

# pre-visit

Finding The Clues  
Elementary & Middle School



*Weeksville Heritage Center*

# DEAR EDUCATOR

This packet was designed to be used by teachers in their classroom before their class visit to Weeksville Heritage Center. It should help prepare your students to ask questions, make observations, and take an active role in their visit to Weeksville. Weeksville is a special place with a unique and rich history. We hope that you and your students will have an inspiring visit. We are looking forward to working with your students!

Best Regards,  
Department of Programs and Education

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**Visit our website:**

[www.weeksvillesociety.org](http://www.weeksvillesociety.org)

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**Museum Address:**

*158 Buffalo Avenue*

*(Between St. Marks Avenue and  
Bergen Street)*

*Brooklyn, New York 11213*

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## INTRODUCTION TO WEEKSVILLE HERITAGE CENTER

Weeksville Heritage Center's (WHC) Hunterfly Road Houses, located on an old Native American trail and later a colonial road, are examples of the homes of 19th century free African Americans in the urban North. These historic houses were continuously inhabited from their construction until their acquisition by the museum in 1968. Named for James Weeks, who purchased the land in 1838, Weeksville was originally settled by African Americans from all over the east coast following slavery's end in New York State in 1827. It was to become an economic, political, and cultural center during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The mission of Weeksville Heritage Center is to document, preserve and interpret the history of free African American communities in Weeksville, Brooklyn, and beyond to create and inspire innovative, contemporary uses of African American history through education, the arts, and civic engagement.

Weeksville's mission is advanced through innovative programming in the following content areas; history and historic preservation, visual and performing arts, ecology and the built environment. Educational and public program activities are designed to create practical applications of history as a tool for understanding contemporary culture and community. In particular, our activities attempt to use the historic houses, history and stories of Weeksville's 19th century residents (and later WHC founders) to help visitors make connections to their own stories and current issues. Specifically, we highlight the impact of 19th century African Americans' role in the shaping of Brooklyn, NY, and US history and help visitors draw parallels to their own experiences. Drawing on this history, central educational themes include, freedom, creativity, self-sufficiency, entrepreneurialism, the natural and built environment, and civic engagement.

Our approach is based on an inquiry-based learning model, rather than a didactic approach. Educators and Programmers use the WHC collection, research, and resources to engage visitors in discussion and help them devise a personal connection to the site and Weeksville's past. These dialogues are cultivated through the use of interactive tours, hands-on learning, workshops, public performances, and forums.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF WEEKSVILLE

In 1838, only eleven years after slavery ended in New York State, free African American James Weeks purchased a modest plot of land from Henry C. Thompson, another free African American. That land in what is now Central Brooklyn became Weeksville, a thriving, self-sufficient African American community. Weeksville quickly became a safe haven for southern blacks fleeing slavery and free northern blacks fleeing racial hatred and violence, including the deadly Civil War draft riots in lower Manhattan.

Established as a suburban enclave on the outskirts of Brooklyn, by 1850 Weeksville became the second largest known independent African American community in pre-Civil War America. Weeksville was also the only African American community whose residents were distinctive for their urban rather than rural occupations, and the only one that merged into a neighborhood of a major American city after the Civil War. Moreover, Weeksville had a higher rate of African American property ownership than 15 other U.S. cities and more job opportunities than ten other northern cities.

By the 1860s, Weeksville had its own schools, churches, an orphanage, an old age home, a variety of black-owned businesses and one of the country's first African American newspapers, *Freedman's Torchlight*. Almost 500 families headed by ministers, doctors, teachers, tradesmen and other self-reliant citizens lived in Weeksville by the 1900s. Its citizens included Alfred Cornish, a member of the 54th Regiment whose story was told in the film *Glory*; Dr. Susan Smith McKinney-Steward, the first female African American physician in New York State and the third in the nation, Moses P. Cobb, the first African American policeman in Brooklyn's Ninth Ward, and Junius C. Morel, a well-known educator, journalist and activist.

Weeksville covered seven blocks and was a model of African American entrepreneurial success, political freedom and intellectual creativity. Its residents participated in every major national effort against slavery and for equal rights for free people of color, including the black convention movement, voting rights campaigns, the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, resistance to the Draft Riots in New York City; *Freedman's* schools and African nationalism. According to one historian, Public School 83 in Weeksville became the first public school in the nation to integrate fully its teaching staff and student body.

The community still existed through the 1930s, but by the mid-1950s, Weeksville was all but forgotten, with many of its structures and institutions replaced by new roads and buildings. Read about the rediscovery of Weeksville on the next page.

## RE-DISCOVERING WEEKSVILLE

The search for historic Weeksville began in 1968 in a Pratt Institute class on Brooklyn neighborhoods conducted by historian James Hurley. Because so little was known at the time, the group focused on researching Weeksville. When the workshop was completed, some of its participants continued their research on historic Weeksville.

During an archeological dig in the 1960's, they learned how African Americans really lived in the 19th and early 20th centuries. A treasure trove of interesting artifacts was unearthed, including a 19th century tintype photograph of an unknown woman, later known as "the Weeksville Lady."

The 19th century Hunterfly Road houses became a rallying point for the 20th century residents of Weeksville. In fighting to save the four old houses from destruction through urban renewal, the community also fought to save its own history. In the process, the 1960s Weeksville residents became as self reliant, creative and entrepreneurial as their 19th century counterparts. Their unrelenting efforts to call attention to and restore Weeksville's only surviving structures eventually proved successful. The Hunterfly Road Houses were officially declared New York City landmarks in 1970. In 1971 and 1972 they were placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

HISTORICAL

## PLANNING YOUR VISIT:

Reservations can be made three weeks in advance of your visit. Groups of more than 6 people must make a reservation in advance. We can accommodate up to 30 students per visit.

We offer a number of tours and arts workshops. They are all flexible and can be modified to meet each groups needs. The tours and workshops are designed to be hands-on and interactive.

Please prepare your students to ask questions and make observations during their visit. Also feel free to let us know what objectives you have for your visit to Weeksville.

Contact us for more information about scheduling a visit to Weeksville Heritage Center!

