

# **Old First and Slavery**

Report from the First Church History Group

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(with corrections as of 8/6/2022)

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“Our past was slavery. We cannot recur to it with any sense of complacency or composure. The history of it is a record of stripes, a revelation of agony. It is written in characters of blood. Its breath is a sigh, its voice a groan, and we turn from it with a shudder.

The duty of to-day is to meet the questions that confront us with intelligence and courage.”

—Frederick Douglass (1889)<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

In this report, the First Church History Group provides an overview of the history of slavery in relation to “Old First,” a historical predecessor to The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, from the arrival of the first Black enslaved persons in New Amsterdam until the end of the Civil War.

First Church archives and public records from that period indicate that a number of Old First pastors, officers, and members were slaveowners. Several members accumulated wealth through enslavement of others or by participating directly in the slave trade. The early church was supported in part by wealth and leadership skills contributed by those slaveowning individuals. During that time, the congregation included Black people, both free and enslaved. The names and available information concerning those Black members are referenced in this report.

Due to accounting and reporting practices of the time, the precise economic impact of slavery upon our present time is difficult to estimate. However, it is clear that our church and city were involved with slavery from its beginning to at least the Civil War, and such involvement has left a legacy that still exists today.

The First Church History Group respectfully requests that the Session acknowledge the information presented in this report, which is offered to facilitate prayer, reflection, and discussion, and to provide detailed information for further deliberations.

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## Introduction

The Facing Racism Action Group was founded in January 2018 at First Church with a mission to encourage discussion of racism in our society and appropriate Christian responses to racial injustice and inequality. Through the years since the creation of that action group, there have been lectures, presentations, reading groups, and discussions, which have been both enlightening and troubling.

Those meetings have provided an opportunity to openly consider difficult issues regarding slavery and racial discrimination in the United States and have allowed us to reflect on our moral obligations on these issues. Given that our church was founded prior to the end of slavery in the United States, members of the congregation have asked questions about slavery in relation to early First Church history. Those questions have included:

- Did pastors, officers, or members of our congregation ever own slaves?
- How did early First Church leaders view slavery?
- Were funds that founded our church, built church buildings, and provided for the operation of the church, the result of slave ownership or slave labor?

In recent years, many educational and religious organizations have reported extensively on their past connections to slavery. These organizations, some with strong Presbyterian connections, include Princeton Theological Seminary, Rutgers University, Columbia University, the Council of Independent Colleges, St. Mark's Church, and Harvard University.<sup>2</sup>

The Facing Racism Action Group discussed the creation of a project to explore questions regarding slavery in First Church history, encouraging participation from officers and members of the congregation, and a proposal was presented to session. In January 2021, session received and approved the proposal. A research team, designated as the First Church History Group (FC History Group) was assembled, and permission granted to access church archives to begin research.

## Research Process

The FC History Group began by reading published histories of the church including *A City Church: The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York*.<sup>3</sup> The group then spent significant time examining church archives, reviewing early trustee and session minutes, member lists, records of births, deaths, and baptisms. Through this preliminary analysis, we compiled an Excel spreadsheet with over six hundred individuals affiliated with early First Church history. From that spreadsheet, we focused upon three groups: pastors, officers, and members of the church.

To determine individual slave ownership and/or involvement with the slave trade, names from the spreadsheet were cross-referenced with data provided by *The New York Slavery Records Index*, a project of the John Jay College of the City University of New York (CUNY).<sup>4</sup> The searchable database contains tens of thousands of records on slavery within New York State from 1525 through the Civil War.

The CUNY Index also provides a centralized source for supporting documents from the New-York Historical Society and other archives, such as slave ship registers, collections of slave trade publications and runaway slave notices, related manuscripts, and image files. United States census data, beginning with the census of 1790 through the Civil War, was used to confirm names, addresses, and personal details such as title or occupation.

Obtaining financial data for the church during the era of slavery was difficult. Due to incomplete reporting practices of the time, early session and trustee minutes and other documents did not contain extensive financial accounting information and often did not cite specific expenses or income. In certain instances, for example, those records noted a single annual fund balance, with only a brief certification that the books had been reviewed and found satisfactory.

As a result, rather than a complete and comprehensive account, the financial data obtained from our research is episodic. Nevertheless, many documents created prior to the Civil War provide an overall sense of financial condition of the church and how financial challenges were addressed at various points in our history. While some profits of slavery surely benefited the church, the FC History Group was unable to quantify the amount of support received from members that derived income from slavery or the slave trade.

In addition to First Church archives and the CUNY Index, the group accessed supplemental archives including Princeton, Columbia, and Rutgers University records, books, articles, and archival

press clippings from Newspapers.com, Ancestry.com, and other online resources. These materials were cross-referenced to obtain primary and secondary documents to confirm histories of slave trade or slave ownership. Those supporting references are cited in footnotes, as well as in sources assembled in a bibliography that follows our report.

To place early First Church in context, the FC History Group examined the broader history of slavery in New York City and surrounding areas. A summary of that research follows.



## Slavery in New York City

(1626-1865)

The enslavement of African people in New York City began less than one hundred years before the founding of Old First. In 1626, eleven African slaves were brought to the city, then known as New Amsterdam and under Dutch control.

In 1664, the British took control of New Amsterdam, renaming the city and continuing to import enslaved Africans.<sup>5</sup> Slaves in New York were forced to work in many areas of unskilled and skilled labor in the growing port city and surrounding areas. A slave market was established at the east end of Wall Street on the East River in 1711.<sup>6</sup> Eight years later, in 1719, The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York was built near the west end of Wall Street.

Shortly after the establishment of the slave market, the city recorded its first uprising of enslaved people. Nine White New Yorkers were killed, and the rebels were captured and executed. Following the uprising, laws were established severely restricting slave movements and activities with penalties ranging from whipping to death. Punishment took place in front of City Hall, which was located a few yards from Old First.

By 1730, 42 percent of the population owned enslaved persons, a higher percentage than in any other city in the colonies except Charleston, South Carolina. One in five New Yorkers were enslaved persons. The enslaved population in New York City built much of the city's infrastructure and, from unskilled manual and domestic service to skilled labor in carpentry, farming, butchering, and early manufacturing, was foundational to the New York City economy. "Slaves built the city, its hulking stone houses, its nail-knocked wooden wharves ... they loaded and unloaded the ships, steps from the slave market."<sup>7</sup> During this period, a sugar refinery was located on Wall Street, between the slave market and Old First.<sup>8</sup>

The city was increasingly threatened by fears of uprisings of enslaved people, such as the New York Conspiracy of 1741. Under suspicious circumstances, multiple fires were set in the city and blamed on a slave rebellion. Over several weeks, more than one hundred fifty enslaved persons and twenty Whites were arrested, tried, and convicted, with many brutal executions. Old First trustee William Smith Sr. was a prosecutor in the trials. Quimino, an enslaved person of Old First pastor Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton, was tried, convicted as a conspirator, and sold to a forced labor camp in the West Indies.<sup>9</sup>

During the Revolutionary War, the British promised freedom to enslaved persons in exchange for serving as soldiers. When British troops occupied New York City in 1776, slaves flocked to the city in search of freedom. In response, New York State offered slaveowners financial incentives to assign their slaves to the military, with the promise of eventually freeing those slaves at the end of the war.

After the war, some Blacks were offered the opportunity to purchase their freedom. While it was extremely difficult, some enslaved persons were able to secure freedom in this way while others tried to obtain freedom by running away. From the 1780s onward, slaves were increasingly freed from enslavement by the will of their owners. Sometimes freedom was given due to the slaveowner's moral concerns, but often because an enslaved person grew too old, too costly to keep, or was no longer needed. This granting of freedom was called "manumission." By definition, manumission is the "sending out by hand," that is, at the sole discretion of the slaveowner.<sup>10</sup>

In 1785, the New York Manumission Society was founded, and it worked to prohibit the international slave trade and to advance laws which would ultimately free slaves. Several First Church pastors and members were active in this society. Although leaders of the society advocated for gradual freedom of Black enslaved people, many of those leaders owned enslaved people, some of whom were never freed. And for those who were, manumission was often conditional upon removal and "recolonization" to Africa or other locations outside the boundaries of the United States.

In order to prepare Blacks for freedom in the U.S. or colonies in Africa such as Liberia, the society established the African Free School in New York City (not to be confused with the similarly named African School, a Presbyterian institution founded later for similar purposes). The African Free School was the first formal educational institution for Blacks in North America. The school expanded to seven locations, with some graduates continuing to higher education and specialized careers. Very few graduates accepted the offer to leave the country for colonies in Africa.

By 1790, one in three Blacks in New York State were free. Especially in areas of concentrated population, such as New York City, free Blacks organized independent communities, with dedicated churches, benevolent and civic organizations, and businesses. Blacks continued to push for full emancipation. Subsequently, a number of prominent White New Yorkers began to advocate for gradual manumission, by law.

One of the last northern states to end slavery, New York enacted a series of legal measures which incrementally freed enslaved persons. Beginning with the New York Gradual Manumission Act in 1799,

these complicated laws often indentured enslaved children until they were adults. It would be nearly thirty years until those laws fully abolished slavery in New York State. However, knowledge of their imminent freedom motivated many enslaved people to negotiate for an earlier release.

In the ensuing years, Black and White abolitionists continued to work to end slavery immediately throughout the country and advocate for full citizenship. As Blacks participated in defending New York during the War of 1812, calls increased not only for manumission, but for full emancipation and abolition. However, there was also significant and continuing backlash against emancipation, particularly in New York City. Close economic ties to the South, especially in the cotton and sugar trade, shipping, insurance, and finance sectors, caused many business leaders and officials in New York City to continue to both directly and indirectly support the institution of slavery.

As a major shipping port, New York City maintained important links to international trade, including the slave trade. A law implemented in 1807 banned the importation of enslaved people into the United States but did not affect the U. S. domestic slave trade.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, with the legal supply of imported enslaved people terminated, the demand for domestic enslaved people increased. Much of this trade was brokered, financed, shipped, and insured by businesses located in New York City for slave buyers in the South, Cuba, and the West Indies.

As calls for emancipation and abolition of slavery grew stronger, a backlash against them grew stronger in New York City as well. In 1834, the city was torn by anti-abolitionist riots which lasted for nearly a week, until put down by military force. Rioters attacked homes, businesses, and churches of abolitionist leaders and ransacked Black neighborhoods. A little over ten years later, Old First moved to its current location on Twelfth Street.

In the years immediately preceding the Civil War, New York City continued to hold strong ties to the slaveholding South. Beginning in the early 1850s, the city became a key center for the illegal Atlantic slave trade. While New Yorkers were not allowed to own slaves themselves, the Port of New York permitted slave ships to anchor and restock with food and supplies. In addition, both free and enslaved Blacks were often kidnapped in the streets of New York and sent to southern states and foreign countries.

The city continued to profit enormously from slavery. In 1861, just weeks prior to the Civil War, New York Mayor Fernando Wood proposed secession from the Union rather than lose profits from the cotton trade with the South.<sup>12</sup> Even during the Civil War and after the Emancipation Proclamation, pro-Confederate and pro-slavery sentiment in New York City ran high. During the infamous Draft Riots of

1863, White mobs destroyed Black neighborhoods and property throughout New York City, in response to fears that freed slaves would compete for work. Approximately one hundred people, mostly free Blacks, were assaulted and lynched.

Although the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery and the Civil War ended in 1865, the economic, social, emotional, and spiritual impacts of slavery continued.

## **Legacy of Slavery**

Often described as America's "original sin," slavery and its legacy have caused Americans of all races to grapple with our country's history. For Black Americans, the end of slavery was the beginning of a quest for democratic, legal, and civil equality spanning many generations. Blacks have endured continuing injustices, from the failure of Reconstruction to the establishment of Jim Crow to the terrors of lynching.

Although slavery was institutionalized throughout the northern as well as the southern colonies and early states, the existence of slavery in the North and its significance for the region's economic and spiritual development has rarely received public recognition. It is as if northerners had collectively forgotten centuries of human enslavement and the recent—and continuing—struggles over acknowledging, and commemorating, what slavery entailed.

It may be difficult for us today to imagine the weight of slavery. People were treated as property, not as human beings. Men, women, and children were bought and sold. Families were torn apart. Forced labor provided income, wealth, and leisure time for owners. Enslaved people were contracted out to businesses or to other individuals, generating additional income for slaveowners. That these practices continued for decades, yet are not commonly recognized in the North, perpetuates a legacy of injustice.

Kyera Singleton, executive director of the Royall House and Slave Quarters Museum in Medford, Massachusetts, reminds us to "think about the violence of forgetting, of not seeing." Says Singleton, "The legacy of slavery is all around us .... slavery was an important part of northern society and its economy ... People look to the region as a whole and they say, 'Well, there weren't that many enslaved people.'"<sup>13</sup> Yet, fewer numbers do not mean less suffering, merely fewer individuals experiencing the same suffering, in different ways, in isolation.

## Old First and Slavery

Old First, a predecessor of The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, exemplifies a paradox of American history. From its founding through the decades leading up to the Civil War, liberty and slavery were intertwined at Old First.

While the founders of Old First were leaders in America's fight for independence and religious freedom, a number of those same persons owned slaves or were participants in the slave trade.<sup>14</sup> While most slaveowners owned one to three enslaved persons, which was typical of New York slaveowners of the time, several notable individuals and families owned more slaves or were involved in the slave trade.<sup>15</sup>

In researching Old First connections to slavery, the FC History Group looked at pastors, officers, and members, and examined early church finances. The history of the church unfolded in two locations in New York City:

- Wall Street, in the current Financial District area, from 1719 until 1844.
- Twelfth Street in Greenwich Village, from 1846 to the present.

About ten years prior to the founding of the church on Wall Street, Presbyterians were meeting in private homes in the area. A group of five worshipers began advocating for the construction of a Presbyterian church. Public records indicate that three of those five advocates owned slaves.<sup>16</sup>

Despite many challenges, the congregation was formed in 1716 and the church building opened on Wall Street in 1719. Nearly fifty years later, as the congregation grew, a second worship space, known as "Brick Church," was constructed nearby. After the Revolutionary War, a third worship space, "Rutgers Church," was also constructed. These three churches, all in the Wall Street area, were considered a single congregation, sharing pastors, officers, and finances. For purposes of simplification, we refer to the combined congregation during this period, and through the Civil War, as "Old First," unless referring to a specific building.

In 1809, after years of operating as a single "collegiate" congregation, those worshipping in the three buildings formally agreed to split into three separate entities: Old First, Brick, and Rutgers. Our report does not follow the history of Brick and Rutgers congregations after 1809, since they became independent and no longer a part of Old First records and history.

As downtown New York City became more congested and commercial, the Presbytery suggested that the Wall Street property be sold, and the congregation moved north to Greenwich Village, which had been incorporated into the city two decades earlier. In 1846, the congregation held its first worship service in a new church on a site between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets on Fifth Avenue. In that location we continue to worship and gather today.

It should be noted that in 1918, decades after the end of the Civil War and over a century after Brick and Rutgers separated from our congregation, Old First would unite with two other nearby churches in Greenwich Village. Our former corporate name reflected this merger: “The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York—Founded 1716, Old First, University Place, Madison Square Foundation.” With that merger, the individual histories of the three congregations were absorbed into the new entity, today simply referred to as “First Church.” Likewise, the assets of those congregations, some of which were accumulated during the era of slavery in the United States, contributed to those of our current time.

## **Pastors**

Throughout Old First history, pastors have been primarily spiritual leaders, preachers, and teachers. Ordained by their respective presbyteries, pastors were men called by the congregation to serve “to ‘minister in the Word and Doctrine,’ and to dispense the sacraments.”<sup>17</sup>

Twelve pastors served the church from its founding through the end of the Civil War. Some ministered to the church for decades, others for only a few years, while some served as senior pastors or as co-pastors with other associate clergy.

