



Maryland General Assembly  
2023 Session  
6 Bladen St Ste 425  
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 16, 2024

Support: HB851- testimony in support of establishing a Reparations Commission and information Women Pioneers of Reparations

I am LaWann Stribling, born LaWann Pendleton to parents Warren Pendleton and Narvest Thomas Pendleton. I've been on an 11-year journey to trace my family heritage via [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com). Tracing my paternal side, I learn that my Grandmother Eleanora Pendleton Bailey, born in Washington DC, parents are Henry Pendleton born in Washington DC 1910 and Eleanor E. Taylor Pendleton born in New Jersey approximately 1910. My Great Grandfather Henry's parents are James Pendleton born in Accomack County Virginia 1869 and Great Great Grandmother Ida Smallwood Pendleton born in *Maryland* 1885. Her parents are my Great Great Great Grandparents Sarah Garner Smallwood born in *Calvert Maryland* 1867 and Henson Smallwood born in *Maryland* 1864. The 1870 census has *Harris Lot Charles Maryland* listed for the residence. By 1890 they were living in Petersville MD, moved to Washington DC in 1894 and back to Petersville MD in 1900. By 1937 they were living in Frederick MD. Henson's parents Hanson Smallwood born 1839 and Eliza Sinkfield 1844, my Great Great Great Great Grandparents were born in Maryland. My ancestors were farm hands, laborers, oystermen and servants enslaved in Charles County MD, Petersville, Frederick MD, Accomack County, Va, Madison Orange, Va, North Carolina and Florida. We deserve everything our ancestors built. The ability to have this service free of charge to search for your ancestors should be included with reparations!

# MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Thursday, May 18, 1738

*The Lower House.*

199

L. H. J.  
Lib. No. 45

M <sup>r</sup> Aisquith	Col Hanson	M <sup>r</sup> Rumsey
M <sup>r</sup> Kennard	M <sup>r</sup> Smallwood	M <sup>r</sup> Moale
M <sup>r</sup> Tho: Smith	Col King	M <sup>r</sup> Sprigg
M <sup>r</sup> Hynson	M <sup>r</sup> Stoughton	M <sup>r</sup> Pemberton
M <sup>r</sup> Hammond	M <sup>r</sup> Henry	M <sup>r</sup> Wilkinson
M <sup>r</sup> Dulany	M <sup>r</sup> Goldsborough	M <sup>r</sup> Wright
M <sup>r</sup> Denton	M <sup>r</sup> Rob <sup>t</sup> Lloyd	M <sup>r</sup> Clayton
M <sup>r</sup> Sam <sup>l</sup> Smith	Col Hooper	
M <sup>r</sup> Weems	Col Colvill	

M <sup>r</sup> Waughop	M <sup>r</sup> Courts	M <sup>r</sup> Matthews
M <sup>r</sup> Read	M <sup>r</sup> Edw <sup>d</sup> Lloyd	M <sup>r</sup> Caswell
M <sup>r</sup> Swan	M <sup>r</sup> Trippe	M <sup>r</sup> Stoddert
M <sup>r</sup> Wilson	M <sup>r</sup> Brannock	M <sup>r</sup> Wootton.
M <sup>r</sup> Walt <sup>r</sup> Smith	M <sup>r</sup> Ennalls	

Col Hooper and M<sup>r</sup> Courts sent to the Upper House with the following Message (see page 163)

The House adjourns untill 3 of the Clock in the Afternoon

p. 771  
Vide  
Black Book  
No. 4  
Letters  
Nos. 63, 64,  
66

Post Meridien. The House met according to adjournment

The Door-keeper acquainting the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Speaker that M<sup>r</sup> Ross was sent with a Message from the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Upper House to this House. Ordered that the Clerk of this House acquaint M<sup>r</sup> Ross that He is commanded by the Speaker and the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Members of the Lower House of Assembly to let him know that this House will not receive any Message from his Hands untill an Answ<sup>r</sup> be suitably returned by one or more Members of the Upper House to that Message sent this Day by Col Hooper and M<sup>r</sup> Courts and the manner be Settled of sending Messages by the clerks of either House, this House will then receive the Mesages accordingly.

The Clerk acquaints the House he discharged his Trust.

The House adjourns untill to morrow Morning at 9 of the Clock

Searching through Slavery files in Maryland I found a relationship between 2 families that owned slaves who were also lawmakers. According to Branson Cook Genealogy, "[Robert Hanson](#)" and Bayne Smallwood were among the General Assembly delegates who considered Acts involving impositions on negroes, imported liquor and Irish servants. One of the goals was to see to it that a minimal number of Irish papists (Catholics) were allowed to live in Maryland. This illustrates that some of our forefathers were quite prejudiced against certain races and religions, even though the Constitution, the Federalist Papers and other founding documents argued for equality of both. Of course, these Acts in Maryland were taking place about 30-35 years before the Revolutionary War, and the delegation was still loyal to the British Crown. It is also possible that they were simply following the desires of the British Crown and may not have believed in this sort of lawmaking. At least one thing is certain - general public opinion began to change before the ratification of the Constitution, with the exception of attitudes toward slaves. Slavery was still alive and well for more than a century after these Acts were considered. Census records in 1790 and 1800 show that both the Hansons and Smallwood's had quite a few

slaves. One such person, Hoskins Hanson, had 32 slaves recorded in the 1790 Charles County census. (Hoskins was the probable first cousin of Mary).