Telephone: 718-756-5250 ext. 302 or ext. 319

Email: [tours@weeksvillesociety.org](mailto:tours@weeksvillesociety.org)

Mailing Address: Weeksville Heritage Center  
158 Buffalo Avenue  
Brooklyn, New York 11213

Website: [www.weeksvillesociety.org](http://www.weeksvillesociety.org)



# VISITOR GUIDELINES

Preserving these historic houses and the furnishings within them for future generations is everyone's responsibility, including your class. We also want to make sure your class has a great visit to Weeksville Heritage Center.

Please go over the following guidelines with your students before your visit. This will make the visit more productive as the tour guide will have to spend less time going over and reiterating the museum manners.

## Ask the tour guide before touching objects in the houses

The houses are set up to show how people lived, there are no ropes over furniture, and no glass cases holding valuable objects. Even so, the objects that are on display are all valuable objects. Many of them were made in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Some objects, such as paper, and fabric objects, are especially fragile. These objects are harmed every time they are touched. This is why we ask everyone, students and adults, to ask the tour guide before touching any objects. The tour guide will make an announcement about this guideline to the students, but please go over this concept with them before they arrive.

## Raise Hands and be respectful of others, their opinions and ideas.

In order to make sure that everyone can participate on the tour, we ask that students raise their hands when they want to make a comment or pose a question and that everyone listens respectfully. We value and respect everyone's insights and comments.

## Photography is not permitted in the historic homes.

Photographs may be taken on the property outside of the homes, but not inside the historic homes.

## Stay with the group.

Students and adult chaperones are asked to stay with the group at all times. If your group has a workshop scheduled many times adults chaperones are asked to help. Make sure that the adults you bring with you on the trip are aware of their responsibilities for the group.

## Lunch

There is no indoor lunch facility. Students may bring bagged lunches to eat outdoors on the grounds. Please plan appropriately for the season you wish to visit Weeksville.

## Do not bring food or drink into the historic houses.

Please leave all food, gum, candy, drink, and book bags in the office.

## Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices which can interrupt the tour.

## Do not run in the historic houses.

# DIRECTIONS TO WEEKSVILLE HERITAGE CENTER

## Address

158 Buffalo Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11213  
Between St. Marks Avenue and Bergen Street

t. 718.756.5250

[www.weeksvillesociety.org](http://www.weeksvillesociety.org)

## Subway

A or C to Utica Avenue. Walk 4 short blocks south on Utica Ave. to Bergen Street. Turn left, 1 ½ blocks to historic site (between Buffalo Avenue and Rochester Avenue).

3 or 4 to Crown Heights-Utica Avenue. Walk 8 short blocks north on Utica Avenue to Bergen Street. Turn right, 1 ½ blocks to historic site (between Buffalo Avenue and Rochester Avenue).

## Bus

B65, B45, & the B15 all stop near the site.

## Car

### From Manhattan

Brooklyn Bridge to Adams Street left on Atlantic Avenue right on Ralph Avenue, right on Bergen Street cross Buffalo Avenue. Historic site is on the left.

Manhattan Bridge to Flatbush Avenue, left on Fulton Street, right on Clermont Street, left on Atlantic Avenue. Follow above.

### From Staten Island

Verrazano Bridge to Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, right on Atlantic Avenue. Follow above.

### From Long Island & Queens

Southern State Parkway to Belt Parkway to North Conduit Avenue, to Atlantic Avenue Left on Saratoga Avenue, right on Pacific Street, left on Ralph Avenue, right on Bergen Street to site.

### From The Bronx

Triboro Bridge to Grand Central Parkway to Jackie Robinson Parkway to Pennsylvania Avenue, right on Atlantic Avenue. Follow above.

## Parking:

There is no on-site parking available. However, there is usually street parking available in front of the historic homes.

# PRE-VISIT: FINDING THE CLUES

## Overview:

This following activities will help introduce students to Weeksville's rich history. Students will explore different primary source documents which tell them something about Weeksville. They will be able to use the clues that you provide in order to piece together some of the main ideas about Weeksville.

## Objectives:

Students will know that:

- Weeksville was a community founded by *Free* African American families before the Civil War
- the Hunterfly Road Historic Homes are a part of the historic community of Weeksville

## Time frame:

45 minutes to 1 hour per activity.

## Learning standards:

This pre-visit packet and all of our tours, workshops and in-school programs meet the new Common Core Standards.

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## Activity 1: Investigating Weeksville

1. Divide students into small groups. For each group, print out 2 double sided copies of the supplemental primary source clues (pgs. 15-42) provided and place into large envelopes or mailers.
2. For each student print out double-sided copies of the supplemental *Investigating Weeksville* worksheet (pgs.43-44).
3. Explain to the students that they will be exploring and analyzing clues to learn more about Weeksville. Just as a historian uses clues to uncover bits of information about the past. Introduce Weeksville as a historic community that they will be visiting soon. This activity is designed to have them discover the history of the community themselves; therefore it is important that you do not give away information about Weeksville before the students have a chance to analyze the clues.
4. Hand each group a sealed envelope with their clues inside.
5. Handout the *Investigating Weeksville* worksheet to each student. Let them know that they should work as a team to analyze their photographs and documents. As the groups work on their analysis float around the room to answer questions or help groups get started.
6. After the groups have completed their worksheets, lead a class discussion about what they uncovered about Weeksville. During the discussion ask each group to present their clues and talk a little bit about what they learned. You can also have a student write on the board some of the inferences that the group makes about Weeksville. See the suggested discussion questions below for ideas about how to get the conversation started.

*Suggested discussion questions:*

- What did you uncover about Weeksville?
  - Based on the evidence that you have, what kind of a community was Weeksville?
  - Do you think the people in these photographs were rich, poor, or in between? Why?
  - What do you notice about the clothing depicted in these photographs? In what ways is it different/similar to fashion in modern American culture?
  - How is this community different or similar to the community you live in?
  - What do you think people in Weeksville did for fun?
  - How do you think the people in the photographs feel?
- 

## *Activity 2: Weeksville Torchlight*

Using the supplemental *Weeksville Torchlight* document provided, choose a student to read the first article aloud. In the form of a class discussion, have the students share what they think the main ideas in the article are, and some questions that they have about Weeksville based on the reading. The reading is designed to fill in some of the information that the students may not have been able to infer from the primary source documents. If you have time you can read the second article as a class and discuss the re-discovery of Weeksville as well. You could also have the students take the reading home and write a response or question based on what they read.

*Suggested Discussion Questions:*

These questions may help you generate a class discussion about the article.