Church archives and public records indicate that seven of the first nine Old First pastors were owners of enslaved persons:

- Rev. James Anderson, our founding pastor, left three slaves to his descendants.<sup>18</sup>
- Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton Jr. granted his slave freedom in his will.<sup>19</sup>
- Rev. David Bostwick sold two of his slaves in 1759.<sup>20</sup>
- Rev. Joseph Treat was a slaveowner while a tutor at the College of New Jersey.<sup>21</sup>
- Rev. John Rodgers owned one slave at the time of the 1790 census.<sup>22</sup>
- Rev. John McKnight owned enslaved persons while a professor at King’s College.<sup>23</sup>
- Rev. Samuel Miller owned several enslaved persons, at least one of whom attempted to escape.<sup>24</sup>

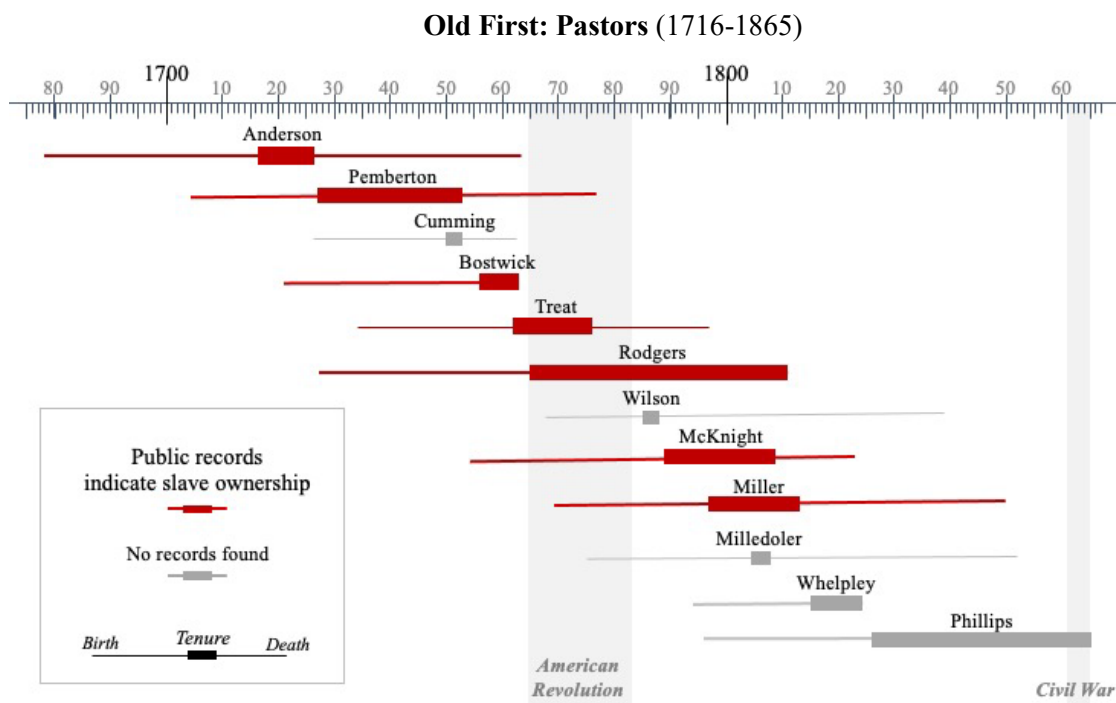
Two of the first nine pastors had served in the South prior to or after their calls to Old First:

- Rev. Alexander Cumming<sup>25</sup>
- Rev. James Wilson<sup>26</sup>

While it may be reasonable to assume that some pastors serving in the South may have owned enslaved persons, research at present shows no record of slave ownership by these two pastors, Cumming and Wilson.

Of the three remaining Old First pastors installed in the decades immediately preceding the Civil War, the FC History Group found no evidence of slaveholding:

- Rev. Philip Milledoler
- Rev. Philip Whelpley
- Rev. William Wirt Phillips



Public records indicate that as a group, pastors took varied positions regarding slavery which at times appeared contradictory. For example, some pastors took a public position against slavery even though they owned slaves.<sup>27</sup> For further discussion of pastoral positions regarding slavery in the years

leading to the Civil War, please see the “Supplemental Information” section of the appendix that follows this report.

## **Officers**

Today, church officers have separate responsibilities. Trustees manage the property and financial dealings of the church, while elders lead church government and deacons minister to the corporal needs of the congregation. In the early years of Old First, these responsibilities were not separate.

## ***Trustees***

From the founding of Old First until 1743, there were no designated elders or deacons. In the absence of specialized officers, trustees attended to all aspects of the management of the church, including property, finance, governance, and corporal needs of the congregation. As such, trustee responsibilities overlapped, with individuals often serving long and repeated terms.

Trustee meeting minutes have provided a nearly complete list of trustees serving between 1743 to 1865, with a small cohort of individuals consistently rotating on and off the board. This pattern of rotation continued through the 1780s. Many trustees of Old First were prominent, highly respected individuals, identified as merchants and lawyers, with recorded designations of “Esq.” or as “Merchant of this city.”

For example, Dr. John Nicoll, a founder of Old First in the early 1700s, “attended to all the temporalities of the Church.”<sup>28</sup> The FC History Group found no direct evidence to suggest that Nicoll was a slaveowner.<sup>29</sup> After Nicoll’s death in 1743, eight trustees in four classes of two were elected.

Even after incorporation, trustees played a vital role in all aspects of the church. Public records indicate that a significant number of founders and trustees owned enslaved persons.

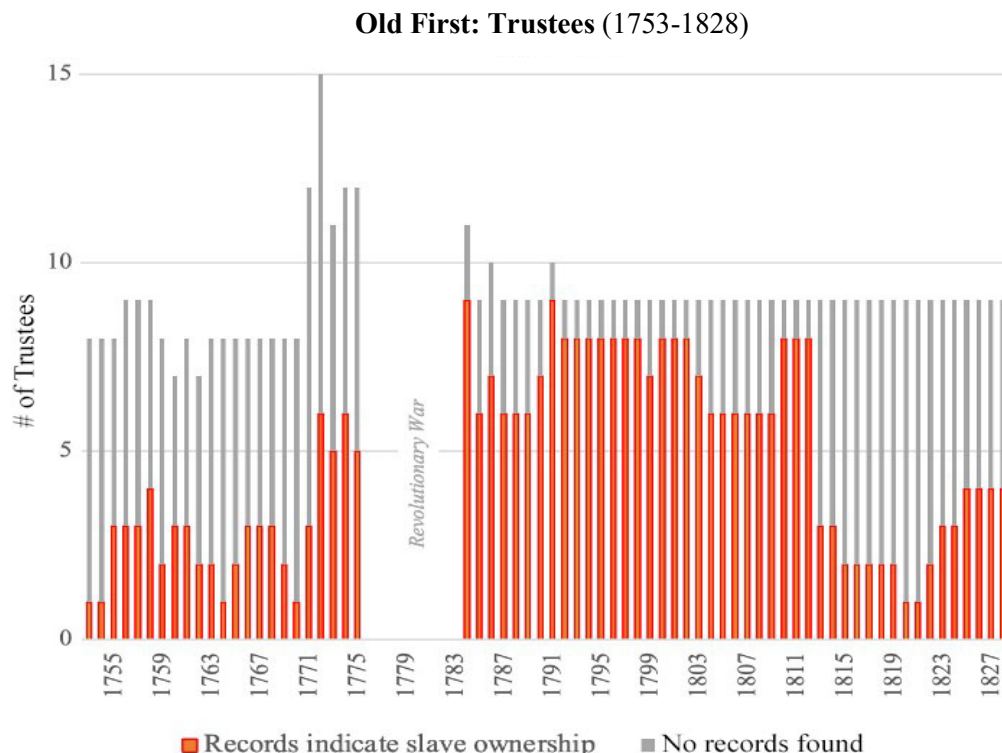
Examples include:

- Peter Van Brugh Livingston (trustee 1743-1753) was born to a prominent New York family involved in the slave trade, slave shipping, and products produced by enslaved labor, such as sugar and tobacco from the West Indies.<sup>30</sup> Livingston was elected president of the board of trustees of Old First.



- Alexander McDougal (trustee 1768-1771; 1773-1775), prior to the Revolutionary War, as privateer and merchant, bought and sold slaves. Public records indicate McDougal owned two enslaved persons in 1790. One was named Colerain<sup>31</sup> and another named Cudjoe.<sup>32</sup>
- Daniel Phoenix (trustee 1772-1775; 1784-1786; 1789-1791) was a successful merchant and the first treasurer of New York City. Public records indicated that he owned four enslaved persons in 1790.<sup>33</sup>
- Robert Lenox (trustee 1787-1789, 1809-1812), a successful merchant whose business depended heavily on trading goods produced by enslaved labor in the West Indies, was president of Mutual Insurance Co., the city's first fire insurance company. He became one of New York's wealthiest men.<sup>34</sup> Census records indicate that in 1800, Lenox owned four enslaved persons, and in 1820 he owned one.<sup>35</sup>
- Ebenezer Stevens (trustee 1793-1798) was a shipping fleet owner and liquor importer. Public records indicate that Stevens owned an enslaved woman named Phelia as well as an enslaved person who tried to escape.<sup>36</sup>

Slave ownership among trustees peaked in the period between 1784 and 1812. Public records indicate that during that period the majority of trustees serving Old First had owned enslaved people.<sup>37</sup>



Although the numbers of individual slaveowners declined, beginning in 1812, trustees continued to own slaves, with at least one individual increasing their ownership of enslaved people. Public records indicate that John Greenfield (trustee 1823-1833), a merchant of Staffordshire China, owned one enslaved person in 1810 but later obtained another, as reported in the 1820 census.<sup>38</sup> Supplemental biographical data on several of those trustees who owned enslaved persons is provided in the appendix that follows this report.

### *Elders*

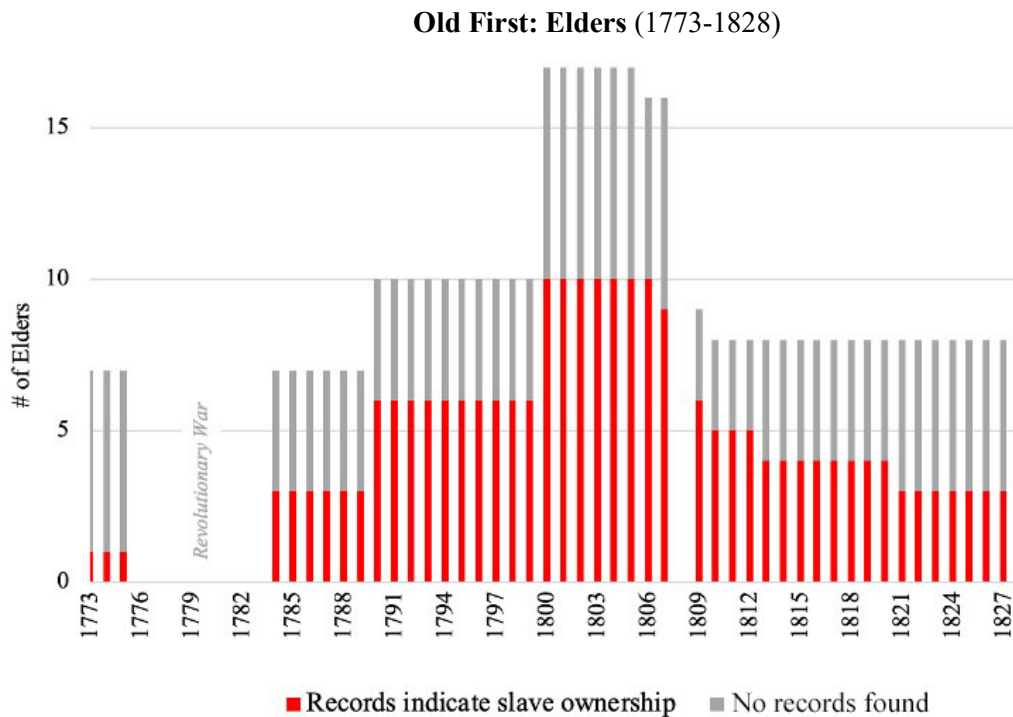
Rather than attending primarily to church governance in the manner of elders today, the role of Old First elders before 1765 was more akin to the duties of both elders and deacons. As Rev. Samuel Miller expressed in a church polity document of the time, it was the duty of elders “to have an eye of inspection and care over all the members of the congregation; and, for this purpose, to cultivate a universal and intimate acquaintance, as far as may be, with every family in the flock of which they are made ‘overseers.’”<sup>39</sup>

Before official incorporation of Old First, in 1784, a few individuals designated as elders were recorded in trustee minutes. Once separate session minutes began to be recorded, beginning in 1765, names of elders were captured. These elders often were prominent leaders in business and civic affairs.

Several examples include:

- John Broome (elder 1784-1789; 1799-1810, trustee 1791; 1794-1799; 1800-1808), served as New York City treasurer and lieutenant governor of New York. Records indicate Broome owned two enslaved persons in 1790.<sup>40</sup>
- John R. B. Rodgers M.D. (elder 1799-1822; 1824-1833), son of Old First Rev. John Rodgers, served as a surgeon in the Revolutionary Army and a professor in the medical department of Columbia College.<sup>41</sup> Public records indicate Rodgers owned one enslaved person in 1790.<sup>42</sup>
- Henry Rutgers (elder 1800-1807) although a member of the New York Manumission Society, an organization dedicated to freeing slaves, owned several enslaved persons during his lifetime.<sup>43</sup> In 1798, Henry Rutgers witnessed an agreement regarding an eleven-year-old enslaved girl owned by his sister Mary McCrea.<sup>44</sup>

Public records indicate that between 1784 and 1812, the majority of elders serving Old First owned enslaved people.<sup>45</sup>



Supplemental biographical data on several of those elders who owned enslaved persons is provided in the appendix that follows this report.

### ***Deacons***

Today, the PC(USA) *Book of Order* calls ordained deacons to a ministry of “compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress.”<sup>46</sup>

It is difficult to identify the role of deacons of Old First and when that role became specialized, because from the founding of Old First through the Civil War, deacons’ meeting minutes were not recorded. While certain deacons are mentioned incidentally in trustee and session minutes, usually when funds for diaconal projects were requested, no comprehensive lists of deacons or activities were provided. As a result, information regarding deacons is incomplete and less detailed than records highlighting trustees and elders. However, the FC History Group found examples of deacons whose records indicate they were slaveowners:

- Thomas Ogilvie (deacon 1772, 1790; elder 1800-1839), a member of the influential Marine Society of the City of New York, was a prominent businessman.<sup>47</sup> According to census records, Ogilvie was the owner of one enslaved person in 1790 and in 1810.<sup>48</sup>
- John Bingham (deacon 1785, 1792; elder, 1800-07) based on Census information, owned two enslaved persons in 1790, one in 1800 and one in 1820. His name is associated with three Manumission Instruments from 1813 releasing enslaved individuals with the names Grace, Lucretia, Mary, and with one manumission in 1816 of Sarah Bush.<sup>49</sup>
- Richard Cunningham (deacon 1804) was a tanner by profession, but also served on the Board of Aldermen from 1810 to 1813.<sup>50</sup> He represented the Fourth Ward, located in lower Manhattan, not far from Wall Street. Public records from 1800 and 1806 indicate that Cunningham owned an enslaved woman named Catherine Godfrey.<sup>51</sup>

## Members

Of the member lists and records that were compiled and have survived, usually only White male members are noted, without specific mention of slaveholding. Women's names are sometimes recorded in documents as "widow of" or "wife of" a male member. Occasionally, women's full names are recorded in death and baptismal records, providing maiden names and family affiliations. The overwhelming majority of names recorded, however, are those of Whites.

