



Restoring and Preserving Our Past
 African Cemetery No. 2, Inc.
 Chartered 1870

African American Builders of Our Town and City

The pioneer explorers who made their way into Kentucke County, Virginia in 1775, camped near a tributary of North Elkhorn Creek. They decided that a new settlement should be established. Four years later, twenty-five men returned to the area. Trees were felled to build a log fort and cabins. By 1780, trustees had been selected to govern. They petitioned the state of Virginia for a charter to establish the town of Lexington.

Source: Staples, Charles R. *The History of Pioneer Lexington, 1779-1806*. 1939. Reprint University Press of Kentucky 1996.

By 1790, Lexington had 18,410 residents. Among them were 3,752 enslaved and thirty-two free African Americans. They provided the labor force that built the environment.

Michael Clarke, a free man of color, constructed the log cabin home of John Keizer in 1807 on South Upper Street.

["First census" of Kentucky, 1790 : \(reconstructed from tax lists\) - Notable Kentucky African Americans Database \(uky.edu\)](#)

Dunn, C. Frank. *Old Houses of Lexington*. n.d. typescript, Kentucky Room, Lexington Public Library

As the town grew more prosperous, log homes were replaced with brick, creating a demand for more construction laborers.

Records found in the Lexington branch of the Freedman’s Savings and Trust Bank, 1870 to 1874, provided information about some African American masons employed by construction companies.

Name	Bank Record	Employed as	Employer	Business Location
Joseph Mason	#545	stone mason	Charles Slade	275 South Broadway
Henry Byrd	#356	brick mason	Garrett D. Wilgus	Lower Street (now Patterson)
Breckinridge Howard	#230	brick moulder	Garrett D. Wilgus	
Andrew Jackson	#458	brick carrier	Garrett D. Wilgus	
Anderson Porter	#1877	none stated	Garrett D. Wilgus	
Henry Richardson	#278	mason	Garrett D. Wilgus	
Robert Whiton	#223	brick layer	Garrett D. Wilgus	
Abram Chinn	#1590	brick mason	John C. Young	Manufacturer of Brick, Builder and Contractor 11 West Vine Street
George Holmes	#474	brick carrier	John C. Young	
Harrison Williams	#1057	none stated	John C. Young	
Samuel Bell	#257	brick mason	none stated	
Edward Douglass	#1055	brick moulder	none stated	
John B. Graham	#1177	brick mason	none stated	
Milton Lewis	#894	brick moulder	none stated	
Robert Logan	#1192	brick layer	none stated	
John Miller	#438	brick moulder	none stated	
Joseph Smith	#851	brick moulder	none stated	
Nelson Taylor	#454	brick maker	none stated	
Harrison Thompson	#1528	stone mason	none stated	

Carpenters, Painters, and Plasterers

Building a commercial or residential structure requires the skills of other professionals.

The Lexington branch of the Freedman's Savings and Trust bank, 1870-1874, is the source of the following list:

Name	Bank Record	Specialty	Employer
Josiah Allen	#819	carpenter	A.J. Alexander
Edmund Brown	#349	carpenter	
George Henry Cook	#599	carpenter	
Henry Grant	#517	carpenter	
Reuben Jackson	#373	carpenter	
Thomas Jackson	#1286	carpenter	John Preston
John Kilby	#250	carpenter	
Oldham, William	#799	carpenter	self-employed
J. Robert Page	#728	carpenter	self-employed
Green Peters	#268	carpenter	self-employed
Lewis Peters	#796	carpenter	self-employed
Thomas Robertson	#637	carpenter	Williamson & Company
Charles Rochester	#1834	carpenter	Williamson & Company
Jerry Sullinger	#1288	carpenter	
George Washington	#697	carpenter	Charley Tarleton
Samuel Washington	#514	carpenter	self-employed
Warren Williams	#1523	carpenter	self-employed
Mark Allen	#559	painter	
Daniel Carter	#334	painter	self-employed
Thomas Jefferson	#887	painter	self-employed
Harry Slaughter	#1159	painter	self-employed
John Warfield	#263	painter	
Henry Wilson	#696	painter	Hornback
Jefferson Buford	#997	plasterer	self-employed
James Curd	#347	plasterer	Carrick
John Sissler	#974	plasterer	Benjamin Sneed
Phillip Smith	#754	plasterer	self-employed
Benjamin Sneed	#788	plasterer	Owner

Masonry Professionals

The following men were buried in African Cemetery No. 2 and Ladies Auxiliary No. 2 Cemetery.