- Can you think of any reasons why a group of African Americans living in 1840's New York decided to create their own community?
- In what ways do you think it was difficult for the people who lived in Weeksville to build a community before the civil war?
- Why do you think people in the Bedford-Stuyvesant community in the 1960's thought it was important to save the historic homes?
- What kinds of places are in your neighborhood? Are they similar or different than the places in Historic Weeksville?
- Can you think of some reasons why African Americans living in New York would want to create a place of safety like Weeksville?
- When did slavery end in the rest of the US?

Here are some questions that students/teachers might pose during the discussion about the reading:

- If slavery was abolished in New York in 1827, when did slavery end for the rest of the United States?*
  - Slavery was abolished in the whole of the United States in 1865 with the passage of the 13th amendment.  
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/13thamendment.html>
  - For more information about abolition of slavery in other Northern states please refer to *Slavery in the North*.  
<http://www.slavenorth.com/>

- *What kinds of racial discrimination existed in New York after the abolition of slavery in 1827?*
    - Restrictions on voting for African American men -  
In 1826, during the gradual emancipation from slavery in New York, the NY state legislature amended the New York state constitution to strike the property qualification in order for white males to vote, but enforce the property qualification for black males. After this time, black men in New York needed to own \$250.00 worth of property and live in the state for three years to be able to vote. White men had no property qualification and only had to live in the state for one year. There had been several attempts to pass an amendment to the New York state constitution that would strike the property requirement for Black men, but none of those amendments were voted into law. Thus, the property qualification for Black men to vote was in place until 1870, this was the year that the 15th amendment to the US constitution was passed. This amendment said that you cannot deny a US citizen the right to vote on the basis of race, color, or a condition of servitude.  
[http://www.courts.state.ny.us/history/constitutions/1821\\_constitution.htm](http://www.courts.state.ny.us/history/constitutions/1821_constitution.htm)  
(See Article II and 1826 Amendment, Qualification of Voters)  
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/15thamendment.html>
    - Fugitive Slave Law -  
The “Fugitive Slave Law” was passed in 1850 as part of the “Compromise of 1850”. This law made it illegal to aid and abet a person who was a “fugitive slave.” This law made the north unsafe for all African Americans.  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart3b.html#03c>  
<http://www.nationalcenter.org/FugitiveSlaveAct.html>
    - Violence -  
There were many acts of violence perpetrated against African American people in New York during the period of enslavement and afterwards. The most famous example of violence towards African American families in New York City was the Draft Riots of 1863. This riot resulted in the loss of life and property for hundreds of African American families. Weeksville served as a safe haven for many hundreds of refugees fleeing the violence in Manhattan, and was able to help those who fled get back on their feet after the riot was over.  
[http://www.virtualny.cuny.edu/draftriots/Intro/draft\\_riot\\_intro\\_set.html](http://www.virtualny.cuny.edu/draftriots/Intro/draft_riot_intro_set.html)  
<http://maap.columbia.edu/place/52.html>
- 

### *Activity 3: What do you expect to find, see, or hear at Weeksville?*

Now that your students have uncovered some of the basic pieces about Weeksville’s history it is time for them to think about what they expect to find when they visit and what questions they want to ask when they get to Weeksville.

Have the students share a question that they have about Weeksville. Write down the students questions on the board. Then choose three questions as a class. These are the questions that the students will be focusing on when they visit Weeksville. After the visit have the students return to the questions and see if they are able to answer them.

# VOCABULARY LIST

- Activism – taking action to support ones beliefs
- Archeologist – A person who studies past human life by finding and examining remaining material evidence.
- Civil War – a war between opposing groups of citizens of the same country.  
The war in the United States fought between the Confederacy and the Union, 1861-1865
- Community – People with a common interest living in a particular area
- Demolition – The process of wrecking or destroying
- Discrimination - Unfair treatment of a person or group on the basis of prejudice
- Evidence – Something that can clarify, prove, or exemplify an argument
- Founded – When an organization is established or started
- Oasis - A situation or place preserved from surrounding unpleasantness;  
a refuge: an oasis of serenity amid chaos
- Orphanage – An institution for the care and protection of children without parents
- Racism– Discrimination or hatred based on race
- Refuge - a shelter from danger or hardship
- Political Organizations – An organization which supports a specific political viewpoint.

## SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL FOR ACTIVITY 1: PRIMARY SOURCE CLUES LIST PHOTOGRAPHS

### Clue 1:

Author/artist: Daniel Berry Austin  
Title: "Clove Road"  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1900  
Collection of: Brooklyn Public Library, Brooklyn Collection.

### Clue 2:

Author/artist: Unknown  
Title: The Lane Family  
Type: Photograph  
Date: 1894  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center

### Clue 3:

Author/artist: Alexander A. Moore  
Title: Churchgoers  
Type: Photograph  
Date: 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center

### Clue 4:

Author/artist: US Government  
Title: Federal Census  
Type: Document  
Date: 1850  
Collection of: Public Domain

### Clue 5:

Author/artist: African Civilization Society  
Title: Freedom's Torchlight  
Type: Newspaper  
Date: December 1866  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center

### Clue 6:

Author/artist: Unknown  
Title: Nana's Cousins on Marion Street  
Type: Photograph mounted on card  
Date: Ca. 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center

### Clue 7:

Author/artist: Photographer unknown  
Title: "Mounted cavalry soldier seated on horse"  
Type: Photograph, ambrotype  
Date: Ca. 1860  
Collection of: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Civil War Photographs, LC-USZ62-132212

### Clue 8:

Author/artist: Photographer unknown  
Title: "Seated black soldier, frock coat, gloves, kepi"  
Type: Photograph, Tintype  
Date: Between 1860 & 1870  
Collection of: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Civil War Photographs, LC-USZ62-132213

### Clue 9:

Author/artist: Junius C. Morel  
Title: The North Star, Page 3  
Type: Newspaper advertisement  
Date: January 25, 1850  
Collection of: Accessible Archives, African American Newspapers

### Clue 10:

Author/artist: Alexander A. Moore  
Title: Street Scene  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center

### Clue 11:

Author/artist: Alexander A. Moore  
Title: Katherine Harris Moore with child  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center

### Clue 12:

Author/artist: New York Times  
Title: Long Island: Brooklyn Public Schools  
Type: Newspaper article  
Date: July 19, 1855  
Collection of: New York Times

### Clue 13:

Author/artist: Mary Jane Robinson  
Title: Letter from Buxton  
Type: Letter reprinted in the Provincial Freeman  
Date: January 13, 1855  
Collection of: Accessible Archives, African American Newspapers


### Clue 14:

Author/artist: Photographer unknown  
Title: "Colored School #2"  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1890  
Collection of: Brooklyn Historical Society



Clue 1 - Courtesy of: Brooklyn Museum/Brooklyn Public Library - Brooklyn Collection





Clue 1:  
Photographer: Daniel Berry Austin  
Title: “Clove Road at Bergen Street”  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1900

Courtesy of: Brooklyn Museum/Brooklyn Public Library - Brooklyn  
Collection.