Yet among our early membership rolls are the names of Black men, women, and children. Those persons are specified with the designation "coloured," "negro," and other terms. First Church archives contained three sources for specific names of African Americans.

The first source is session minutes from 1765 to 1808. During that time, it was customary for individuals to apply to the session for permission to participate in communion. As such, the session minutes recorded the names of all individuals, Black or White, who would later be received by the congregation as members. For example, a list of communicants included in session minutes from 1769 shows that of 391 persons received, approximately 1 percent of Old First members were listed as free or enslaved Blacks.<sup>52</sup> In session minutes of the time, Black members almost always appear at the end of the record and are frequently noted by first name only.

While those specifically mentioned by name in the minutes were primarily White officers, committee members, or those requesting to be admitted or dismissed from the congregation, some members were named as a result of being rebuked or investigated for moral lapses. Two examples included Black members: William, “a Negro free man” and Cato, a “Negro man,” who was rebuked and suspended, then readmitted and his child baptized.<sup>53</sup>

Of the many members recorded in session minutes were a total of thirty-three Blacks, eleven of whom were acknowledged as free, while three others were recorded as “servant to” another member. It is unclear whether the remaining Black members were free or enslaved. The names of these members appear in the appendix following this report. In a history of the church written in 1886, it appears that most of those individuals had left to form their own church around 1807.<sup>54</sup>

The second source, a member registry compiled in the mid-1840s, documented membership from 1809 to 1844. The registry shows that a significant number of members, including Blacks, were removed from the rolls due to “long-term absence” around 1835. Although there is no specific information as to why those Black members left the church, some were recorded as having left the city, two were received by the First Colored Presbyterian Church (aka Shiloh Presbyterian Church), while several others transferred to the Baptist Church. Of 927 names counted in the registry, 51 Black members were noted, approximately 5 percent of the total. The names of these members found by the FC History Group appear in the appendix that follows this report.

The third source was baptismal records in First Church archives. Among church records, the FC History Group found records of three baptisms of Black individuals prior to the Revolutionary War: that of “a Negro Wench” recorded in 1766 along with five other adult women, “a Negro Man of Peter Goleston,” and “a Negro Child belonging to Mrs. Mary Fox.”<sup>55</sup>

Since children born to enslaved mothers were considered the property of their owners, it was especially important to document the birthdate of a Black child in a birth certificate, in order to determine how long that child could be enslaved before the gradual manumission laws took effect. The New-York Historical Society Manuscript Collection Relating to Slavery holds hundreds of these documents; nine are certificates of children born to slaves owned by trustees of First Church.<sup>56</sup>

Robert Speir (trustee 1821-1826), was the owner of an enslaved woman named Diana Harris.<sup>57</sup> When Diana gave birth to her son Henry in 1808, Robert Speir was recorded on the birth certificate as the owner of both mother and child. One year later, Speir manumitted both Diana and her baby.<sup>58</sup> A copy of

the birth certificate of Henry Harris is included in the appendix that follows this report.

It is difficult to determine the exact numbers of Black men, women, and children who were members of Old First. Likewise, it is difficult to determine which of those persons were free or enslaved. Due to lack of available records, we were unable to discover more about these Black members.

In contrast, many White members are relatively well-documented in church archives and public documents. Professions of those members, noted in birth and death records, included a wide variety of trades and professions, from ship captain to silversmith, from banker to bookseller, trader to local and national politics, railroads, insurance, and banking.

Those members mentioned in early Old First records include many names important to New York City history, putting into context the role Old First played in creating the city in which we live today. Listed among church archives are the names of many well-known families recorded upon many streets, neighborhoods, and institutions throughout the city—Broome, Lenox, Bleecker, Rutgers, Livingston. Some of these families and others—Arden, Smith, Nicoll, Phelps—had multiple generations active in the congregation.

While some members of those families owned slaves, other members of the same family did not. Besides finding complex associations between those individuals who owned enslaved persons and those who did not, the FC History Group found associations between those individuals whose occupations suggest a connection to slavery and those whose connection to slavery cannot be definitively determined. An example follows:

- Peartree Family—William Peartree (1643-1714) was the mayor of New York City from 1703 to 1707. He began his career as a planter in Jamaica in the Caribbean and, during one of England's wars with France, had success as a privateer, attacking Spanish and French ships. After much of Jamaica was destroyed and flooded in the earthquake of 1692, Peartree moved to New York City and was elected mayor in 1703. Peartree's great-grandson William Peartree Smith was a founder of Princeton University and an Old First trustee (1747-1751).<sup>59</sup>

Complicating clear understanding of the role of slavery in Old First membership is the fact that some members of the same family may have been pro-slavery while others may have been against slavery. Individuals in a family who were members of Old First may not have been slaveowners while other individuals in the same family, who were not members, may have owned enslaved persons. Church

and public records also often provide alternate spellings of family names and show tangled relationships among families and members. Three examples of these complicated associations may be seen in the Quackenbos, Riley, and Greenleaf families.

- The Quackenbos Family (also spelled Quackenboos, Quackenboss, or Quackenbush) was related to the Greenleaf Family through marriage. John Quackenbos (trustee 1771-1775). owned four enslaved persons in 1790, one of whom, named “Van Gezen,” died of “malignant fever” in 1798.<sup>60</sup>
- The Riley Family was also related to the Greenleaf Family. Emmeline Matilda Riley married Joseph Greenleaf and a number of individuals in the Riley family were members of Old First, including Emmeline’s mother Hannah. Census records indicate that Emmeline’s father, not a member of Old First, owned two enslaved persons in the 1810 census.<sup>61</sup> He is also listed as a slaveowner in an emancipation record of 1808.<sup>62</sup>
- The Greenleaf Family, which had deep colonial roots and a complex family tree, appears frequently in church archives. While the majority of individuals in the family do not seem to have been slaveowners, records indicate that Anna Greenleaf (Quackenbos), the widow of Joseph Greenleaf (trustee and elder), owned one enslaved person in 1800.<sup>63</sup> A “Nancy Greenleaf (coloured),” likely Anna’s domestic enslaved woman, was noted under Anna’s name in member rolls of the period. Nancy was removed from the church roll in 1835 for continued absence.<sup>64</sup>

Family connections to Old First often spanned many generations. For example, members of the Greenleaf family held a pew at the Wall Street church, and when the congregation moved north to Twelfth Street, the family pew, #54, was transferred to pew #69 at the new location. In honor of the family, Joseph’s son Thomas Greenleaf funded a stained-glass window in memory of his father, which is still visible in the north aisle of the church.

At times, deep family relationships have also intersected. For example, Joseph Greenleaf was married to Abigail Payne, the granddaughter of Rev. Samuel Treat, a relative of Rev. Joseph Treat, Old First associate pastor from 1762 to 1784<sup>65</sup> and Katherine Nash Greenleaf married Old First pastor George Howard Duffield in 1874.<sup>66</sup>

A plaque in the Twelfth Street church narthex reads, “The lights of the church installed in 1916 are the gift of five members of the Greenleaf Family as a memorial to their ancestors who, in an unbroken line since 1742, have served the Old First Church.”<sup>67</sup>

## **Properties**

### ***Wall Street Church (1719-1844)***

The name “Wall Street” refers to a wall—built by enslaved Africans—to protect Dutch settlers from Indian raids. Enslaved and free Africans were responsible for a great deal of the construction of the early city, first by clearing land, then by building the docks, a fort, stone houses, the first city hall, and other buildings.

At the corner of Wall Street and Broadway, enslaved people helped erect Trinity Church. It has been asked if the original Old First Wall Street church may likewise have been constructed with assistance of enslaved persons, but the FC History Group was unable to find any records of such assistance.

Financing the construction of the Wall Street church was difficult. New York was an English colony; the Crown did not recognize the Presbyterian form of worship and therefore did not provide financial support. Without assistance from the ruling authorities, the founders acquired land for the church with a £350 British promissory note. Funds for construction of the building were raised from many sources, including donations of £600 from residents, a significant level of participation and commitment in a city of only 5,000 inhabitants.

The most significant funds for construction of the original Wall Street church were provided by Presbyterian churches in Scotland. Yet as the original budget for construction grew, the church became burdened with a debt. Even after construction was completed, due to instances of fire damage, subsequent repairs, and pastoral housing, debt continued to increase despite insurance payments.



### ***Brick Church (1768)***

A secondary worship annex for the growing Old First congregation was built on Nassau Street in 1768, it was dubbed the "Brick Church" and in 1809 separated from "Old First". Like the Wall Street Church, no evidence was found to suggest that the labor of enslaved persons was used in the construction of Brick Church. Trustee minutes do not describe the financing for the new building, nor do they describe other aspects of construction. However, in 1768, Old First trustees announced that overall expenses and debt had risen to alarming and distressed levels, with the Wall Street church indebted by £1,100 and Brick Church indebted an additional £2,600.

After the Revolutionary War, trustees continued to face enormous financial pressure, including the need to repair both Old First and Brick Church, which had been badly damaged by the British. There were also increasing demands to build an additional church and a school for the expanding congregation.

### ***Rutgers Church (1798)***

Like Brick Church, Rutgers was also originally a part of Old First, they also separated in 1809. Likewise, there is no evidence that enslaved labor was used in construction. In 1798, Henry Rutgers donated land for the site of a new church. Actual construction of the building was financed through what was called a "subscription," a form of capital campaign, and by the sale of pews. At completion, Rutgers also purchased a bell for the new building, which would later be known as Rutgers Church.

### ***Twelfth Street Church (1846-present)***

In 1844, due to rapid population growth and commercialization of the Wall Street area, ground was broken for a new church building in Greenwich Village. As slavery had been abolished in New York State for nearly two decades, the labor of enslaved persons was not used in construction. Financing the new building was complex, with an estimated construction cost of approximately \$145,000, an enormous sum at the time. Funding was obtained from the sale of the old church property and related lots in the Wall Street area, a capital campaign, pew sales, and the sale of the physical Wall Street church building.<sup>68</sup>

As those sources of funding were not sufficient to fund the full cost of construction, the remaining debt was partly addressed through borrowing additional money. Parts of the debt were repaid, but church debt continued to grow with periodic refinancing and new borrowing. The topic of finances, including revenue, expenses, endowments, and details about those loans is in the following section.

## **Finances**

As reflected in construction of buildings and operations during much of the 1700s and 1800s, Old First faced severe financial challenges at multiple points in its history. Although trustee minutes give only a rough outline of fiscal operations in the absence of full financial statements, surviving records reviewed by the FC History Group show that affluent slaveowners often used their own wealth to support Old First, to provide contributions, cover shortfalls, and to provide loans for the church and fund construction projects.

## ***Revenue***

In the absence of significant major contributions, Old First's financial condition from its founding through the Civil War was surprisingly tenuous, with regular deficits and little or no reserves. The church relied upon the following revenue sources to fund operations:

- **Pew rentals** Like many churches of the time, Old First received money from the sale of pews and pew rentals, which typically accounted for the majority of revenues and helped the church cover operating expenses.
- **Offerings** Financial records show both weekly and monthly offerings from the congregation. It is unclear whether contributions to the church in excess of pew rentals were counted as offerings.
- **Subscriptions** When the church faced significant financial needs, it would sometimes create a special fund-raising campaign called a subscription.
- **Trustee support** Trustees played a crucial role in the operations of Old First. Not only did they oversee management, but they were required to share financial burdens as a group, to bear their proportion of all risks with the rest of the trustees. Individual trustees were frequently called upon for financial support. After the death of Dr. John Nicoll, in 1743, trustees are noted as signing the deed to purchase land for a manse. Trustee Edward Jaffray was a frequent contributor to subscriptions to close budget deficits of the 1860s, and in 1864, he provided the largest individual subsidy to the church.<sup>48</sup> James Lenox, the son of trustee

Robert Lenox, frequently supported Old First with substantial contributions.<sup>69</sup>

- **Large gifts and bequests** Gifts and bequests from individuals were donated to Old First for specific purposes or to support general operation of the church. Although session minutes from the 1700s to 1800 tend not to include names of individual donors, several individuals were acknowledged for substantial contributions. One prominent example is Henry Rutgers, an elder who donated the land upon which Rutgers Church was built, among other large gifts.
- **Burial plots and fees** Old First sold plots and obtained fees for burial. It appears that Old First purchased several lots in the Wall Street area for that purpose, and in 1803 purchased a lot for a cemetery at the current-day Forsyth and Houston Streets. Old First also later offered burial vaults, located underneath the church lawn, for sale at the Twelfth Street location.
- **Other sources** Early in its history, Old First successfully solicited funds from the Church of Scotland in order to construct the original Wall Street church. Later records also show that in 1773, a lottery was used to raise funds. In the 1800s, Old First began renting space as a way to supplement income. In 1835, for example, the church constructed an additional building specifically to rent as offices. It was financed with a \$16,000 loan from Robert Lenox and \$3,000 from a member of the Sheafe family.

### ***Expenses***

Construction and related maintenance projects, as well as related interest on debt, accounted for a large portion of Old First expenses. Salaries, however, were the major expense of Old First. Pastors were paid a salary and often provided with housing. In 1805, salaries are shown to represent approximately 75 percent of yearly church expenses.<sup>70</sup> When the financial condition of Old First was weak, salaries were kept low and the clergy had to accept reductions. In fact, the amount received by clergy was sometimes inadequate. In 1759, one pastor, Rev. David Bostwick, reported to the trustees that his salary was so inadequate as to require him to sell two enslaved persons to support his family.<sup>71</sup>

### ***Endowment and Reserves***

From its founding through the Civil War, endowment funds or designated reserves were not created or utilized by Old First. Monies received during that time were designated to address urgent and ongoing needs, since the church usually operated at a deficit or a break-even basis. The FC History Group

found no evidence of an endowment or funds held in reserve from 1716 through the Civil War. The present First Church endowment was not created from Old First funds.

### ***Loans and Debt***

Church records indicate that throughout its history, Old First frequently borrowed money both for facilities and to meet expenses when other revenues were not sufficient. Although trustee minutes during the 1700s usually do not provide significant detailed information about such loans, beginning in the early 1800s, records show more detailed loan statements and accounting. By the mid-1800s, Old First records demonstrate that certain wealthy members made loans or contribution to finance repayment of the majority of accrued church debt. In other instances, the church relied upon those affluent members, some of whom had obtained wealth from a slave economy.

In addition to Old First members, some businesses and non-members also loaned money to the church at crucial periods. Some of those lenders appear to have been business associates of Old First officers and members in the cotton and sugar trades. For example, in arranging finance for construction of the Twelfth Street church, there was a significant gap between the funds raised and the projected budget of \$145,000. In the early 1840s, before construction on the new church began, a \$30,000 loan was secured from John R. Donnell, a wealthy North Carolina judge and plantation owner.<sup>72</sup> This large loan followed closely on the heels of one from David S. Kennedy, a partner in the firm Maitland & Kennedy, while R.S. Maitland & Co. were agents for Donnell.<sup>73</sup>

Once construction on the Twelfth Street church was completed, Old First officers hoped that pew sales and rentals would be sufficient to repay the loans. However, rentals and pledges were inadequate to cover operating expenses and Old First, as often in its history, borrowed money to fund the shortfall. The situation was not sustainable. Consequently, in 1847 James Lenox offered a loan of \$12,000, on the condition that the church improve its financial management.<sup>74</sup>

The trustees also launched a fund-raising effort, primarily from current and recent trustees and their families. In 1847, these funds were used to repay some of the previous loans but did not settle the \$30,000 loan from Donnell. In 1850 a group called “the Liquidating Committee” raised an additional \$29,000, which finally relieved the construction debt for the Twelfth Street Church property.

The loan from Lenox remained outstanding and Old First continued to borrow money. How the Lenox loan was eventually resolved is outside the scope of the FC History Group’s work.

