisters’ kidnappings. All of them had valuable information, but I could not help but feel underwhelmed by most of them for their oversights and lack of critical analysis as well as minimization of African agency. Today, there are still local European American historians who gather large audiences to discuss publications of books on the Underground Railroad in Chester County and the surrounding area and write as if African agency was minute or nonexistent. Aforementioned books like R.C. Smedley’s *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania* and Lucy Maddox’s *The Parker Sisters: A Border Kidnapping* are still viewed locally as the premier books on African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area during the antebellum era even though both are European-centered. Even in terms of discussing the Christiana Resistance, Ella Forbes’ *But We Have No Country: The 1851 Christiana, Pennsylvania Resistance* is rarely mentioned unless by local African residents who understand and appreciate its value in discussing African agency accurately and in-depth. Additionally, Lincoln University has only recently incorporated Hinsonville and its

importance in the founding of the institution. On September 18, 2015, a commemoration was held for Hosanna Church by representatives of the university as well as an erection and dedication of a Toni Morrison inspired Bench by the Road marker. Although problematic, the inscription celebrates James Amos and Thomas Amos as having a key role in Liberian colonization but is at least a public acknowledgment of Hinsonville residents besides Hosanna Church's Pennsylvania historical marker ("The Friends of Hosanna," 2015). This is important because Hosanna Church is not owned by the university so having public acknowledgement from Lincoln University of Hinsonville does well to incorporate the current community where the descendants of Hinsonville residents still reside.

The work of this dissertation is still only the beginning of a continuance to recognize and discuss African agency in Chester County and the surrounding area that will be preserved by myself and, hopefully, others as well as at local institutions. In particular, Chester County has to its benefit two of the first HBCUs with Cheyney University and Lincoln University, yet neither offer a course about local African history. Having a course for students and public seminars for the community could greatly benefit in understanding local African agency and its importance in building the county into what it is today as one of the oldest and wealthiest in Pennsylvania as well as in the United States. Africans have been in Chester County prior to the arrival of the British and William Penn and are still important to why it continues to thrive today. As the African historian John Hope Franklin once wrote:

When one begins a poem, a hymn, a short story, or even a history, one must be optimistic about its completion and about what it seeks to teach. If one believes in the power of his own words and in the words of others, one must also hope and believe that the world will be a better place by our having spoken or written those words. (Russo, 2005, xii)

It is my hope and optimism that this dissertation continues the work of bringing to the forefront and uplifting of the African voices from the underground that have far too often been ignored in making not only Chester County and the surrounding area but the world a better place.

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