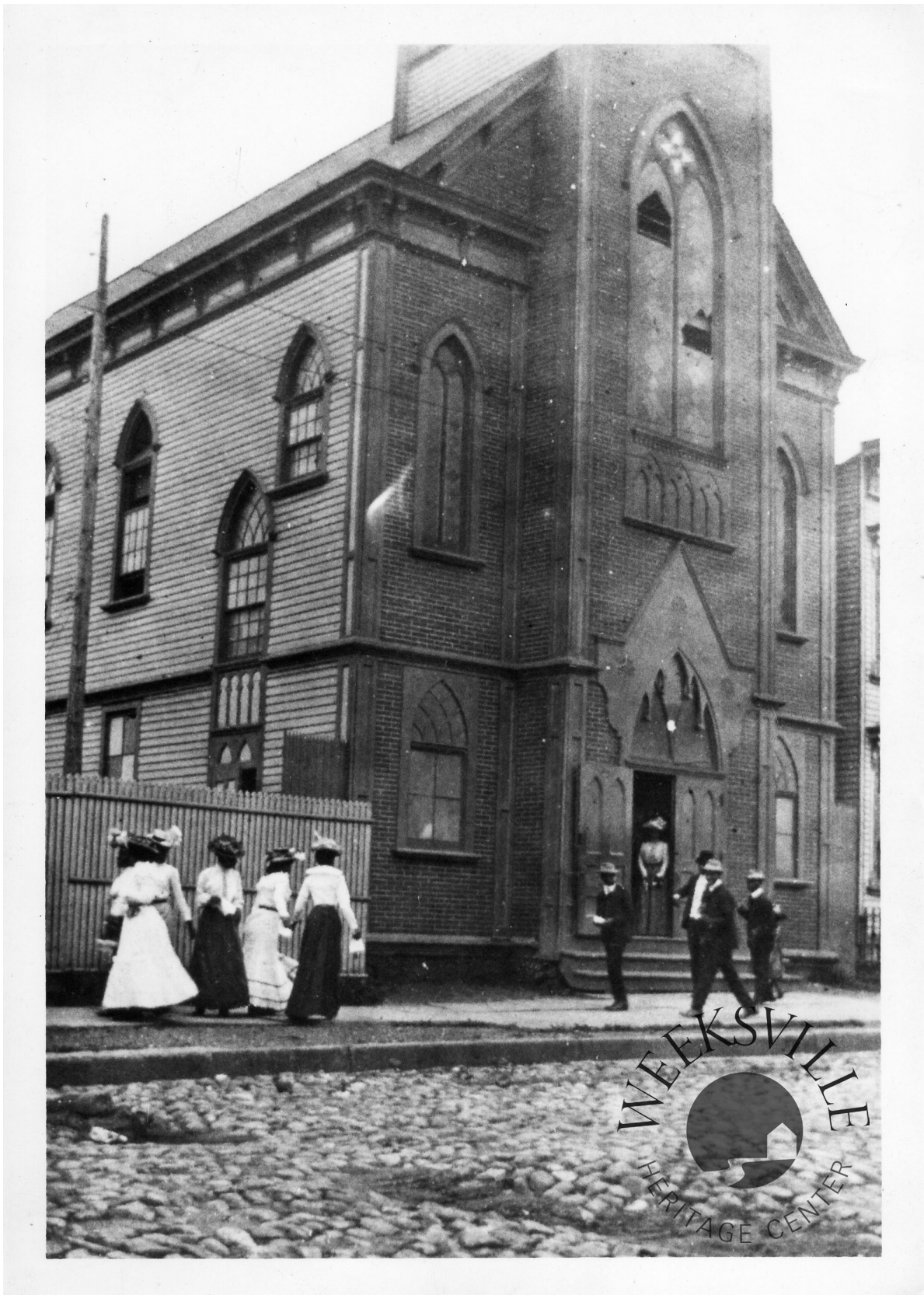




Clue 2 - Weeksville Heritage Center Collection

Clue 2:  
Photographer: Unknown  
Title: The Lane Family  
Type: Photograph  
Date: 1894  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center





Clue 3 - Weeksville Heritage Center Collection

Clue 3:  
Photographer: Alexander A. Moore  
Title: Churchgoers  
Type: Photograph  
Date: 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center



**SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in** *St. Marys* **in the County of** *King* **State**  
of *the* *U. S.* enumerated by me, on the *20* day of *Aug* 1860. *Abraham Lincoln* Ass't Repr

1	2	3	4	5			7	8	9	10	11	12	13
				Age	Sex	Color, (White, black, or mulatto)							
322107		<i>John G. Wilson</i>	36	F	B				<i>Real Estate</i>				
		<i>Steno</i>	7	F	B								
		<i>Joseph Brewell</i>	31	M	M				<i>Real Estate</i>				
		<i>James H. H. H.</i>	32	M	B				<i>Real Estate</i>				
		<i>Elizabeth</i>	34	F	M								
		<i>Elizabeth</i>	14	F	M								
		<i>James</i>	11	F	M								
		<i>James</i>	5	M	M								
		<i>Louise</i>	3	F	M								
		<i>James</i>	47	M	M				<i>100</i>				
		<i>Olivia</i>	40	F	M								
		<i>David</i>	12	M	M								
		<i>Robert</i>	39	M	B								
		<i>Robert</i>	55	F	B								
		<i>Henry</i>	21	M	B								
		<i>Joseph</i>	15	F	B								
		<i>Richard</i>	16	M	B								
		<i>Arthur</i>	12	M	B								

Clue 4:  
Author: US Government  
Title: Federal Census, New York State,  
Kings County, City of Brooklyn, 9th Ward, Pg. 58  
Date: 1850  
Type: Document



1962  
F74

# THE FREEDMAN'S TORCHLIGHT.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"--Rom. 8: 31.

Vol. 1.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1866.