## Closing

The history of Old First is inextricably tied to the history of New York City, as many of those who built the congregation also built our city and a number of its major institutions. While many individuals connected to the church were successful and accomplished innovators and entrepreneurs, they also participated in and benefited from slavery, even while in some cases professing support for manumission and emancipation.

Although slavery is known as a part of the South, it was also very much a part of the economy of the North in general and New York City in particular prior to the Civil War. Given that fact, it is unsurprising that from its founding, through the American Revolution to the Civil War, Old First's history is intertwined both with aspirations toward liberty and freedom and acceptance of slavery.

As noted above during the period reviewed the church benefited from slavery in a number of ways, but it is not possible to calculate how much the church benefited. It is notable that Blacks, both free and enslaved, have been members of the congregation from the early days of Old First.

The FC History Group is grateful for the opportunity to access First Church archives, preserved both in original and digitized manuscripts, as well as public records. Learning about our history is an ongoing process and there is still more research to be done. As additional materials are transcribed and digitized and more data become available, we hope to gain a fuller understanding of the range of human experience affected by slavery. While this report provides a particular glimpse into the issue, it is not a full and complete record. Rather, it is offered as a guide for ongoing research, discussion, reflection, and prayer. We offer our sincere thanks to all who assisted and supported us in our efforts.

The process of discovery has been challenging and troubling, but also rewarding. We have learned about our history and are both appreciative of its complexity and challenged by the promise of our future. Remnants of this history are all around us, both inside and outside our church, from plaques on the walls of the sanctuary to the names of the surrounding areas of the neighborhood to ongoing issues regarding racial reconciliation and social justice in our community today.

As a congregation focused on restorative justice of this world, we strive to maintain an open and inclusive space for all, a place where everyone can exist exactly as they are created by God. The information in this report, and the information still to be uncovered, present a unique opportunity for the congregation of The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York to ask, "How do we address the contradictions in our history? What is our responsibility? Where does our history propel us in the future, knowing a relationship with slavery is interwoven in our past? Where does our story go from here?"

May we come to see where God leads us, to truly understand and to take ownership of the history of this church community. May we rise to this occasion, to leave our mark as we are called, to respond to racial injustices of this very hour. And may we accept God's guidance for the future.

Rather than aiming to distance ourselves from the actions and ideas of those who came before us, let us meet this challenge head on, so we may carve a way forward that is forged with righteousness, secured in justice, and built on the foundation of everlasting grace, forgiveness, and hope of God.

We return to the words of Frederick Douglass that opened this report: "The duty of to-day is to meet the questions that confront us with intelligence and courage."

## Appendix

## Black Members of Old First

from trustee minutes (1769-1808)

**William**  
“a negro man”

**Cato**  
“a negro man”

**Jenny**  
“a negro woman”

**John**  
“a negro man”

**Judah**  
“a negro woman”

**Holland**  
“a negro man”

**Dinah**  
“a negro wench”

**Sylvia**  
“a negro wench”

**Sylvia**  
“a free negro woman”

**Jane**  
“negro woman  
servant of Mrs Morton”

**Francis Squire**  
“a free negro”

**Bristol**  
“a free negro man”

**Phoebe**  
“a negro woman  
servant to William Jennings”

**Romeo**  
“a negro man”

**Dinah**  
“a free negro woman”

**Hannah Anderson**  
“a free mulatto”

**Ceasar**  
“a free negro man”

**James Peters**  
“a free negro man”

**Tamar Peters**  
“wife of James Peters”

**Sarah**  
“a negro woman  
servant to Mrs. Duncan”

**Grace**  
“a free negro woman”

**Sylvia**  
“a black woman”

**Hannah Roe**  
“a free black”

**Mary**  
“A free black”

**Joseph**  
“A free black”

**Zippora Townsend**  
“a free Black”

**Celia Moore**  
“a woman of Colour”

**Ceasar**  
“people of color”

**Benjamin**  
“people of color”

**Mary Wathers**  
“people of color”

**Daphne**  
“people of color”

**Judith Crawford**

**Sarah Bayard**



## **Black Members of Old First**

Persons designated as “coloured” in a membership list  
spanning the years 1807 to 1846

**Rosina Ackerleys**

**Louisa Binks**

**Nancy Bradford**

**Ann Broome**

**Violet Cambridge (or Garnish)**

**Rachel Chambers**

**Jane Cisco**

**Judy Crawford**

**Margaret Cuffee**

**David Dean**

**Nancy Dean**

**Sarah Decker**

**Dinah Depuy**

**Maria Dickerson**

**Susan Evans**

**Sylvia Field**

**Diana Freeman**

**Nancy George**

**Nancy Greenleaf**

**Ann Harris**

**Stella Hawkins**

**Letitia Hill**

**Violet Jackson**

**Judy Leffers**

**Hannah Leonard**

**Judy Little**

**Rachel Matthews**

**Duncan (or Dorcas) Moore**

**Sabina Nicoll**

**Diana Pidgeon**

**Mrs. Jane Plato**

**Ann Prince**

**Ivanna Prior**

**Diana Pryne**

**Morris Reed**

**Christiana Rhodes**

**Hetty Richardson**

**Champa (or Clarissa) Richardson**

**Sarah Riley**

**Diana Roberts**

**Ellen Robinson**

**Catherine Roe**

**Jane Sacket**

**Mary Salters (or Saltus)**

**Hagar Seabury**

**Samuel Shepherd**

**Chloe Smith**

**Sylvia Stocker**

**Hannah Teller**

**Mary Waters**

**Lettice**

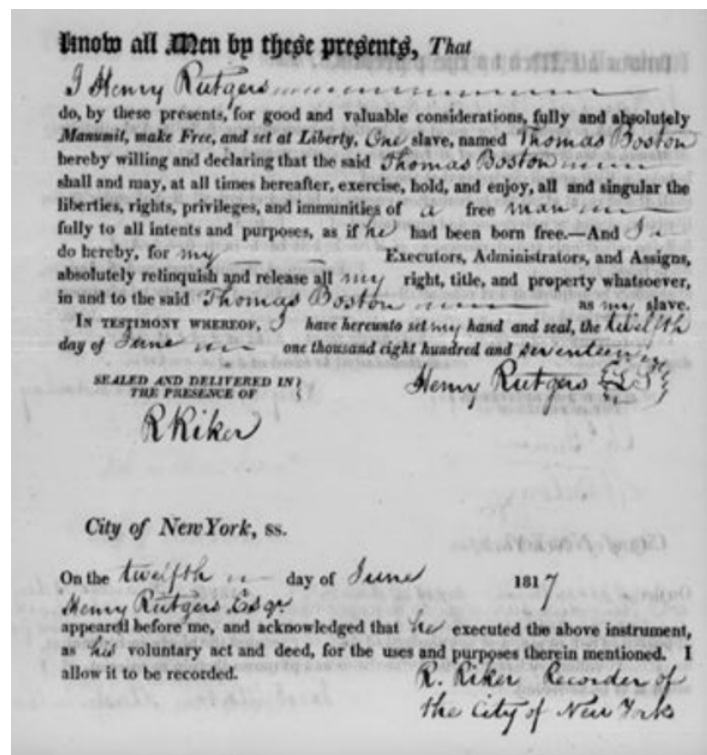
## Example: CUNY The New York Slavery Records Index

The following example shows records obtained when the name “Henry Rutgers” was entered into the index search.

The first record (1790) indicates that Henry Rutgers owned two enslaved persons at that time. The second record (1800) indicates he owned five enslaved persons, while the third record (1810) indicates the number of persons Rutgers enslaved were reduced to three by that year. The fourth record mentions Rutgers in connection to Thomas Boston, an enslaved man whom Rutgers manumitted in 1817.

The screenshot shows a web browser with a search results page for "Henry Rutgers". The page has a header with navigation links and a sidebar with a logo and a list of essays. The main content area displays four records in a table format.

Record Type	Enslaver	Record Type	Enslaver	Record Type	Enslaver	Record Type	Enslaved Person
Year of Record	1790	Year of Record	1800	Year of Record	1810	Year of Record	1817
Owner Last Name	Rutgers	Owner Last Name	Rutgers	Owner Last Name	Rutgers	Owner Last Name	Rutgers
Owner First Name	Henry	Owner First Name	Henry	Owner First Name	Henry	Owner First Name	Henry
County or Borough	New York	County or Borough	New York	County or Borough	New York	County or Borough	New York
Locality	New York City Out Ward	Locality	New York Ward 7	Locality	New York Ward 7	Locality	New York
Number of Slaves	2	Address or Place Name of		Number of Slaves	3	Number of Slaves	1
Number of All Persons	8	House or Vessel maybe Rutgers,		Number of All Persons	6	Adult Male Slaves	1
Source Document	Census1790	Col. Henry, E. Washington pg. 521		Source Document	Census1810	Enslaved Person Last	
		Number of Slaves	5			Name	Boston
		Number of All Persons	9			Enslaved Person First	
		Source Document	Census1800			Name	Thomas
		Comment	The street address			Source Document	NY Historical
		information is from the Longworth				Society, Manumission Society	
		NYC Directory from 1798. These				records, 1785-1849, Vol. 2	
		are preliminary suggestions based				Search Tag	EMN
		on comparing names.				Website Address	NY Historical
		Search Tag	NYS1800			Society_Digital Image	
		Website Address	NYC				
		Longworth 1798 form NYPL					



Source document manumitting Thomas Boston, referenced in the fourth entry of the example.

## Example: Financial Analysis

Early Old First records, from its founding to the mid-1700s, provide little information regarding church finances. However, by the late 1700s and through the mid-1800s, trustee minutes begin to show more detailed financial reporting. This may be due to continued growth in the congregation and larger amounts of money being handled. These figures were not audited by an external party.

One of the earliest detailed formal financial reports was in 1805. The summary table below shows that the church was able to meet expenses through pew rentals and sizable contributions. However, the church carried significant debt.

Comparing the 1840-1841 and 1863-1864 financial years shows very different revenue compositions, although pew rentals had grown relatively little. A significant source of income from 1835 to the move to the Twelfth Street church was office rentals received from a building constructed for that purpose.

During that period, the church was deeply in debt (\$35,000). However, the church was able to rely on a \$2,000 loan from Robert Lenox to cover the deficit.

Similarly, financial records for the 1863 period show that while pew rentals increased at the new church and expenses declined from the previous period, the church remained heavily in debt. The church also relied upon gifts of \$2,600 from prominent families to cover the deficit.

The Year 1804-1805			The Year 1840-1841			The Year 1863-1864		
Pew Rents			Pew Rents	2,372		Pew Rents	3,921	
Old Church	2,000		Office Rental	4,464		Contributions	2,600	
Brick Church	2,241		Other	87		Other	NA	
Rutgers Church	800							
Weekly Collections	1,476							
Burials	600							
Total	7,117		Total	6,923		Total	6,521	
<u>Expenses</u>			<u>Expenses</u>			<u>Expenses</u>		
Ministers	4,500		Ministers	4,000		Ministers	4,000	
Interest on debt	NA		Interest on debt	2,368		Interest on debt	NA	
Repairs	1,000							
Donation to School	105		All Other	1,548		All Other	2,678	
All Other	669							
Total	6,274		Total	7,916		Total	6,678	
Surplus	843			(993)			(157)	

These two periods demonstrate that while revenues were relatively stagnant at these times, special contributions from major donors played a major role in maintaining operations of Old First. The following page shows church financial reporting from 1864. The column on the lower right shows the names of larger donors and the donation amount. The list includes several of the trustees including James Lenox.

The Annual Report of the Treasurer was presented and ordered to be entered upon the minutes, as follows.

Report of the  
Treasurer of the First Presbyterian Church  
for the year ending April 30<sup>th</sup> 1864

First Presby<sup>n</sup> Church in Ac with A M Taber Treas<sup>r</sup>  
or  
ler

Cash p <sup>d</sup> Ministers	4000 00
Salary one year	1000
" " Choir	400
" " Sexton	51.82
" " Comm <sup>n</sup>	256.
" Insurance	178.25
" Coal	25.50
" Wood	72.50
" Gas	38.
" " Centon Water	30
" " Keeping Grounds	100.75
" " portable heater &c	115.30
" " Carpet & labor for	"
" S S Room	76.75
" Benches &c	333.61
" Balance.	<u>6.678.48</u>

By Balance from	
last account	257.65
" Cash for the Rents	
on 1 <sup>st</sup> floor	3.778.83
in Gallery	142. <u>3.920.83</u>
" Cash from	
M <sup>r</sup> E S Daffray	1.000
Jas Knox	500
Sam <sup>l</sup> Frost	100
J McNeely	100
Geo Hamilton	100
J S Hall	100
A B Belknap	50
H King	50.
A M Taber	500
	<u>6.678.48</u>

May 1. To Cash for Choir  
exp Gr Gallery due  
Wed day c 42.50.<sup>00</sup>  
312.50

Apr 30. By Balance  
brought down 333.61

Old First financial report from 1864.

## **Old First Finances in the Late 19th Century**

Though outside the in-depth scope of research represented in the body of the report, we did review trustee minutes for the end of the nineteenth century. The minutes from 1865 to 1902 paint a picture of a church that was often in financial crisis and continued to rely heavily on its members, particularly its wealthy members, to balance budgets and contribute toward renovations via generous donations. In the late nineteenth century, before Old First's merger with the Madison Square and University Place congregations, larger projects such as repairs to the roof, a new organ, and improvements to the choir loft took place entirely through support from members, with a majority of congregants providing small donations and a few key members giving large donations. Many of these wealthier members were trustee officers or prominent figures in the primary study period, such as generations of the Kennedy and Lenox families. For example, in the 1890s, Rachel Kennedy made a donation to cover half of Pastor Dr. Duffield's salary due to Old First's struggling financial situation.

From the 1840s to roughly the 1870s, yearly budgets were quite vague and rarely mention the names of major donors. However, from the 1870s onward, line items became more specific. Significant donors to the budget were cited and more attention was paid to salaries and church repair costs.

No mention of the Civil War is featured in the minutes. This omission is surprising considering a number of the trustees and key member donors made their wealth in industries which would have been greatly affected by both the War and Reconstruction. While only a handful of trustees from the 1840s through the 1870s were referenced in the CUNY Index, many worked in industries that would have had historical links to slavery, such as the cotton trade and sugar processing, due to the nature of the New York economy at the time.

## Supplemental Information

### *Biographical Details on Slavery*

#### ***Founding Influences***

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. Francis Makemie** (1680-1743)

Because he was the first Presbyterian minister to preach in New York City in 1706, Rev. Makemie has often been referred to as one of the founders of Old First. “Makemie, who died near his home in Virginia, was later called the Father of American Presbyterianism. He succeeded not only as a minister but also as a landowner. His estate included 5,000 acres...and thirty-three slaves, indicative of the fact that many southern clergymen strongly believed in religious and political freedom yet supported slavery.”<sup>75</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. Jonathan Edwards** (1703-1758)

A visiting pastor before the installation of Rev. James Anderson, in 1717, Jonathan Edwards owned slaves throughout his lifetime. In 1759, Timothy Dwight and Timothy Edwards executed the will of Jonathan Edwards when they, for a total of £23, “sold, conveyed and in open market delivered two negro slaves, viz.: the one a negro man name Joseph, the other a negro woman named Sue, and is wife to the said Jo, which slaves were lately the proper goods of said Jonathan Edwards.”<sup>76</sup>

In a letter, Edwards wrote in his own defense, “If [the critics of slave owners] continue to cry out against those who keep Negro slaves,” they would show themselves to be hypocrites, because they too benefited from the slave trade. “Let them also fully and thoroughly vindicate themselves and their own practice in partaking of negroes’ slavery,” he charged, “or confess that there is no hurt in partaking in it,” otherwise “let them own that their objections are not conscientious.”<sup>77</sup>

#### ***Pastors***

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. James Anderson** (1678-1740)

Old First Years: 1717-1726

Our church’s first pastor, Rev. James Anderson, was born in Scotland in 1678. After a brief time in Virginia, he settled in New Castle, Delaware, where he was installed as pastor in 1713. That same year, he married Suit Garland, with whom he had eleven children. He received a call from Old First in 1716, but by 1726 “his strict Presbyterianism and rigid Scottish habits and doctrines were distasteful to the people, and his charge, consequently, did not prove to be happy or comfortable, and he desired a removal.”<sup>78</sup> Rev. Anderson was called subsequently to Donegal, Pennsylvania, where he served as a charter member of Donegal Presbytery and moderator of the Synod of Philadelphia.