Name	Specialty	Birth	Death	Cert.#	Grave Marker Location
Humphrey Allen	brick mason	12/12/1825	04/02/1902	5888	Section E, Row 4, military
Page Anderson	hod carrier	ca.1872	01/24/1913	1034	
James Bradshaw	hod carrier	ca.1861	02/18/1923	4185	
Albert Byrd	Tandy & Byrd Const.	11/18/1851	07/19/1909	527	Section E, Row 7
Henry L. Byrd	brick mason	01/23/1845	04/15/1874	none	Section E, Row 7
Henry Roland Clay	stone mason	08/16/1863	09/15/1929	23477	Section B, Row 10
Alonzo Curtis	hod carrier	03/18/1845	05/24/1904	7702	
Silas Davis	brick maker	ca.1829	10/04/1890	none	Section B, Row 12
Edward Douglass	brick molder	ca.1843	04/08/1926	9401	
Alex Edwards	brick layer	ca.1868	10/23/1922	21622	
Clarence B. Espy	brick layer	06/02/1893	12/20/1943	26321	Section B, Row 4, military
Henry Finch	stone mason	ca.1844	04/23/1901	5131	Section B, Row 3, military
George Frazier	stone mason	ca.1852	03/10/1927	5681	
Henry Guy	contractor	04/19/1872	05/01/1926	12455	Section B, Row 7
Thomas Harris	brick layer	ca.1858	08/28/1924	17942	
Albert Hawkins	stone mason	ca.1843	10/04/1910	761	
Robert Holmes	mason	ca.1874	03/11/1905	8438	
Samuel Holmes	brick mason	ca.1848	12/14/1903	7262	
Archie Hueston	brick layer	06/24/1902	04/24/1929	11610	
Seth Hummons	brick layer	11/25/1881	12/16/1937	30548	
Albert Irvin	brick mason	ca.1865	02/22/1913	4036	
Jordan Jewett	brick layer	ca.1828	12/18/1900	4862	
James Lay	brick mason	ca.1855	12/10/1898	3238	
Lewis, Milton	brick molder	ca.1833	05/15/1896	1149	Section F, Row 4, military
Thomas Lewis	stone mason	08/24/1864	01/22/1914	1045	
Joseph Mason	stone mason	ca.1836	08/13/1906	595	Section F, Row 4
Samuel McDonald	stone mason	01/20/1845	08/06/1937	20685	Section B, Row 1
Newell, George	hod carrier	ca.1892	10/17/1927	27532	
Allen Pellman	stone mason	ca.1865	03/02/1903	6644	
John Porter	brick layer	01/05/1873	02/12/1922	3367	Section A, Row 5
George Richardson	stone mason	ca.1846	12/16/1929	31151	
Harrison Richardson	brick layer	ca.1833	12/27/1913	31871	
George Rhodes	stone mason	ca.1860	01/01/1917	870	Section B, Row 8
Cornelius Roycroft	hod carrier	10/13/1865	01/20/1924	619	
Thomas A. Samuels	stone mason	10/18/1879	09/05/1929	23607	
Henry Sanders	brick mason	ca.1859	05/22/1919	15789	
Wilson Slaughter	brick layer	ca.1856	08/24/1928	19435	
John B. Snowden	brick mason	ca.1832	10/01/1911	24563	Section F, Row 8
Joe Steele	mechanical brick	ca.1869	04/22/1929	11695	
Alexander Stone	stone mason	ca.1857	09/02/1932	21021	
William B. Thomas	brick mason	12/24/1866	10/06/1914	25563	
Richard H.M. Thompson	stone mason	ca.1834	04/15/1906	269	Section B, Row 9
(Augustus) Gus Waller	brick mason	ca.1838	10/01/1898	3080	Section E, Row 8, military
Ethelbert Washington	brick mason	02/01/1891	03/09/1930	8802	Section D, Row 2
George Washington	brick yard	ca.1864	02/12/1929	5634	
Joseph Williams	hod carrier	ca.1869	03/02/1929	8785	
June Williams	stone mason	ca.1875	02/27/1922	3368	
Andrew Willis	brick layer	03/12/1898	10/10/1931	23602	
Eugene Wilson	brick layer	ca.1880	07/24/1935	11675	Section F, Row 5, military

Carpenters

The professionals were:

Name	Specialty	Birth	Death	Cert.#	Grave Marker Location
Cyrus Berryman	carpenter	ca.1832	10/27/1890	none	Section A, Row 1
Daniel Bowyer	carpenter	ca.1853	07/17/1902	6137	
Anderson Brown	carpenter	ca.1842	04/07/1899	3546	Section D, Row 3
Edmund Brown	carpenter	ca.1823	02/28/1910	195	
Frank Bryant	carpenter	ca.1841	10/05/1906	690	
Green Buckner	carpenter	ca.1840	1892	none	Section F, Row 8, military
Chapman Coles	carpenter	ca1840	08/28/1896	1482	Section F, Row 6
B.A. Crittenden	carpenter	06/15/1843	06/28/1926	14858	
Simpson Davis	carpenter	03/01/1882	08/26/1925	18765	
Stephen Dunn	carpenter	ca.1833	06/15/1904	7767	Section C, Row 6, military
James Dyke	carpenter	ca.1840	11/19/1896	1653	Section F, Row 8, military
R.F. Edmonds, Jr.	carpenter	07/28/1897	05/27/1914	12752	
Rueben F. Edmonds, Sr	carpenter	08/1861	09/29/1928	21993	Section F, Row 2
Charlie Fields	carpenter	04/27/1879	02/28/1924	3279	
James Henry Forman	carpenter	01/15/1868	08/07/1949	15845	
Dennis Gordon	carpenter	ca.1857	05/23/1919	15302	
David Green	carpenter	ca.1846	05/02/1906	317	
Nook Jackson	carpenter	ca.1852	09/09/1907	703	
Lewis James	carpenter	ca.1849	06/24/1901	5249	
Jacob Jones	carpenter	10/12/1842	06/26/1920	15721	Section E, Row 3
Henry King	carpenter	ca.1859	06/26/1922	13054	Section D, Row 3
James T. Lewis	carpenter	11/20/1827	12/13/1921	26329	
Martin, Jacob	carpenter	ca.1858	10/02/1918	25882	Section F, Row 5
William Million	carpenter	03/11/1871	03/07/1928	5995	
Moses Mitchell	carpenter	ca.1849	05/01/1906	349	Section A, Row 14
Tyler Munday	carpenter	ca.1843	07/07/1900	4547	
J.R. Payne	carpenter	ca.1839	12/14/1912	30220	
Green Peters	carpenter	ca.1849	02/23/1901	5035	Section F, Row 9, military
Henry Porter	carpenter	ca.1815	01/18/1913	1023	Section E, Row 5
George H. Price	carpenter	unknown	03/19/1902	5849	
Robert Ramey	carpenter	ca.1837	08/16/1902	6212	
John Robinson	carpenter	ca.1822	04/04/1902	5889	
Rogers, Sidney	carpenter	ca.1841	11/20/1899	4048	
Christopher Shields	carpenter	ca.1841	03/29/1892	none	Section F, row 9, military
Green Shotwell	carpenter	ca.1825	01/10/1900	4129	Section F, Row 4
John Stevenson	carpenter	ca.1840	04/08/1900	4338	
William Vinegar	carpenter	ca.1843	03/12/1900	4269	
Joseph Walker	carpenter	ca.1829	03/30/1899	3526	
Ben Williams	carpenter	03/10/1868	09/23/1931	21606	
Warren Williams	carpenter	ca.1853	07/11/1920	17875	
John Woolfolk	carpenter	ca.1834	03/20/1912	6625	

Painters and Plasterers

The professionals were:

Name	Specialty	Birth	Death	Cert.#	Grave Marker Location
Joseph Allen	painter	ca.1856	04/13/1911	9221	
Henry Brice	painter	11/24/1894	09/08/1914	23211	
Leslie Henderson	painter	06/1850	04/12/1907	426	
William Hickland	painter	ca.1873	11/15/1899	4008	
Henry King	painter	12/17/1830	11/16/1889	none	Section D, Row 4
Nathan Lee	painter	ca.1888	06/11/1918	15269	
Thomas J. McGee	painter	ca.1845	03/17/1918	6606	
Harry Slaughter	painter	ca.1820	06/14/1906	420	
Nathan Bibbs	plasterer	03/07/1859	03/06/1916	7338	
Barry Colerane	plasterer	ca.1870	03/06/1913	6806	
Henry Colerain	plasterer	ca.1868	06/22/1913	15416	
Charles Grimes	plasterer	ca.1855	06/28/1919	18069	
John Montjoy	plasterer	ca.1875	12/05/1927	24753	Section C, Row 4
Thomas Seals	plasterer	ca.1866	10/08/1899	3938	
Benjamin Sneed	plasterer	10/1834	10/23/1925	57554	
Jack Strans	plasterer	ca.1856	03/06/1901	5063	
Rev. James Turner	plasterer	ca.1818	03/15/1885	none	Section E, Row 6
Austin Young	plasterer	06/1833	04/01/1912	9580	

Researched and compiled Y. Giles April 2024