No. 1.

THE FREEDMAN'S TORCHLIGHT

Is published Monthly on the following

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 African Civilization Building, Dean st.,  
 near Troy avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.

ALPHABETS.

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LESSON No 1.

ba be bi bo bu by  
 ca ce ci co cu cy  
 da de di do du dy  
 fa fe fi fo fu fy  
 ga ge gi go gu gy  
 ha he hi ho hu hy

LESSON No 2.

ja je ji jo ju  
 ka ke ki ko ku ky  
 la le li lo lu ly  
 ma me mi mo mu my  
 na ne ni no nu ny  
 pa pe pi po pu py

LESSON No 3.

ra re ri ro ru ry  
 sa se si so su sy  
 ta te ti to tu ty  
 va ve vi vo vu vy  
 wa we ya ye za ze  
 wi wo zi zo

LESSON No 4.

ab eb ib ob ub  
 ac ic oc uc  
 ad ed id od ud  
 af ef if of uf  
 ag eg ig og ak

SPELLING AND READING LESSONS.

1

bat cat rat boy top. run sun  
 dog hog log. sing wing the see  
 has map bark and can.

2

the bat can fly. the dog can bark,  
 and the boy can run. the sun is up.  
 I can see the sun. I see the map.  
 the boy has a top.

3

free life live lives took love  
 loves man now will thank God  
 work hard good house  
 right learn land made free slaves  
 stand God should ought serve read  
 stand union ever now and.

4

I am free and well. I will love God  
 and thank him for it. and I must  
 work hard and be good and get me  
 a house and lot.

5

God made all men free. Then we  
 should not be slaves to sin nor man.  
 But we ought to love God and serve  
 him. We should learn to read and  
 write and be good. We will stand up  
 for the union, now and for ever.

Looking to God.

*At night before I close my eyes  
 And in the morning when I rise,  
 I pray for safety, health and grace,  
 And still the Lord before me place.  
 Through all the business of the day,  
 He goes before, and points the way;  
 His goodness shows me what is right,  
 And makes me sleep in peace at night.*

GOD SEES US.

God made our eyes, and can discern  
 Which ever way we think to turn.  
 He made our ears, and he can hear,  
 When we may think nobody's near.  
 In every place, by night and day,  
 He watches all we do and say.  
 Then always be afraid, my dear,  
 To tell a lie, for God does hear.

GOD

There is none like unto thee our  
 God. He made us, and the heavens  
 declare his glory. He is one God and  
 the Father of us all. He sees all we  
 do and hears all we say. If we are  
 good he will love us and save us;  
 but if we are bad he will punish us  
 with eternal death.

MAN

God created man in his own image.  
 He made man of the dust of the earth,  
 and breathed life into his nostrils and  
 man became a living soul.

ADAM.

Adam was the first man. He had  
 a reddish color. Adam lived nine hun-  
 dred and thirty years.

EVE

Eve was the first woman. She was  
 Adam's wife. Adam and Eve were  
 our first parents.

THE BIBLE.

The Bible is the holy book of God;  
 it tells us all about God and his works.  
 It also tells us how the first people  
 lived and where they lived; and about  
 Jesus Christ the Son of God who  
 died to save sinners. We must study  
 hard and learn to read the Bible; for  
 it tells us how to please God and  
 get to heaven.

HISTORY

History will tell you all about the  
 different nations, and great cities that  
 ever have been. It will tell you who  
 first came to this country, and all  
 about the Colored people and every  
 other people. It is delightful to read  
 history. As soon as you can read all  
 in this little paper, called the *Torch-*  
*light*, you will be able to read history.

ARITHMETIC.

Arithmetic is the science that treats  
 of numbers. It is sometimes called a  
 language of which there are ten dif-  
 ferent letters or characters, namely,  
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 0, which is  
 called a cipher. These may be combin-  
 ed so as to express every idea of num-  
 bers. One is the base of all numbers.  
 Hence to one, every other number  
 bears a certain relation. Numbers  
 may be added together, subtracted, di-  
 vided or multiplied, therefore, there are  
 four general divisions to Arithmetic, ad-  
 dition, subtraction, multiplication, and  
 division.

GEOGRAPHY.

Geography is the science that treats  
 of the outside part of the earth. If  
 you can read well enough to under-  
 stand it, you may turn to a lesson on  
 Geography found at another place in  
 this little paper.

GRAMMAR


English grammar teaches how to  
 speak and write the English language  
 correctly. If you wish to know more  
 about it, you can find the lesson in it at  
 another place in the *Torchlight*.

HITHERTO THE LORD HATH HELPED  
 US."

BY REV. F. BOTTOME.

"Ebenzer! God is with us!"  
 Sang our fathers long ago;  
 "Ebenzer! God is with us,"  
 Sing their grateful children now;  
 Every knee in worship bow,  
 Blessing now and adoration  
 Young and old in concert sing;  
 Sing in lofty jubilation  
 To our great Redeemer, King;  
 Grace and mercy  
 His right arm alone did bring:  
 "Ebenzer! God is with us!"  
 Echo down the stream of time,  
 "Ebenzer!" till the story  
 From the hills of glory chime,  
 And the angels  
 Swell the glorious song sublime.





Clue 5:  
Author: African Civilization Society  
Title: Freedman's Torchlight  
Type: Newspaper  
Date: December 1866

Courtesy of the Watkinson Library, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut





Clue 6 - Weeksville Heritage Center Collection

Clue 6:  
Photographer: Unknown  
Title: Nana's Cousins on Marion Street  
Type: Photograph mounted on card  
Date: Ca. 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center





Clue 7 - Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Civil War Photographs



Clue 7:

Photographer: unknown

Title: “Mounted cavalry soldier seated on horse”

Type: Photograph, ambrotype

Date: Ca. 1860

Collection of: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division,  
Civil War Photographs, LC-USZ62-132212



**WEEKSVILLE**  
HERITAGE CENTER



Clue 8 - Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Civil War Photographs

Clue 8:

Photographer: unknown

Title: "Seated black soldier, frock coat, gloves, kepi"

Type: Photograph, Tintype

Date: Between 1860 & 1870

Collection of: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division,  
Civil War Photographs, LC-USZ62-132213



WEEKSVILLE  
HERITAGE CENTER

With respect, &c.,  
**FREDERICK DOUGLASS.**

future made us individuals, as she did the  
 veils and the pebbles; but we are afraid to  
 secular, and so our society resembles a  
 of marbles or a string of mould can-  
 . Why should we all dress after the same  
 ion? The frost never paints my windows  
 e alike.