After his wife died in 1736, Rev. Anderson married Rebecca Crawford of Donegal. At the time of his death in 1740, Rev. Anderson left a large estate to his family, a farm of three hundred five acres, including most of the land upon which the town of Marietta now stands, as well as a valuable ferry-right called “Anderson’s Ferry,” land on the opposite side of the river, together with several slaves.<sup>79</sup>

In his will, Rev. Anderson stated: “I give and bequeath to my dearly beloved wife, Rebecca Anderson, the half of this plantation whereon I now live, including the house, barn ... and services of the negro wench Dinah while she and Dinah lives.” To his son, Rev. Anderson willed: “In the next place, I give and bequeath to my son James the other half of this plantation to him, his heirs and assigns forever ... and bequeath to him the negro man Pline to him and his heirs and assigns forever.” Rev. Anderson continued: “I give to my daughter Susannah the negro wench Bell to her and her heirs” while later sharing his last wish to have his son Thomas “be brought up to learning and particularly to the ministry.”<sup>80</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton Jr.** (1704-1777)

Old First years: 1727-1753

Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton Jr. was descended from several generations of slaveowners. When his grandfather died in Boston in 1696, he bequeathed to his son, Ebenezer Pemberton Sr., a “negro boy” for “his own use and behoof.”<sup>81</sup> Immediately prior to his death, Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton Jr. apparently had a change of heart over the institution of slavery. In his Last Will and Testament, he included a clause which read: “My Will is, I thereby order that my Negro man Jack have his freedom given him.”<sup>82</sup>

After serving Old First for twenty-seven years, Rev. Pemberton left to serve a church in Boston. However, the congregation was not pleased with Rev. Pemberton’s politics, as he sided with the British Crown. Rev. Pemberton was forced to give up his pulpit prior to the American Revolution and retired from the pulpit, beginning in 1774. He died three years later.<sup>83</sup>

*Likely to have owned slaves (as part of southern ministry) but unconfirmed*

**Rev. Alexander Cumming**—Associate (1726-1763)

Old First Years: 1750-1753

During his ministry, in addition to serving in New York, Rev. Cumming served in Delaware, Virginia, and Tennessee. Public church records demonstrate the use of slave labor was common practice among southern congregations at that time. Although it is likely that Rev. Cumming may have owned or been provided slaves at some point during his ministry, the FP History Group found no direct evidence.

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. David Bostwick** (1721-1763)

Old First Years: 1756 -1763 (died in tenure)

The Rev. David Bostwick was born in New Milford, Connecticut, and entered Yale College, but left before graduation to complete study at the College of New Jersey (now Princeton). In 1745, he was ordained by the Presbytery of New York as pastor at Jamaica, Long Island. Rev. Bostwick remained with the church in Long Island for approximately ten years. In 1754, the Synod of New York directed him to visit the states of Virginia and North Carolina for three months.

Rev. Bostwick was such a popular preacher that two congregations in New York fought over him, causing the New York Synod to intervene. In 1756, he accepted a call to Old First and was installed shortly thereafter. In the trustee minutes of Old First dated May 1, 1759, Rev. Bostwick is recorded as stating: “Since my removal to NY, I have sold two servants for better than 70 pounds the whole of which besides my yearly salary is now expended.”<sup>84</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. Joseph Treat**—Associate (1734-1797)

Old First Years: 1762-1776 (dissolved 1784)

Born in 1734, Rev. Joseph Treat graduated from Princeton in 1757 and was installed at Old First as a colleague of the Rev. David Bostwick in 1762. He left the city at the beginning of the Revolutionary War and did not return to serve the church.

Throughout his life, Rev. Treat maintained close ties with the College of New Jersey (now Princeton). That institution’s entanglement with slavery mirrors New Jersey’s status as a nominally anti-slavery northern state with remarkable sympathy for the South in the Civil War. New Jersey was the last northern state to abolish slavery and initially refused to ratify the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which banned slavery. A handful of people were still enslaved in New Jersey as late as 1865. According to Princeton University records, “Tutors also owned slaves, and some remained connected to the college and its administration after their years in the classroom. ... Joseph Treat, David Cowell, William Tennent and Ebenezer Pemberton were charter trustees, tutors of the college, and slaveowners.”<sup>85</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. John Rodgers** (1727-1811)

Old First Years: 1765-1811

Rev. John Rodgers was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1727. After supplying several churches in New Castle, Delaware, Rev. Rodgers traveled to Virginia, but after considerable trouble with authorities of the Church of England, he was forced to leave, later supplying pulpits in Maryland. In 1748, Rev. Rogers received a call to Delaware and was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of New Castle in 1749.

In 1765, Rev. Rodgers received a call to Old First. While the New York offer was still pending, he was offered another call to an “important congregational church in Charleston, in South Carolina.”<sup>86</sup> Unable to decide, Rev. Rodgers brought the matter before his synod which decided that the best opportunity was in New York. Rev. Rodgers was received by the Presbytery of New York in 1765 and was installed at Old First later that year.

While it has been said that Rev. Rodgers “manifested a deep interest in the abolition of slavery, that long-patronized disgrace of Christendom, and in the success of plans for meliorating the condition of slaves,”<sup>87</sup> public records demonstrate he was a slaveowner at various points in his life, including while he was a member of the New York Manumission Society.<sup>88</sup> Public records indicate that Rev. Rodgers owned one enslaved person at the time of the U. S. census of 1790.

*Likely to have owned slaves (as part of southern ministry) but unconfirmed*

**Rev. James Wilson**—Associate (1751-1799)

Old First Years: 1785 -1788

Rev. James Wilson was born and later ordained in Scotland. He was received and installed by the Presbytery of New York by 1786 and served Old First with Rev. Rodgers for approximately three years. Resigning in 1788 due to a pulmonary illness, Rev. Wilson was then called to the First Presbyterian Church in the City of Charleston, South Carolina, serving there for nearly ten years. Having served in Charleston, South Carolina, it would not be unreasonable to consider that Rev. Wilson may have owned or been provided use of slaves at some point during his ministry.<sup>89</sup> However, the FC History Group found no direct evidence.

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. John McKnight** (1754-1823)

Old First Years: 1789-1809

Rev. John McKnight, seventh pastor of Old First, was born near Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1754, and graduated from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton) in 1773. He ministered to a congregation in Virginia from 1775 to 1783 and then returned to Pennsylvania. In 1783, he was named a charter trustee of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Rev. McKnight received a call from Old First and was installed as colleague with Dr. Rodgers in 1789. He became both a trustee and professor of moral philosophy and logic at Columbia University in 1795 and was elected moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly that same year.

Rev. McKnight resigned from Old First in 1809. His health declining, he continued preaching as a stated supply minister. As professor at Columbia University, Rev. McKnight is confirmed to have owned at least two slaves while teaching Moral Philosophy. The names of those enslaved persons were “Het” and “An.”<sup>90</sup>

Columbia University, in recent research into slavery at that institution, has acknowledged the relative prevalence of slaveholding among the Columbia College faculty, stating that, “While many professors may not have explicitly articulated their views on slavery, a significant number of them owned slaves or strongly benefited from slavery ... Additionally, some professors who were anti-slavery owned slaves, either as they worked to oppose slavery or before they did so. ... The considerable number of professors who owned slaves further paints the faculty as widely accepting of the institution and loath to question it.”<sup>91</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Rev. Samuel Miller** (1769-1850)

Old First Years: 1793-1813



Rev. Samuel Miller, himself the son of a prominent preacher, was born near Dover, Delaware, in 1769 and graduated with a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania in 1809. He was later active in the establishment of Princeton Theological Seminary.<sup>92</sup> In 1813, Rev. Miller was selected chair of ecclesiastical history and church government at Princeton, serving more than thirty-six years. He tendered his resignation from Princeton in 1849 and, after a period of declining health, died in 1850.

While public accounts acknowledge that Rev. Miller was raised in a slave-owning family, this was often related only in relation to his early public statements in opposition to slavery. For example, his son Samuel Miller Jr. wrote in a biography of his father: “Although he came from a family of slave-holders, he spoke firmly against the institution of slavery, which he saw as ‘inconsistent with justice.’ He promoted gradual emancipation, in an effort to educate enslaved people and give them tools to thrive on their own.”<sup>93</sup> However, public records demonstrate Rev. Miller himself clearly owned slaves at various points of his life. While a professor at Princeton Seminary “at different times, (Miller) owned several slaves under the law providing in that state for the gradual abolition of human bondage.”<sup>94</sup> On one occasion, Miller was deceived by a vendor who sold him a slave. Rev. Miller was told that the enslaved man he purchased had been born after 1804, he did not in fact qualify for emancipation under the law. Miller was “obliged, by law, to hold him and provide for him for life”—an obligation the professor considered a burden.”<sup>95</sup>

Public records also indicate that Rev. Miller did not consider his personal ownership of slaves to be in conflict with his condemnation of slavery. “Dr. Miller's opinions respecting slavery have already several times been adverted to and illustrated. But greatly as he disliked the institution, he did not, we have seen, consider slaveholding in itself, of necessity, a sin; ... It was difficult otherwise to secure domestics; but this experiment of slavery, what with some that ran off, one that he could not get rid of, and the short-comings of all, was not very encouraging.”<sup>96</sup> In his later years, Rev. Miller denounced abolition and abolitionists who he believed were destroying the unity and peace of the church. “The division in the church led him to a further shift in his opinions, in particular his opinion on slavery. The remaining Presbyterian church associated with the Old School was spread over northern and southern States and was deeply divided on the issue of abolition; Miller came to the conclusion that ministers and the church should withhold judgment on the issue of slavery absolutely. He still supported emancipation in some form but came to the conclusion church could not afford further division at this time.”<sup>97</sup>

#### *No evidence of slave ownership*

**Rev. Philip Milledoler**—Associate (1775-1852)

Old First Years: 1805-1808

Rev. Philip Milledoler was born in 1775 in New York, graduated from Columbia College in 1793, and the next year was ordained to ministry. He first accepted a call in Philadelphia, later receiving a call to First Church in 1805. After approximately three years at First Church, Rev. Milledoler departed in 1808 to serve the Reformed Dutch Church in New York and began a long association with Queen's College (now Rutgers University) and was active in founding Princeton Theological Seminary, the American Bible Society, and the United Foreign Missionary Society. After the death of John Henry Livingston in 1825, he accepted the presidency of Queen's College, and convinced Henry Rutgers, a First Church congregant, to donate \$5,000 to the college. Rev. Milledoler resigned from the college in 1839 and was later elected a member of the American Philosophical Society. He died on Staten Island in 1852.<sup>98</sup>

Rev. Milledoler was an active member of the New York Colonization Society, serving as Vice-President from 1823 to 1824.<sup>99</sup> “Through their leadership of the state and regional boards of the American Colonization Society (ACS), men like John Henry Livingston (Rutgers president, 1810–1824), the Reverend Philip Milledoler (Rutgers president, 1824–1840), Henry Rutgers (trustee after whom the college is named), and Theodore Frelinghuysen, Rutgers' seventh president, were among the most ardent anti-abolitionists in the Mid-Atlantic.”<sup>100</sup>

#### *No evidence of slave ownership*

**Rev. Philip Whelpley** (1794-1824)

Old First Years: 1815-1824

Born in 1794, Rev. Whelpley began religious studies in Newark, New Jersey, and received his license to preach in 1813. While in his early twenties, he accepted a call to Old First and served as pastor for nearly ten years. He died in New York City in 1824, during one of the city's yellow fever epidemics, leaving a wife and two children.

*No evidence of slave ownership*

**Rev. William Wirt Phillips** (1796-1865)

Old First Years: 1826-1865 (died in tenure)

Rev. William Wirt Phillips was born in Montgomery County, New York, in 1796 and graduated from Union College, Schenectady, in 1812. Rev. Phillips attended the theological seminary at New Brunswick, New Jersey, was licensed by the New Brunswick Classis of the Reformed Dutch Church and was later ordained and installed as pastor of Pearl Street Presbyterian Church, New York City, in 1819. From this appointment he was called to First Church in 1826. He served as moderator of the General Assembly in 1835 and for many years was the presiding officer of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, president of the Board of Publication, a trustee of Princeton College and Seminary, a director of the Sailors' Snug Harbor, and several other charitable organizations.

In 1844, after nearly twenty years serving First Church on Wall Street, Rev. Phillips laid the cornerstone of the building on Fifth Avenue, near Twelfth Street. The new sanctuary was opened and dedicated in 1846. After nearly twenty more years of service, Rev. Phillips discharged his pastoral duties. He passed away in 1865, one month before the surrender of the Confederacy.<sup>101</sup>

### ***Prominent Officers***

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Peter Van Brugh Livingston** (1710-1792)

Trustee 1743-1753

Livingston's father, Philip Livingston, inherited slaves from both his parents and in-laws. and the family owned a half-interest in a vessel that journeyed to Madagascar, Barbados, and Virginia to trade in slaves, sugar, and tobacco. Later, Philip and his sons continued to trade with the West Indies; in the 1730s and 1740s, Philip was one of New York's leading importers of slave labor from the sugar islands.<sup>102</sup>

In 1748, Peter Van Brugh Livingston served as trustee and was a founder of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton). He was elected first president of the board of trustees of Old First in 1784. Members of the Livingston family were signers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.<sup>103</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Alexander McDougal** (1732-1786)

Trustee 1768-1771, 1773-1775

McDougal, described as a Presbyterian and former privateer, was active in demonstrations against the Stamp Act of 1765 and organized the Sons of Liberty, referred to by royalists as the "Presbyterian Junto."<sup>104</sup> He was jailed for his activities and since he was at the time serving as clerk of the trustees of the Presbyterian church, the January and February trustee meetings were held in the "New Gaol."<sup>105</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Robert Lenox** (1759-1839)

Trustee 1787-1789, Elder 1809-1839

Lenox was a successful merchant whose business depended heavily on trade with the West Indies. He also invested in real estate, eventually becoming one of New York's wealthiest men. He was the first president of Mutual Insurance Co., the city's first fire insurance company.<sup>106</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Henry (Hendrick) Rutgers** (1745-1830)

Elder 1800-1807

The seventh child of Hendrick Rutgers Sr. (1712–1779) and Catharina De Peyster (1711–1779); his mother belonged to one of New York's most prominent families and the Rutgers were related by marriage to several other

leading families of colonial New York, including the Bancker, Bedlow, Beekman, Clarkson, Gouverneur, LeRoy, and Philipse families. The wealth of the Rutgers family came from brewing.