**Receipts**

For the NORTH STAR, for the Week ending  
 January 23, 1849.

Martin, Cork, Ireland	\$ 4.00
Harryman, England	3.00
fish Spalding, Navarino	2.00
M Nichols, Scott's Hollow.	2.00
Levy, Palmer Boput	2.00
ph Santee	2.00
ph Underhill	2.00
Thomson, Providence	2.00
Tuttle	1.00
ith M Cooper	1.00
Dickinson	2.00
Chesey	1.00
Ross	2.00
Petrie (Sept. 2)	1.00
in Ross	2.00
d Scott	2.00
er H Walton	2.00
a Chevalier	2.00
Bece	2.00
Fox	2.00
Ainsworth	1.00
Fanny Kumble	don 5.00
is C Jackson	2.00
id Waite	2.00
r Cutler	2.00
um Howland	1.00
luther Coleman	2.00
N H Smith	1.00
ard Patterson	1.00
lan H Topp	2.00
ert B Forson	1.00
E Wallace	2.00
in Putman	2.00
ewton	don 1.00
ph Savage	2.00
ben Smith	3.00
cher Clarke	2.00
be H Jones	2.00
ph Strain	2.00
nas Butler	2.00
Louisa	1.00
y Sexton	1.00
ard M'Osler	2.00

**The Old Curiosity Shop,**

At No 48 Exchange Street Rochester.

**LLOYD SCOTT**, grateful for the patronage  
 awarded him, would respectfully inform his  
 friends and the public generally, that he has recently  
 enlarged his establishment and augmented his stock  
 of Men's, Women's, and Children's. New and  
 Second hand apparel. In addition to this depart-  
 ment he will buy and sell House and Store Furni-  
 ture, Books, Jewelry, Fancy articles, Mechanical  
 and agricultural implements, and indeed all those  
 various "odds and ends" of which may not be  
 readily obtained at other places. It is his intention  
 to, keep "The Old Curiosity Shop" well furnished  
 with an endless variety of articles for which he will  
 pay liberally and dispose of at satisfactory prices.

Clothing repaired and renovated with neatness  
 and despatch.

Don't forget "The Old Curiosity Shop."  
 Rochester March 1849.

**NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDER-  
 ICK DOUGLASS**, written by himself, to be  
 had at this office, price 30 cents; new Edit. 37c

**Dental Surgery.**

I would respectfully inform the citizens of Rochester  
 and surrounding country, that I have removed my  
 office from No. 89 Smith's Arcade to my dwelling  
 house No. 92 Monroe Street.

Thankful for past favors in the line of my profes-  
 sion, and flattering myself that I can give perfect  
 satisfaction to all who may favor me with their pa-  
 tronage. I would invite all those who are de-  
 siring of having operations performed on the teeth or  
 of having teeth inserted to call on me and satisfy  
 themselves.

A. CLARK.

N. B. All operations performed by me on the  
 teeth and Plate Work warranted.  
 Rochester, Oct. 13, 1848. tf.

**Rail-Road Time.**

**CHANGE IN TIME.**—The trains will commence  
 to leave Rochester to-day at the following time:  
 Eastward—at 12½ A. M., 8½ A. M., 1 P. M., 7½ P. M.  
 Westward—at 8½ A. M., 2 P. M., 5½ P. M., 11 P. M.  
 Rochester, May 1, 1849.

**For Sale Cheap,**

**TWENTY BUILDING LOTS**, in the Ninth  
 Ward of the City of Brooklyn, a few minutes'  
 walk from the railroad, and ten minutes' travel to  
 the East River Ferries. Title indisputable. Per-  
 sons wishing to purchase and improve immediately,  
 will be accommodated on easy terms. Said lots  
 front on Thompson Street and Morell's Lane, and  
 adjoin Ward School No 2.

Also for sale a neat **ONE-HORSE CARRIAGE**  
 with Harness complete. Very cheap.

Address (post paid) **J. C. MORELL**, Brooklyn  
 post office, or an interview may be had at my  
 apartments in Weeksville, from 4 to 6 o'clock P. M.  
 every day in the week, Saturdays excepted.

Jan 4—6w

**Elihu Burritt's Newspaper.**

**THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN.** ELIHU BUR-

that my son Albert, eleven years of age, was  
 afflicted in his feet from the time he first began to  
 walk, the bottoms of which were covered with a  
 hard dry skin full of cracks, causing pain and much  
 affliction, many times he was obliged to go on his  
 hands and knees, and no time has he been free from  
 the sore affliction, until now; baffling the skill of  
 several physicians; but to our surprise his feet are  
 now perfectly smooth soft and free from cracks, all  
 from one application of your Ointment, I would say  
 the boy put it on himself as an experiment of his  
 own, from hearing it recommended. Nothing more  
 was thought of it for three weeks, at which time  
 his feet were near about in a healthy state, and are  
 now the same as though they never had been other-  
 wise.

Years, &c.

**ISAAC PADEN.**

Galesburg, Knox Co., Ill., April 2d, 1849.

**FIVE LARGE DEEP ULCERS.**

**SHEBOYGAN, Wis., March 2, 1849.**

**Dr. W. B. Sloan—Dear Sir:** In my opinion,  
 the greatest cures effected are those that have  
 longest resisted the skill of the Medical Faculty.  
 Admitting that to be a fact, I have a case in point,  
 to wit: **Mr. James Sanford, of Sheboygan Falls**, was  
 crippled two years with *five large deep ulcers*, just  
 above the ankle. The leg was so much swollen he  
 could not get on a boot. Nearly all the most popu-  
 lar Physicians in various places, have treated his  
 case without any beneficial effect.

Last August, **Mr. Sanford**, solicited my advice.  
 I succeeded in reducing the swelling and healed two  
 of the sores. The other three I labored at till the  
 first of February, without much if any benefit, when  
 I gave him a box of **SLOAN'S OINTMENT**, and  
 in three weeks he was well.

Respectfully yours  
**C. B. OSTRANDER, M. D.**

**THE BEST AND CHEAPEST  
 HORSE MEDICINE  
 IN THE WORLD.**




**SLOAN'S OINTMENT,  
 AND  
 CONDITION POWDER**  
 HAVE EARNED A GREAT NAME.

**BURN'T TO CINDER!**

**W. D. SLOAN:**—  
 Dear Sir: Justice demands that I should return  
 to you my unfeigned thanks for your UNPARAL-  
 LED OINTMENT. That...





Clue 9:  
Artist: Junius C. Morel  
Title: The North Star, Page 3  
Date: January 25, 1850  
Source: Accessible Archives, African American Newspapers Collection  
Type: Newspaper advertisement





(c) Weeksville Heritage Center

Clue 10 - Weeksville Heritage Center Collection

Clue 10:  
Photographer: Alexander A. Moore  
Title: Street Scene  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center





Clue 11 - Weeksville Heritage Center Collection

Clue 11:  
Photographer: Alexander A. Moore  
Title: Katherine Harris Moore with child  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1900  
Collection of: Weeksville Heritage Center



# LONG ISLAND.


## Brooklyn Public Schools.

The Examiners next called at School No. 3, in Bedford-avenue, in the Seventh Ward, near the line of the Ninth Ward and Fulton-avenue, known as the Bedford District. This school is situated delightfully, with extended open space around it. The present edifice is of wood, two stories, and the school is a mixed one—the boys and girls being taught together.

Our next visit was made at Colored School, No 2, under the pleasant guidance of Master JOSEPH DAVIS, detailed by Mr. CLARK. This school is at the corner of Dean-street and Troy-avenue in the Ninth Ward at Weeksville.

This school has a fine tasteful house, that will comfortably seat 250 pupils, the lower portion only being seated at present. The building stands in a beautiful grove of oaks, surrounded by the small, neat white houses of a hamlet, consisting of some thirty or forty colored families.

The school is a mixed one and has 115 on register, with an attendance of 61 under the charge of Mr. JUNIUS C. MOREL, a very superior man and most devoted teacher. Miss CHARLOTTE DEWITT is the assistant. We examined a large number of pen sketches, pencil drawings and penmanship, the best we have met in any of the schools thus far. The school is in excellent condition.



Clue 12:  
Author: Unknown  
Title: “Long Island: Brooklyn Public Schools”  
Date: July 19, 1855  
Source: New York Times  
Type: Newspaper article



From the Anti-Slavery Standard.

Letter from Canada.

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BUXTON, Canada West, March 23, 1854.

MY DEAR MRS. HARRIS: We arrived in Chatham on the 13th May, after a pleasant journey. It's really beautiful to travel in the Spring, and to behold the different faces of nature's beauty. In the steamboat we went to Troy; then took the cars to Buffalo, and there we put up until Monday from Friday, and I found Buffalo a very pretty place indeed; then we took the steamboat for Detroit – a beautiful sail across the Lake – Erie – and out of sight of land, it seems to me as on the sea; and then we took the steamboat again for Chatham ... and then my husband went to Buxton, to the coloured settlement, a distance of six miles, and purchased a farm of fifty acres, with nine acres cut down and one all cleared. ...There is nine thousand acres of land now taken up by coloured people in Buxton, where we live; and Mr. King, the government agent, who sells the land, has purchased eight thousand more to sell at the same rate; and the people are coming in from all parts, and the place is filling up fast. ...We had turnips as big as the crown of your husband's hat, and cabbage as large as a water-pail. O, don't laugh, for it's a fact – for the ground is so rich it raises everything up in no time. ...There is a saw-mill and a grist-mill building in Buxton, and a school now here, with seventy or eighty scholars. O, we are just beginning to live well enough without the white man's foot on our necks. Away with your King Fillmore, I am for QUEEN VICTORIA. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN. ...The land will bring anything you plant just as I did in Weeksville (only it wanted more manuring); only put in the seed and pray to the Giver of rain, and they will come up. O, dear, how I want to see you again. Do come to Buxton, Canada West.

MARY JANE ROBINSON.

To Mrs. Sarah Ann Harris, Weeksville,  
Care of Wm. Dolly, Zion's Church, New York.

\* York Shillings.





Clue 13:

Author: Mary Jane Robinson

Title: Letter from Buxton

Date: January 13, 1855

Source: Accessible Archives, African American Newspapers Collection


Type: Letter reprinted in the Provincial Freeman Newspaper



**WEEKSVILLE**  
HERITAGE CENTER



Clue 14 – Courtesy of Brooklyn Historical Society



Clue 14:  
Photographer: Unknown  
Title: Colored School #2  
Type: Photograph  
Date: Ca. 1890  
Courtesy of: Brooklyn Historical Society



# Investigating Weeksville...

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the questions below to help you analyze your clues to find out more about Weeksville..



## Photograph #1:

List the kinds of things you see in the photograph.  
(people, objects, activities, setting, etc.)

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Based on the clues that you listed above, write down 2 things you can guess about the Weeksville community.

## Document #1:

What type of document are you investigating?

- Census record
- Advertisement
- Newspaper Article
- Report
- Letter
- Other

What date was the document created?

---

Why do you think the document was written? (remember look for clues in the document itself)

---

---

What clues can this document give you about Weeksville?

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You can use the back page too...

The Investigation Continues...

**Photograph #2:**

List the kinds of things you see in the photograph.  
(people, objects, activities, setting, etc.)

---

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---

Based on the clues that you listed above, write down 2 things you can guess about the Weeksville community.

---

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**Document #2:**

What type of document are you investigating?

- Census record
- Advertisement
- Newspaper Article
- Report
- Letter
- Other

What date was the document created?

---

Why do you think the document was written? (remember look for clues in the document itself)

---

---

What clues can this document give you about Weeksville?

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# Weeksville Torchlight

Vol. 1

Brooklyn, NY,

No. 1

## The Great Dig of 1968!

In the 1960's, the history of the Weeksville Community was re-discovered. During that time many of the historic buildings were being torn down in the Weeksville area.

Students, teachers, archeologists, historians, community activists, artists, moms and dads all worked together to save four of the homes.

In order to save the homes from demolition, they needed to find evidence to prove that the homes were part of an important history. They did an archeological dig in the area and found the evidence they needed!