Although a member of the New York Manumission Society, an organization dedicated to freeing slaves, Rutgers owned several enslaved persons during his lifetime. In 1817, he manumitted an enslaved person named Thomas Boston, and when Rutgers died in 1823, he declared that “my Negro wench slave named Hannah being superannuated, but supported out of my estate.”<sup>107</sup>

In 1892, his grandnephew William B. Crosby’s youngest daughter, Mary, reminisced about her “great great uncle [Henry Rutgers, who] had a strong voice, and report says that his orders to his negroes across the East River could be heard by them.”<sup>108</sup>

*Public records indicate slave ownership*

**Ebenezer Stevens**<sup>9</sup> (1751-1823)

Elder 1793-1798

A Revolutionary War hero who participated in the Boston Tea Party and fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill, Stevens was a shipping fleet owner and liquor importer. Records indicate that Stevens owned a number of slaves. An advertisement for the return of one of Stevens’ slaves who had attempted to escape appears in the *Daily Advertiser* (1792) and states, “Eight Dollars Reward, RUN away from the sloop Betsey, Wm. Wainright, master, a black man named WILL, about 5 feet 10 inches high, pitted with the small-pox, with a large bushy head of hair. Whoever will return said Negro to EBENEZER STEVENS, No. 74 Water Street, shall receive the above reward, and all reasonable charges paid.”<sup>109</sup>

## Supplemental Information

*Gradual Emancipation, Colonization, and the African School*

**Gradual Emancipation in New York** (Excerpted from *Black New York*)

Baruch College, CUNY

“*The Gradual Emancipation Law of 1799* was the first legislative act that freed slave children born after July 4, 1799, but only when women reach the age of twenty-five and men, twenty-eight. Thus, no one was freed immediately. The purpose of this law was to gradually emancipate slaves without causing unrest among slave-owners. The law failed to free all slaves because slaves born prior to July 4, 1799, could live to as late as [the] 1880s. Thus according to this law, the latest that slavery would be abolished would be in 1880s. Although no one was initially freed, it marked the beginning of the end for slavery in New York

*The Gradual Emancipation Law of 1817* was the second piece of abolition legislation passed in New York. This act built upon the 1799 legislation by declaring that any African American born before July 4, 1799, would become free on July 4, 1827. However, freedom came later at the age of twenty-one years for both men and women born later. By precisely establishing a date in which the last slaves would be free, 1848, the law successfully abolished slavery in New York.”

**Rev. Samuel Miller on Slavery** (Excerpted from *Princeton Seminary, Slavery, and Colonization*)

Princeton Theological Seminary

“In 1797, Samuel Miller, then a New York City pastor [Old First], addressed the New York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves and condemned slavery with vigor. It was, he said, a “humiliating tale ... that in this free country ... in this country, from which has been proclaimed to distant lands, as the basis of our political existence, that ‘ALL MEN ARE BORN FREE AND EQUAL,’—in this country there are found slaves!”

Miller avowed that Scripture as well as the Declaration of Independence condemned slavery. “God,” he said quoting the Apostle Paul, “has made of one blood all nations of men that dwell on the face of the whole earth.”

Miller did admit that the Old Testament allowed slavery in ancient Israel and that the New Testament enjoined obedience upon those in servitude, but he denied that these passages justified a continuance of the institution in the present. He admitted that difficulties prevented immediate emancipation of all slaves and suggested that the remedy lay “in emancipation in a gradual manner, which will at the same time, provide for the intellectual and moral cultivation of slaves, that they may be prepared to exercise the rights, and discharge the duties of citizens.” How long would this take? Miller did not say, but he closed his address on a strongly hopeful note:

“The time, I trust, is not far distant, when there shall be no slavery to lament—no oppression to oppose in the United States— ... when every being, who bears the name MAN, whatever complexion an equatorial Sun may have burnt upon him, ... shall enjoy the privileges, and be raised to the dignity which belong to the human character.”

Samuel Miller supplied a different response to the problem of slavery roughly a quarter century later. In 1823, he returned to the subject when he spoke in Newark to address the Presbyterian Synod of New Jersey about a school for African Americans that it sponsored [the African School in Parsippany, New Jersey] ... and he urged the necessity of preparing slaves for freedom through education. ... His words deserve to be quoted at length:

“Some have been so inconsiderate as to maintain, that because slavery is, in all cases, an evil, that, therefore, it ought to be abolished at a stroke, and every slave in our land made free in a day. But the idea of liberating, and turning loose on society, at once, a million and a half of slaves, with all the ignorance and depravity to which their bondage has contributed to reduce them, would surely be the extravagance, or rather the cruelty of benevolence. It would be to bring, not merely on the White population, but on the slaves themselves, thus suddenly liberated without being prepared for it, an accumulated curse under the name and guise of a blessing.”

What then should be done? Miller continued:

“if liberated and left among the whites: so, as neighbours, they would be a constant source of annoyance, of corruption, and of danger to the whites themselves. ... They could never be trusted as faithful citizens. ... Each would regard the other with painful suspicion and apprehension. ... It is, of course, essential to the interest of each that they be separated; and separated to such a distance from each other, as to render intercourse very seldom practicable—If this be so, then the Coloured people must be colonized. In other words, they must be severed from the white population, and sent to some distant part of the world, where they will be in no danger either of suffering themselves, or of inflicting on others, the evils already described.”

Thus, at the end of the day, education to uplift a supposedly degraded people, followed by emigration from the United States to “a distant part of the world,” was the path to avert a social disaster.”

**The American Colonization Society** (Excerpted from *Princeton Seminary, Slavery, and Colonization: Overview of Princeton Seminary and the Colonization Movement*)  
Princeton Theological Seminary

“...The removal of freed slaves to Liberia originated in Princeton among Presbyterian clergy and professors at both the Seminary and the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) ...The leadership of the Presbyterian Church’s seminary supported colonization and never seem to have wavered from this commitment for nearly the entirety of the 19th century. ...Even 12 years *after* the conclusion of the Civil War and the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery and granting full citizenship to blacks, the leader of Princeton Seminary’s faculty continued to raise money and to speak publicly in support of the colonization effort, likely motivated both by the economic and material wretchedness of the newly free black community in the United States, as well as white anxieties about competition for jobs and growing unease about financial stress related to care for poor blacks.

The abolitionists would, they feared, destroy the church and the nation by dividing both right down the middle. Their fears were not wrong; what they indirectly prophesied came to bloodily apocalyptic fact at mid-century. At root, ... the Seminary faculty did not possess a theological imagination that would allow them to envision divine action through human agency to bring about a harmonious multiracial American society, even though they could easily imagine divine intervention through human agency to transform the entire continent of Africa through evangelization by black colonialists from America.

The American Colonization Society (ACS) was founded in 1816. ...The colonization effort at the national level received widespread support in its early years. Such high-profile political leaders as Henry Clay, Francis Scott Key, James Monroe, and even Abraham Lincoln supported the endeavor as a way to deal with the problem of slavery in a gradual and non-divisive way. ...A significant challenge for the ACS involved securing freed slaves who would agree to go to Liberia. A handful of free blacks saw Liberia as a way to get out of the toxic racial maelstrom of American society and some shared the evangelical vision of converting Africa to Christianity. Most free blacks, however, strenuously resisted the colonization effort; and those who did favor emigration often looked to some other organization than the ACS or placed their hopes in a venue other than Liberia. Those who opposed colonization did so on the grounds that they had been born and raised in America and that Africa was a completely foreign place to them. ...The relatively small number of people who emigrated to Liberia soon became the basis for withdrawal of support, if not outright ridicule, of the mission of the ACS.”

### **The African School** (Excerpted from various sources)

“The Presbyterian Church founded a short-lived school in New Jersey for the Christian education of Negro clergymen who would be missionaries to projected African settlements of the new Colonization movement.”<sup>110</sup>

On October 23, 1817, Old First trustees approved a board request by the African School, founded by the Synod of New York and New Jersey, for the Rev. Edward Dorr Griffin to preach a sermon at Old First.<sup>111</sup> The sermon entitled “A Plea for Africa”, an appeal to raise funds and support for the school, was presented three days later.<sup>112</sup>

“Griffin describes at length this pioneering project of African-American education, but most remarkable is his 11-page list of 54 “distinguished” Blacks and “Mulattoes”, past and present, who had distinguished themselves in scientific and other pursuits, including Phyllis Wheatley, Benjamin Banneker, Prince Saunders and others “now living in the United States.”<sup>113</sup>

It should be noted that The African School was not directly related to the similarly named “African Free School” in New York City. The African Free School was founded by members of the New York Manumission Society in 1787. Many of its alumni became leaders in the African American community in New York. In the early 1830s, the African Free School was boycotted by Black students due to connections with the American Colonization Society. By 1835, the facilities of the African Free School were merged into the New York City public school system.<sup>114</sup>

While both the American Colonization Society and the African School were founded in 1816, the African School was dissolved in 1825.<sup>115</sup> The American Colonization Society remained in operation until 1964.<sup>116</sup>

## Illustrations

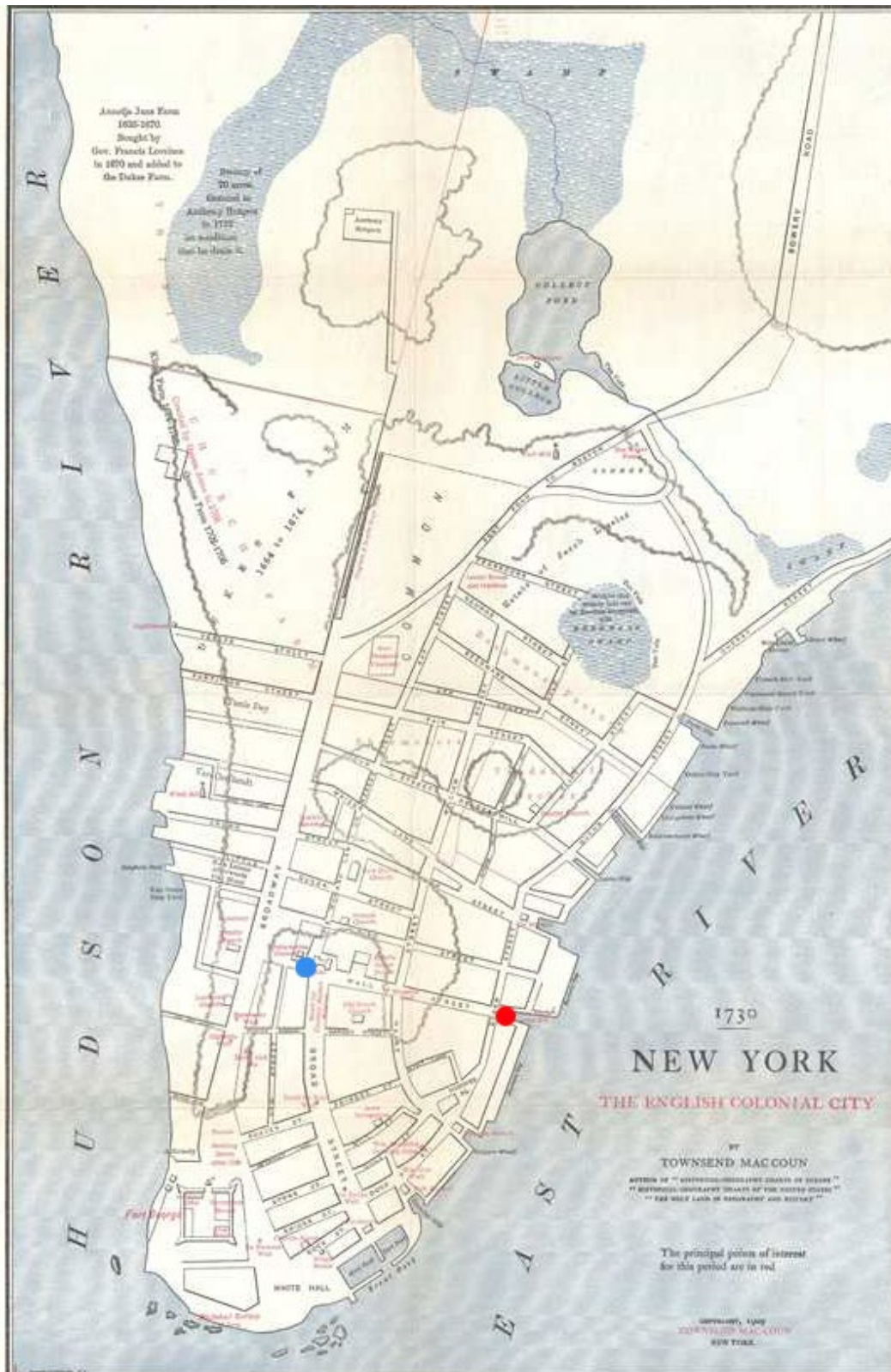


Wall Street at the time of the American Revolution

*Left to right: Trinity Church, Old First, City Hall*

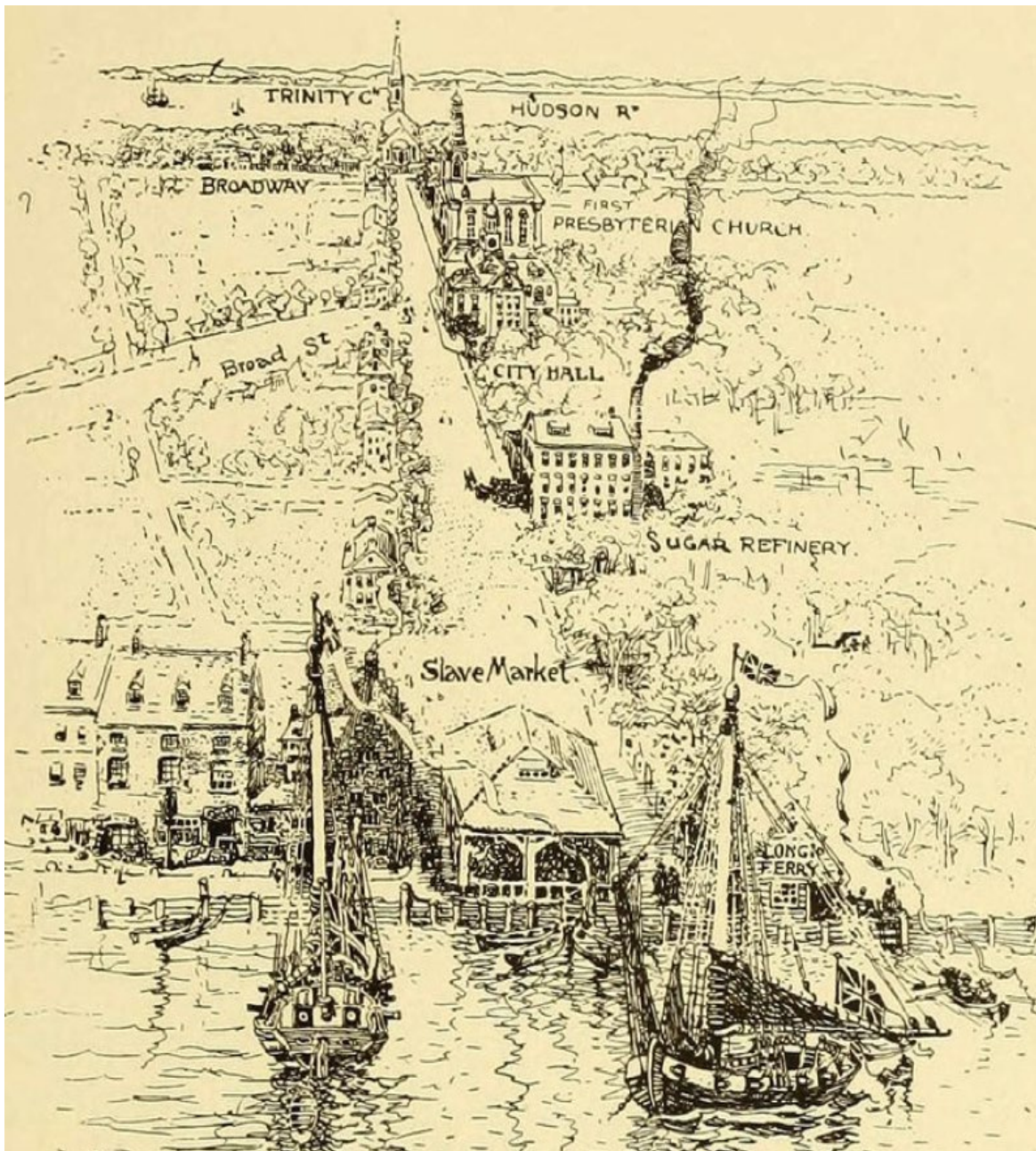
Source: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e0-d808-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>





Old First (Blue dot) and the Slave Market (Red dot) in 1730.

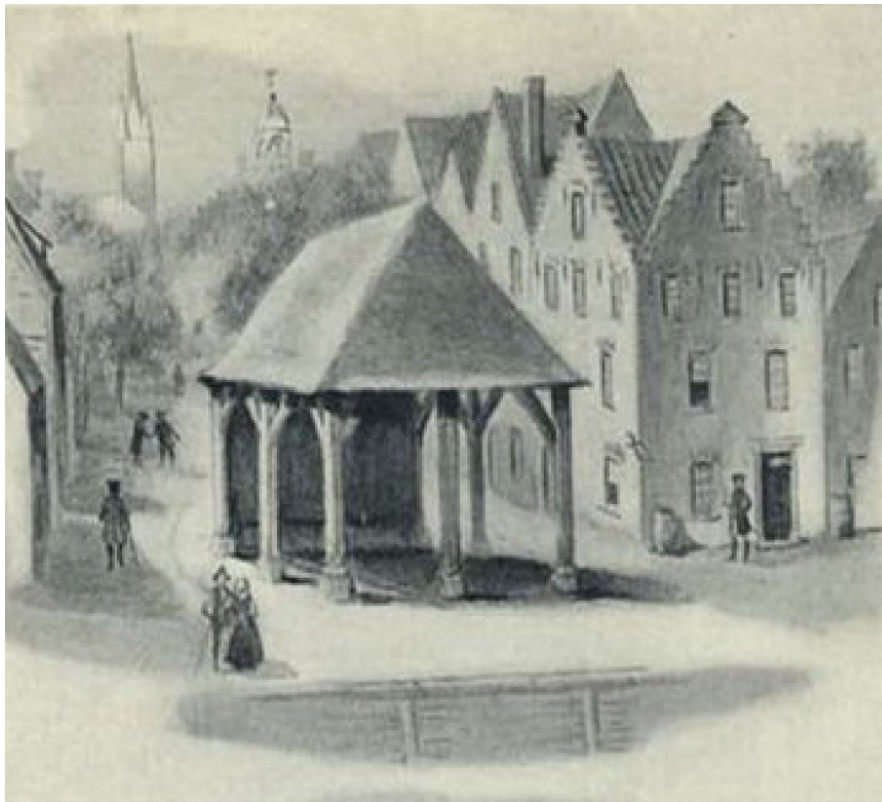
Source: <https://mapcollections.brooklynhistory.org/map/1730-new-york-the-english-colonial-city-by-townsend-maccoun/>



View from the East River, looking towards the Hudson River, showing the Slave Market, Sugar Refinery, City Hall, Wall Street Church, and Trinity Church.

Source: <https://www.nycurbanism.com/blog/2019/6/18/a-short-history-of-slavery-in-nyc>





Slave Market with Trinity and Wall Street church steeples in background.

Source: <https://www.nycurbanism.com/blog/2019/6/18/a-short-history-of-slavery-in-nyc>

**NUMBER OF NEGROES IMPORTED FROM 1701—1726.**

AN ACCOUNT of what Negro Slaves have been Imported into his Majesty's Province of New York as taken from the Custom House Books between the year 1701 & this present year 1726.

[ Lond. Doc. XXXII. ]

YEAR.	From the West Indies.	From the Coast of Africa.	YEAR.	From the West Indies.	From the Coast of Africa.
1701	42	.....	1710	427	104
1702	100	.....	1711	404	101
1703	8	.....	1712	71	.....
1704	84	.....	1713	70	422
1705	85	.....	1714	80	.....
1706	86	.....	1715	84	.....
1707	71	.....	1716	74	107
1708	83	.....	1717	101	.....
1709	87	80			
1710	79	40			
	314	204			
		Total 518.		1079	808

Total 1386.

R. R. That all the Negroes in the foregoing account have been Imported by Private Traders and that none have been Imported during that time by the African Company.

New York 15 December 1726.

\*Entered from the Coast of Africa but found afterwards to have been from Madagascar.

JAMES BLENKEDY Cleric.

List of slaves imported into New York by private traders, 1701-1726.

Source: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-fca7-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

**For Sale,**  
 A LIKELY, HEALTHY, YOUNG  
**NEGRO WENCH,**  
**B**ETWEEN fifteen and sixteen Years old :  
 She has been used to the Farming Bu-  
 siness. Sold for want of Employ.—Enquire at  
 No. 81, William-street.  
 New-York, March 30, 1789.

Advertisement for enslaved person, 1789

Source: Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
 Photographs and Prints Division, New York Public Library

**“ TO BE SOLD,**  
 “ A Servant woman acquainted with both city and  
 “ country business, about 30 years of age, and sold  
 “ because she wishes to change her place. Enquire  
 “ at this office, or at 91 Cherry-street.”

**“ FOR SALE OR HIRE,**  
 “ A likely young Man Servant, sober, honest and  
 “ well behaved. He would suit very well for a house  
 “ servant or gentleman’s waiter, being accustomed to  
 “ both. Enquire at this office.”

Advertisements for enslaved persons in the *New York Daily Advertiser* in 1817,  
 as reproduced in Henry Bradshaw Fearon’s *Sketches of America* (1818).

Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=98037580>

I Archibald Currie of the City of New York Merchant  
Do Certify that a certain Male Black Child named Jacob,  
was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October of my Negro Woman  
Slave named Sarah, which Child I abandon according  
to Law New York June 12<sup>th</sup> 1802  
Arch. Currie

Birth certificate of Jacob, born October 15, 1801, to a "Negro Woman Slave named Sarah" owned by New York City merchant Archibald Currie (Old First trustee in 1784).

Source: <https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15052coll5/id/24503>

I Robert Speir of the City of New York Cooper  
Do Certify that a certain Male Child named Henry  
Harris was born on the eighteenth day of October last  
' part of my Mulatto Woman named Diana Harris  
New York June 21. 1808.  
Robert Speir

1808 Birth certificate of Henry Harris,  
born to Diana Harris, enslaved to Robert Speir (Old First Trustee)

Source: New-York Historical Society, *Manuscript Collections Relating to Slavery*  
<https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15052coll5/id/24947/rec/1>



A PLEA FOR AFRICA.

—♦—

A

SERMON

PREACHED OCTOBER 26, 1817,

IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,

BEFORE THE

SYNOD OF NEW-YORK AND NEW-JERSEY,

AT THE REQUEST OF

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF

THE AFRICAN SCHOOL

ESTABLISHED BY

THE SYNOD.

—♦—

BY EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN NEWARK, NEW-JERSEY.

—♦—

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE BOARD.

NEW-YORK :

GOULD, PRINTER, CHATHAM-ST.

1817.

“A Plea for Africa” sermon by guest preacher Edward Dorr Griffin, 1817.

Source: <https://www.logcollegepress.com/new-page-4>

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These records are in the archives of the First Presbyterian Church in New York City, 12 West Twelfth Street. The manuscripts have been scanned as PDFs and the FC History Group used these PDF documents for research and citation, therefore page numbers throughout this report refer to PDF page numbers, not manuscript page numbers.

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

#### *Trustee Minutes*

1. Memoirs and a Journal of Transaction of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Congregation in the City of New York, 1717-1775, (aka trustees records, file rg413\_b10\_f1)
2. Minutes of Members of the Corporation, May 1784-May 1809, (aka trustees minutes, file rg413\_b11\_f1)
3. 1809-April 1844, (aka trustees minutes, file rg413\_b12\_f1)
4. May 11, 1844-December 1902, (aka trustees minutes, file rg413\_b13\_f2)

#### *Records of the Session*

1. 1765-March 1808. At the end is a brief narrative of the origin and progress of the First Presbyterian Church of New York, 1807. (aka session minutes, file rg413\_b1\_f2)
2. May 3, 1809-October 14, 1862. (aka session minutes, file rg413\_b2\_f1)
3. December 1862-March 12, 1907. (aka session minutes, file rg413\_b3\_f1)

#### *Lists*

1. List of Members, 1807-1846, (file rg413\_b3\_f3)
2. List of Communicants, 1809-1827, (file rg413\_b3\_f5)
3. List of Church Officers, 1809-1854, (file rg413\_b3\_f7)
4. List of Pastors, Elders, and Members, 1809-1867, (file rg413\_b3\_f8)
5. Church Register, various dates 1717-1884, (file rg413\_b3\_f9). (The bulk of this document is a list of member names from 1826-1884; pp. 20-65; earlier dates reference list of pastors, elders, and deacons)

#### *Register of Baptisms*

1. 1728-1790, (file rg413\_b3\_f11)

#### *Register of Deaths*

1. Register of Deaths, 1786-1804, (file rg413\_b8\_f1)
2. Records of Burials, 1807-1811, (file rg413\_b9\_f1)

#### *Pew Records*

1. Pew Subscription Records, 1804, (file rg413\_b13\_f3a)
2. Pew Subscription Records, 1804, (file rg413\_b13\_f3b)
3. Record of Pew Holders, ca 1820, (file rg413\_b13\_f4)
4. Record of Pew Deeds, 1846-1866, (file rg413\_b13\_f5)
5. Records of Pew Deeds, 1866-1917, (file rg413\_b13\_f6)

### *Church Histories*

1. 1886, (file rg413\_b13\_f9\_1886)
2. 1891, (file rg413\_b13\_f9\_1891)
3. 1919, (file rg413\_b13\_f9\_1919)

### *Miscellaneous*

1. Records and Maps..., 1843-1844, (file rg\_413\_b13\_f1) (pertaining to the Fifth Avenue relocation)

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*Note:* As of January 1, 2022, the New York Slavery Records Index, referred to in the body of this report as the CUNY Index, will be incorporated into the Northeast Slavery Records Index (NESRI).

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## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> Frederick Douglass, *The Nation's Problem*, speech delivered before the Bethel Library and Historical Society, Washington, D.C., April 16, 1889.
- <sup>2</sup> For links to research on slavery by these institutions, please see the bibliography which follows this report.
- <sup>3</sup> For general information related to Old First history, please see Dorothy Ganfield Fowler and Donna Hurley, *A City Church: The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York* (2016 edition).
- <sup>4</sup> As of January 1, 2022, the New York Slavery Records Index, referred to in the body of this report as the CUNY Index, will be incorporated into the Northeast Slavery Records Index (NESRI). Endnote citations in this report refer to the CUNY Index by full name: "City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War.*"
- <sup>5</sup> By the early 1660s, the population consisted of approximately 1,500 Europeans, only about half of whom were Dutch, and 375 Africans, 300 of whom were slaves. Leslie M. Harris. *In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 14, 22.
- <sup>6</sup> Sylviane Diouf, New York Public Library, *New York's Slave Market*. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from <https://www.nypl.org/blog/2015/06/29/slave-market>
- <sup>7</sup> Jill Lepore. *These Truths: A History of the United States*, p. 62.
- <sup>8</sup> For detail on the proximity of these locations, please see the appendix that follows this report.
- <sup>9</sup> Evans Early American Imprint Collection, *A journal of the proceedings in the detection of the conspiracy formed by some white people, in conjunction with Negro and other slaves, for burning the city of New-York in America, and murdering the inhabitants*. Retrieved January 19, 2022 from <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/evans/N04378.0001.001/1:88..1?rgn=div3;view=fulltext> (pp. 73, 91, 124, 130, 131).
- <sup>10</sup> Alan Watson, *The Digest of Justinian, Volume 1*. Retrieved January 12, 2022 from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Digest\\_of\\_Justinian/iRGLscg1LWoC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22Manumission+means+sending+out+of+one%27s+hand%22&pg=PA2&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Digest_of_Justinian/iRGLscg1LWoC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22Manumission+means+sending+out+of+one%27s+hand%22&pg=PA2&printsec=frontcover) (p. 2).
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- <sup>12</sup> National Park Service, *Fernando Wood*. Retrieved January 12, 2022 from <https://www.nps.gov/people/fernando-wood.htm>
- <sup>13</sup> Kyera Singleton, Harvard Radcliffe Institute, *The Enduring Legacy of Slavery and Racism in the North*. (video interview, 5:46-6:50), retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jfohQVAiaP0>
- <sup>14</sup> Dorothy Fowler and Donna Hurley, *A City Church: The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York 1716-1976, 1976-2016*, p. 65. Fowler names a group who escorted the New England delegation to the Second Continental Congress into New York in 1775. Among those who are also documented as slaveowners are: John Lasher (1724-1806), Peter Van Brugh Livingston (1710-1792), William Livingston (1723-1790), and Peter R. Livingston (1737-1794).
- <sup>15</sup> Please see supporting materials in the "Pastors," "Officers," and "Members" sections of this report.
- <sup>16</sup> Public records indicate that in 1675, William and Thomas Smith were shipowners involved in importing enslaved persons (CUNY Index, Donnan tables). William Smith spent significant time in Jamaica, a major sugar-producing island (Fowler and Hurley, *A City Church* [2016]). Slave ownership related to Gilbert Livingston is



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detailed in Cynthia A. Kierner, *Traders and Gentlefolk: The Livingstons of New York, 1675-1790* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2018), p. 63.

- <sup>17</sup> Rev. Samuel Miller, *An Essay on the Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the Office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church*, p. 27.
- <sup>18</sup> J. L. Ziegler, A. M., M. D. *An Authentic History of Donegal Presbyterian Church, Located in East Donegal Township, Lancaster Co., Pa.* Retrieved January 7, 2022, from [https://archive.org/stream/authentichistory00zieg/authentichistory00zieg\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/authentichistory00zieg/authentichistory00zieg_djvu.txt) (pp. 23-24)
- <sup>19</sup> Massachusetts County District and Probate Records Vol. 76-77, 1777-1778, *Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton's Will, No. 16385*, p. 412, retrieved July 17, 2017. Princeton University, *Princeton's Founding Trustees, Princeton & Slavery*, retrieved December 8, 2021. <https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/founding-trustees#ref-10>; Princeton University, *Princeton's Founding Trustees, Princeton & Slavery*, retrieved December 8, 2021, from <https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/founding-trustees#ref-10>
- <sup>20</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, trustees meeting, May 1, 1759. (file rg413\_b10\_f1 p. 132)
- <sup>21</sup> Princeton University, *Princeton & Slavery*, "Princeton's Slaveholding Professors." Retrieved December 8, 2021, from <https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/princetons-slaveholding-professors>
- <sup>22</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: "John Rogers."; Shepherd Knapp, *A History of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the City of New York* (New York: Brick Presbyterian Church, 1909), p. 35.
- <sup>23</sup> Columbia University, *Columbia University & Slavery*, "Entrenched Apathy Toward 'Horrible Iniquity': Columbia College Faculty and Slavery, 1784-1865," "John McKnight in the 1790 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry Library*. Retrieved March 20, 2015, from <http://ancestry.me/1HVV4js>.
- <sup>24</sup> James Morehead, *Princeton Theological Seminary and Slavery*. Retrieved December 8, 2021, from <https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/princeton-theological-seminary-and-slavery>; Samuel Miller, *The Life of Samuel Miller, D. D., LL. D.: Second Professor in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, at Princeton, New Jersey, Volume 1*, p. 300.
- <sup>25</sup> Presbyterian Heritage Center, *Biographical Index of Ministers*. Retrieved December 8, 2021. "... he was sent by the Synod, in compliance with pressing requests, and spent some time in Augusta County, Va. He was the first Presbyterian minister that preached within the borders of Tennessee." <https://www.phcmontreat.org/bios/Bios-C.htm>
- <sup>26</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, *The Services in Celebration of the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of the Old First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York: In the Church, Fifth Avenue, Eleventh to Twelfth Streets, December 1916*, p. 86.
- <sup>27</sup> Please see "Supplementary Information" in the Appendix that follows this report.
- <sup>28</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, trustee records 1717-1775 (file rg413\_b10\_f1 p. 10).
- <sup>29</sup> A Black woman named Sabina Nicoll joined Old First "on certificate" in 1810 [session minutes 1810 (p. 9)] and was erased from records in 1835 "for long continued absence." Although Sabina Nicoll shared the same last name, it is not confirmed she is any relation to or was enslaved by Dr. John Nicoll.
- <sup>30</sup> Kierner, *Traders and Gentlefolk*, 1992, pp. 71-72; see also James G. Lydon, *William and Mary Quarterly, third series*, 35 (1978), "New York and the Slave Trade, 1700-1774," pp. 375-394.