## An Oasis discovered in Central Brooklyn.

In Central Brooklyn, 23 years before the Civil War, a small village called Weeksville was founded.

The village had houses, churches, a school, an old age home, an orphanage, political institutions, businesses, and shops. Weeksville was unique because it was founded by and for African American families.

For many African Americans living in the 1840's in New York, Weeksville offered a place of safety and freedom. Slavery ended in New York in 1827, but African Americans still faced a lot of discrimination.



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# LIST OF RESOURCES

## Interactive Learning Websites

### - *African American History:*

#### **Examination Days: The New York African Free School Collection**

<https://www.nyhistory.org/web/afs/>

This site tells the story of the New York African Free School and of African American New York in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

#### **In Motion: The African American Migration Experience**

<http://www.inmotionaame.org/home.cfm>

This website tells the story of the African American migration experience, through documents, photographs, and maps.

#### **MAPP: Mapping the African American Past**

<http://maap.columbia.edu/>

A map of New York City with African American historical sites listed, and MAAP lessons, help teachers at all levels engage in content on this website through stories about building community, resisting slavery, and contributing to New York City's development.

### - *New York History:*

#### **The Lost Museum**

<http://www.lostmuseum.cuny.edu/home.html>

An interesting story set in New York City in the 1860's. Also has information about NYC during the civil war, the draft riots, Uncle Tom's Cabin and much more.

#### **The Triangle Factory Fire**

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/>

Read about an important event in NYC history. The fire at the Triangle Waist Company in New York City, which claimed the lives of 146 immigrant workers, is one of the worst disasters since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

#### **Virtual New York: Draft Riots**

[http://www.virtualny.cuny.edu/draftriots/Intro/draft\\_riot\\_intro\\_set.html](http://www.virtualny.cuny.edu/draftriots/Intro/draft_riot_intro_set.html)

This special exhibit on the Virtual New York website offers a comprehensive history of the July 1863 New York draft riots.



# Find Primary Sources online

## *- Library Databases:*

### **The Library of Congress: African American History**

<http://rs6.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=African%20American%20History>  
Offers primary source documents relating to African American History. Selected from the library of Congress records and placed on the internet.

### **New York Public Library : Digital Gallery Page**

<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm>  
"NYPL Digital Gallery is The New York Public Library's new image database, developed to provide free and open online access to thousands of images from the original and rare holdings of The Library."

### **University of Detroit Mercy : Black Abolitionist Archive**

<http://www.dalnet.lib.mi.us/gsd/cgi-bin/library?p=about&tc=baa>  
The Black Abolitionist Archive is a collection of documents created by antebellum blacks. In contrast to the popular belief that the abolitionist crusade was driven by wealthy whites, these important documents provide a portrait of black involvement in the anti-slavery movement.

## *- Newspapers:*

### **Brooklyn Daily Eagle online**

<http://eagle.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/Default/Skins/BEagle/Client.asp?Skin=Beagle>  
Searchable database of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle from 1841-1902. You will find a view of Brooklyn history, and interesting primary sources.

### **Freedom's Journal online**

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/libraryarchives/aanp/freedom/>  
The Freedom's Journal was the first African American owned and operated newspaper published in the US. The Wisconsin Historical Society has put all of the issues of the paper on line.

## *- Other helpful websites:*

### **Brooklyn Collection @ the Brooklyn Public Library**

<http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/brooklyncollection/>

The Brooklyn Collection is Brooklyn Public Library's local history division, providing a full range of reference services, educational activities, programs and exhibitions. Provides access to research databases such as Ancestry.com – Ancestry.com is the premier online genealogical resource, providing instant access to census materials and much more. This and other data bases are accessible for free at the Brooklyn Collection in Grand Army Plaza.

### **Measuring Worth**

<http://www.measuringworth.com/index.html>  
"MeasuringWorth" is a service for calculating relative worth over time. This website has calculators which help to calculate the value of something and how it changes over time. It is a good idea to read the User Guide and Measures of Worth article, located on the left side of the page. These articles will help you understand the best way to use the calculators.

## **The National Archives – Census**

<http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/census/>

The National Archives websites offers wonderful information about ways to use, search, and access historic census data. To get current census data please go to the US Census Bureau's Fact Finder website [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en)

## **National Parks Service: The American Civil War Homepage**

<http://cwar.nps.gov/civilwar/>

This website gives a pretty good overview of the American Civil War history. It has a tab which allows you to search for soldiers that fought in the civil war, or look at who was in what regiment. It also has a specific page which gives information about African Americans in the civil war.

## **North American Slave Narratives**

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/>

Includes books and articles that document the individual and collective story of African Americans struggling for freedom and human rights.

## **Suggested reading (Elementary – Middle School)**

### **Weeksville specific history**

Bolden, Tonya. *Maritcha: A Nineteenth-Century American Girl*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2005.

Jones, Lynda. *Great Black Heroes: Five Brilliant Scientists*. USA: Scholastic Inc., 2000.

### **General African American History**

Ford, Carin T. *African-American Soldiers in the Civil War: Fighting for Freedom*. Enslow Elementary, 2004.

Fradin, Dennis B. *Bound for the North Star: True Stories of Fugitive Slaves*. New York: Clarion Books, 2000.

Lawrence, Jacob. *The Great Migration : An American Story*. HarperCollins, 1995.

Mckissack, Patricia C. & Fredrick. *Black Diamond*. Scholastic Paperbacks, 1994.

McKissack, Patricia C. & Fredrick L. *Black Hands, White Sails: The Story of African-American Whalers*. New York: Scholastic, 1999.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Ida B. Wells: Let the Truth Be Told*. Amistad, 2008.

Ringgold, Faith. *Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1995.

Thomas, Joyce Carol. *I Have Heard of a Land*. HarperCollins, 2000.

**Visit our website:**

[www.weeksvillesociety.org](http://www.weeksvillesociety.org)

**Contact us:**

*Email: [tours@weeksvillesociety.org](mailto:tours@weeksvillesociety.org)*

*Phone: 718-756-5250*

*Fax: 718-756-5277*

**Museum Address:**

*Weeksville Heritage Center*

*158 Buffalo Avenue*

*Brooklyn, New York 11213*

This educators pre-visit guide has been supported in part by a grant from the New York Community Trust.