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- <sup>31</sup> Gene Procknow, *Journal of the American Revolution*, “Slavery Through the Eyes of Revolutionary Generals.” Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <https://allthingsliberty.com/2017/11/slavery-eyes-revolutionary-generals/>
- <sup>32</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Alexander McDougal.” U.S. census records indicate that in 1810, McDougal owned one enslaved person.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Daniel Phoenix.”
- <sup>34</sup> Fowler and Hurley, *A City Church* [2016], p. 77; Princeton Theological Seminary, *Slavery and the Seminary*. “Robert came to America shortly before the American Revolution. He and a younger brother established a merchant firm, based in New York City, which engaged in far-flung trade, their business extending to plantations in Jamaica, Cuba, and the New Orleans area. ‘His ships,’ Schmidt notes, ‘did not carry slaves as cargo, but rather goods such as sugar, rum, and pimento produced by slaves, which they brought to New York before traveling on to Europe.’” Retrieved December 9, 2021, from <https://slavery.ptsem.edu/the-report/slavery-and-the-seminary/>.
- <sup>35</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Robert Lenox.”
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- <sup>37</sup> Source for trustees: First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, archives; source for slave ownership: City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>; First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, trustee minutes (1717-1775; 1784-1809; 1801-1844; 1844-1902), [files rg413\_b10\_f1 (1717-1775), rg413\_b11\_f1 (1784-1809), rg413\_b12\_f1 (1801-1844), and rg413\_b13\_f2 (1844-1902), file rg413\_b3\_f7]. Once identified, the names were researched in City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. If the minutes included alternate spellings (such as Ricker, and Ryker), both names were reviewed, Keywords: = last name, first name, and county or borough = New York, various. <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>
- <sup>38</sup> John A. Walthall, *Studies in Archaeological Material Culture No. 1, 2013*, “Queensware Direct from the Potteries: US Importers of Staffordshire Ceramics in Antebellum America 1820-1860.” City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “John Greenfield.”
- <sup>39</sup> Rev. Samuel Miller, *An Essay on the Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the Office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church, 1832*, p. 198.
- <sup>40</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “John Broome.”
- <sup>41</sup> Fowler and Hurley, *A City Church* [2016], p. 83.
- <sup>42</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “John R. B. Rodgers.”
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Henry Rutgers.”

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- <sup>44</sup> Rutgers University. David Fowler, *Benevolent Patriot: Henry Rutgers, 1745-1830*. Footnote 11. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from [https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/new-brunswick/visit-study/locations/special-collections-university-archives/divisions-collections/university-archives/rutgers-history/benevolent-patriot-henry-rutgers-1745-1830#ref\\_11](https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/new-brunswick/visit-study/locations/special-collections-university-archives/divisions-collections/university-archives/rutgers-history/benevolent-patriot-henry-rutgers-1745-1830#ref_11); New York Public Library, *Duyckinck Papers*.
- <sup>45</sup> Source for trustees: First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, archives: First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, session minutes (1765-1808 (file rg413\_b1\_f2); 1809-1862 (file rg413\_b2\_f1), trustee minutes (1717-1775 (file rg413\_b10\_f) (file rg413\_b1\_f) for the period from 1765-1808; session minutes: (file rg413\_b2\_f1 for the period 1809-1862; and a summary listing from trustee minutes (file rg413\_b11\_f1, p. 154). A few elders were named in the course of the trustee business prior to 1765; these were found in trustee minutes, First Presbyterian Church (file rg413\_b10\_f1.pdf) for the period 1717-1775. Once names were confirmed, they were researched in the City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. If the minutes included alternate spellings (such as Ricker, and Ryker), both names were reviewed. Keywords = last name, first name, and county or borough = New York, various. <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>
- <sup>46</sup> Presbyterian Church (USA), *Book of Order 2019-2021: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* G-2.020.
- <sup>47</sup> Gustavus D. S. Trask, William Allen Butler, *Marine Society of the City of New York, in the State of New York*, p.59.
- <sup>48</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Thomas Ogilvie.”
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “John Bingham.”
- <sup>50</sup> Wikipedia. 4<sup>th</sup> Ward, New York. Retrieved December 11, 2021, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th\\_Ward,\\_New\\_York](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th_Ward,_New_York)
- <sup>51</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Richard Cunningham.”
- <sup>52</sup> Old First session minutes from 1769 b1\_f2 “full communicants list” contain 391 names, of which five are designated as “Negro.”
- <sup>53</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, (file rg413\_b1\_f2, p. 26).
- <sup>54</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, *First Presbyterian Church, New York City* (New York: Ames & McIlvaine, Printers, 1886), p. 17.
- <sup>55</sup> First Presbyterian Church, Register of Baptisms 1728-1790, (file rg413\_b3\_f11, pp. 27, 141 and 127). Note: Only three recovered baptismal records have been found to date. Due to time limitations, of six volumes of baptisms in the archives, only one, from the period 1728-1790, was reviewed.
- <sup>56</sup> The trustees found are: John Murray (2 records), Robert Speir, Abraham Bussing, Richard Platt, Samuel Cowdrey, Archibald Currie, Thomas Arden (2 records). New-York Historical Society, New-York Heritage Digital Collections. *Manuscript Collections Relating to Slavery*. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15052coll5>
- <sup>57</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Robert Speir.”
- <sup>58</sup> Yoshpe, Harry B. “Record of Slave Manumissions in New York During the Colonial and Early National Periods.” *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 26, no. 1, Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Inc., 1941, pp. 78–107 (specifically p. 89 for Speir), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2715051>

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- <sup>59</sup> People Pill, *William Peartree*. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from <https://peoplepill.com/people/william-peartree/>
- <sup>60</sup> City University of New York, *The New York Slavery Records Index: Records of Enslaved Persons and Slave Holders in New York from 1525 through the Civil War*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “John Quackenbos.”
- <sup>61</sup> Yoshpe, Harry B. “Record of Slave Manumissions in New York During the Colonial and Early National Periods.” *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 26, no. 1, Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Inc., 1941, pp. 78–107 (for Isaac Riley), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2715051>.
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- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, Retrieved December 12, 2021, from <https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. Keywords: “Anna Greenleaf.”
- <sup>64</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, list of members (1807-1846), (file rg413\_b13\_f3, p. 21).
- <sup>65</sup> John Harvey Treat, *The Treat Family A Genealogy of Trott, Tratt and Treat for Fifteen Generations, and Four Hundred and Fifty Years in England and America*. Retrieved December 8, 2021, from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Treat\\_Family/qzcEAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Treat_Family/qzcEAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1)
- <sup>66</sup> The New-York Observer, “*Preachers in the Metropolitan Pulpit—XI.*” June 4, 1908. Retrieved May 20, 2019, from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/New\\_York\\_Observer/DX5PAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PA731&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/New_York_Observer/DX5PAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PA731&printsec=frontcover)
- <sup>67</sup> The Greenleaf plaque includes lines from the hymn “Radiant Morn”, text by Godfrey Thring (1864): “Lead us, O Christ, Safe home at last, Where saints are clothed in spotless white and evening shadows never fall, Where Thou eternal Light of light, Art Lord of all.”
- <sup>68</sup> The Wall Street church building was sold for \$3,000, fully dismantled and shipped across the Hudson, River to be re-assembled in Jersey City. After approximately 40 years of service to the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church in Jersey City, the building was demolished in 1888 for a late-century housing complex. A parking lot now stands on the site. New Jersey City University, *Jersey City Past and Present: The First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City*. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from <https://njcu.libguides.com/firstpresbyterian>
- <sup>69</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, trustee minutes May 2, 1864 (file rg412\_b13\_f2 p 187).
- <sup>70</sup> Please see the sample financial example in the appendix that follows this report.
- <sup>71</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, trustee minutes May 1, 1759, (file rg413\_b10\_f1, p. 413).
- <sup>72</sup> Find A Grave, *Judge John Robert Donnell*, Retrieved March 27, 2021, from <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55706953/john-robert-donnell>. Slave ownership documented: “1830 Craven County North Carolina Census images,” S-K Publications census DCs and DVDs, Accessed December 12, 2021, from <http://www.usgwarchives.net/nc/craven/census/1830/0000read.htm>, images from index: 0121a.gif and 0121b.gif
- <sup>73</sup> Wikipedia, *David S. Kennedy*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_S.\\_Kennedy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_S._Kennedy)
- <sup>74</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, trustee minutes, February 20, 1847, (file rg413\_b13\_f2 pp. 44-45).
- <sup>75</sup> Elliott Robert Barkan, *Making it in America: A Sourcebook on Eminent Ethnic Americans.*, Entry: William E. Van Vugt, *Makemie, Francis*, p. 214.
- <sup>76</sup> Yale, Abolition & Slavery: *Jonathan Edwards College*. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <http://www.yaleslavery.org/WhoYaleHonors/je.html>

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- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, Retrieved December 20, 2021.
- <sup>78</sup> William Henry Egle, *Pennsylvania Genealogies: Scotch-Irish and German*, p. 24.
- <sup>79</sup> Find a Grave, *Rev. James Anderson*. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12234831/james-anderson>
- <sup>80</sup> Iment.com, *Reverend James Anderson (1678-1740)*. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <http://www.iment.com/maida/familytree/anderson/revjamesanderson.htm>
- <sup>81</sup> Sarah Elizabeth Titcomb, *Early New England People: Some Account of the Ellis, Pemberton, Willard, Prescott Titcomb, Sewall and Longfellow, and Allied Families*. Retrieved January 12, 2022 from [https://archive.org/stream/cu31924030933364/cu31924030933364\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/cu31924030933364/cu31924030933364_djvu.txt) (p. 39).
- <sup>82</sup> Princeton University, *Ebenezer Pemberton Will*. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <https://slavery.princeton.edu/sources/ebenezer-pemberton-will>
- <sup>83</sup> Dartmouth College, *Pemberton, Ebenezer Jr.* Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://collections.dartmouth.edu/occom/html/ctx/personography/pers0415.ocp.html>
- <sup>84</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, trustees meeting held May 1, 1759 (file rg413\_b10\_f1 p. 132).
- <sup>85</sup> Jessica R. Mack, *Princeton and Slavery*, “Princeton’s Slaveholding Professors.” Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/princetons-slaveholding-professors>
- <sup>86</sup> Samuel Miller, *Memoirs of the Reverend John Rodgers D. D: Late Pastor of the Wall-Street and Brick Churches in the City of New-York*. Retrieved January 7, 2022, from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/Memoir\\_of\\_the\\_Rev\\_John\\_Rodgers\\_D\\_D/fBWAVmdLH2EC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%E2%80%9Cimportant+congregational+church+in+Charleston,+in+South+Carolina%E2%80%9CD&pg=PA86&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Memoir_of_the_Rev_John_Rodgers_D_D/fBWAVmdLH2EC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%E2%80%9Cimportant+congregational+church+in+Charleston,+in+South+Carolina%E2%80%9CD&pg=PA86&printsec=frontcover) (p. 86).
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590be125ff7c502a07752a5b/t/5e50aa50fe69f273e6aa2630/1582344798826/Miller%2C+Samuel%2C+Memoirs+of+the+Rev.+John+Rodgers%2C+D.D.pdf>. (p. 338).
- <sup>88</sup> Public records indicate that prior to the 1790 Census, Rev. Rodgers held at least one ‘house-servant’, as described in Shepherd Knapp’s *A History of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the City of New York* (1909). Knapp writes that during the 1760s, “His <Rodgers> house-servant, a negro, was at that time the sexton also. To him Mr. Rodgers called out in a loud voice, “Frank, show the gentleman to my seat.” [Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <http://library.logcollegepress.com/Knapp%2C+Jr.%2C+Shepherd%2C+A+History+of+the+Brick+Presbyterian+Church.pdf> (p.35)] While enslavement of Blacks was common in New York at the time, the FC History Group was unable to determine if that servant was free or enslaved. However, during the time of his tenure at Old First, at the time of the 1790 Census, public records indicate Rev. Rodgers owned one enslaved person.
- <sup>89</sup> Prior to the American Revolution and through the early 1800s, Charleston was the primary entry point for slaves transported to the U.S. and Rev. Wilson’s church was located approximately two blocks from the site of embarkation. As South Carolina had a clear enslaved Black majority from about 1708 through most of the eighteenth century, common practice of the time provided clergy in the South with use of slaves during their call [Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <https://www.sciway.net/afam/slavery/population.html>].
- <sup>90</sup> Megan Kallstrom, Columbia University in the City of New York, *Columbia University and Slavery: Entrenched Apathy Toward “Horrible Iniquity”: Columbia College Faculty and Slavery, 1784-1865*. Retrieved January 7, 2022, from <https://columbiaandslavery.columbia.edu/content/entrenched-apathy-toward-horrible-iniquity-columbia-college-faculty-and-slavery-1784-1865>.

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- <sup>92</sup> Wikipedia.com, *Samuel Miller (theologian)*. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel\\_Miller\\_\(theologian\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Miller_(theologian))
- <sup>93</sup> Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, *Place for Truth*. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://www.placefortruth.org/blog/samuel-miller-conscientious-pastor-and-teacher>
- <sup>94</sup> Samuel Miller (Jr.), *The Life of Samuel Miller, D. D., LL. D., Second Professor in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian church, at Princeton, New Jersey. Volume: 1*. Retrieved January 7, 2022, from [https://archive.org/stream/lifesamuelmille00millgoog/lifesamuelmille00millgoog\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/lifesamuelmille00millgoog/lifesamuelmille00millgoog_djvu.txt) (p.300).
- <sup>95</sup> James Moorhead, *Princeton and Slavery*, “Princeton Theological Seminary and Slavery,” Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/princeton-theological-seminary-and-slavery>
- <sup>96</sup> Samuel Miller (Jr.), *The Life of Samuel Miller, D. D., LL. D., Second Professor in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian church, at Princeton, New Jersey. Volume: 1*. Retrieved January 7, 2022, from [https://archive.org/stream/lifesamuelmille00millgoog/lifesamuelmille00millgoog\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/lifesamuelmille00millgoog/lifesamuelmille00millgoog_djvu.txt) (p.300).
- <sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70 -71.
- <sup>98</sup> New York Times, *Death of Rev. Philip Milledoler*. September 23, 1852. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Milledoler\\_1852\\_obit.gif](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Milledoler_1852_obit.gif)
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- <sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*
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- <sup>105</sup> First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, p. 62; trustee minutes, Jan. 7 and Feb. 4, 1771, (file rg413\_b10\_fl pp. 210-211).
- <sup>106</sup> Fowler and Hurley, *A City Church* [2016], p. 77.
- <sup>107</sup> *Will of Henry Rutgers (transcription), RUL*. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <https://digitalcollections.nyhistory.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A132423#page/26/mode/1up>; Source: <https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/new-brunswick/visit-study/locations/special-collections-university-archives/divisions-collections/university-archives/rutgers-history/benevolent-patriot-henry-rutgers-1745-1830>

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