**1790 CENSUS (semi-alphabetical)**

Henry M Hanson Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-0-0) 7 slaves - Image 13

Hoskins Hanson Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-3-4) 32 slaves - Image 13

John, of Jno Hanson Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (2-0-0) 14 slaves - Image 13

John, Senr Hanson Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-0-1) 12 slaves - Image 13

Walter Hanson Jr. Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-1-3) 13 slaves - Image 13

Samuel Hanson (Major) Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-2-4) 14 slaves - Image 13

Samuel Hanson of Walter Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-1-2) 9 slaves - Image 13

Saml Hanson of William Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-1-2) 9 slaves - Image 13

Samuel Hanson Sr. Esq. Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (1-0-2) 28 slaves - Image 14

Theophilus Hanson Not Stated, Charles, MD 1790 (2-2-3) 23 slaves - Image 13

### Ethnicity Estimate

● Nigeria	31%	● Sweden & Denmark	1%
● Ivory Coast & Ghana	18%		
● Cameroon, Congo & Western Bantu Peoples	18%		
● Benin & Togo	13%		
● Mali	6%		
● Scotland	4%		
● Senegal	3%		
● Nigeria—East Central	3%		
● Wales	2%		
● Southern Philippines	1%		

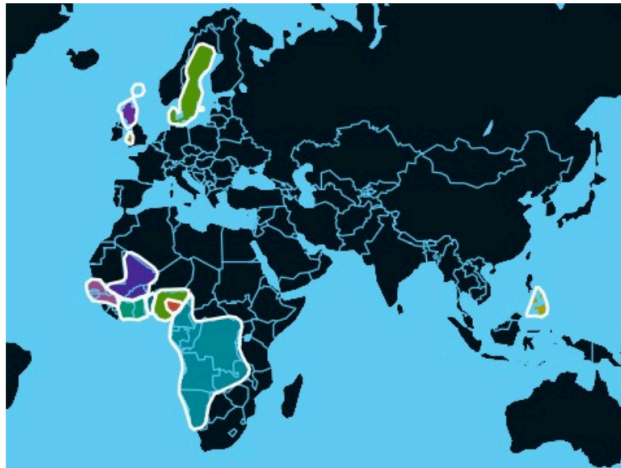
Additional Communities

- Alabama, Georgia & South Carolina African Americans
- Early Virginia African Americans
- The Carolinas, Maryland & Virginia African Americans
- Northern Virginia African Americans

## DNA Story for LaWann Sunita Patricia Pendleton

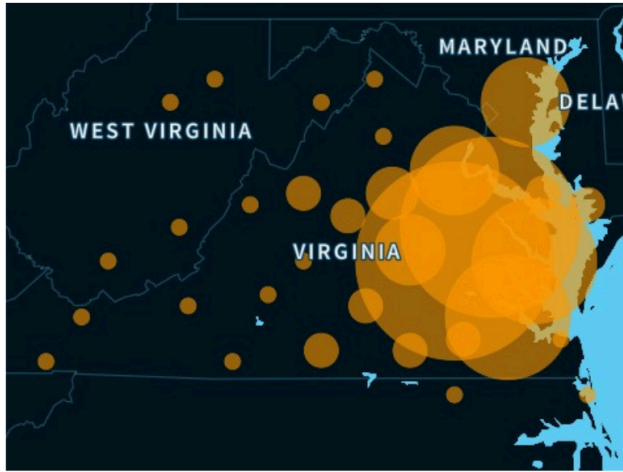
Results as of:  
27 Feb  
2023

### Early History



● Nigeria	31%
● Ivory Coast & Ghana	18%
● Cameroon, Congo & Western Bantu Peoples	18%
● Benin & Togo	13%
● Mali	6%
● Scotland	4%
● Senegal	3%
● Nigeria—East Central	3%
● Wales	2%
● Southern Philippines	1%
● Sweden & Denmark	1%

1700 - 1725

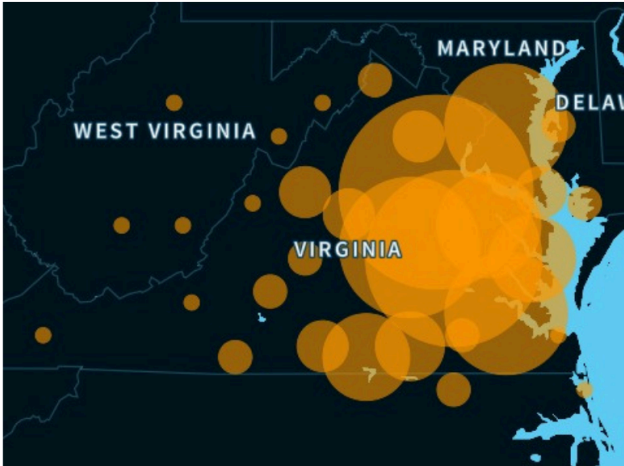


● Early Virginia African Americans

# DNA Story for LaWann Sunita Patricia Pendleton

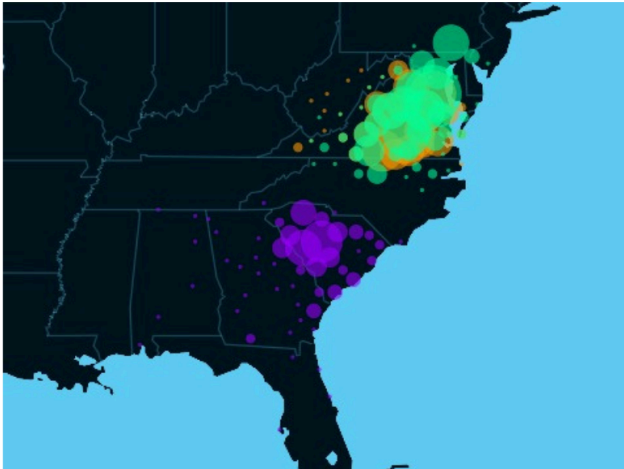
Results as of:  
27 Feb  
2023

1725 - 1750



● Early Virginia African Americans

1750 - 1775

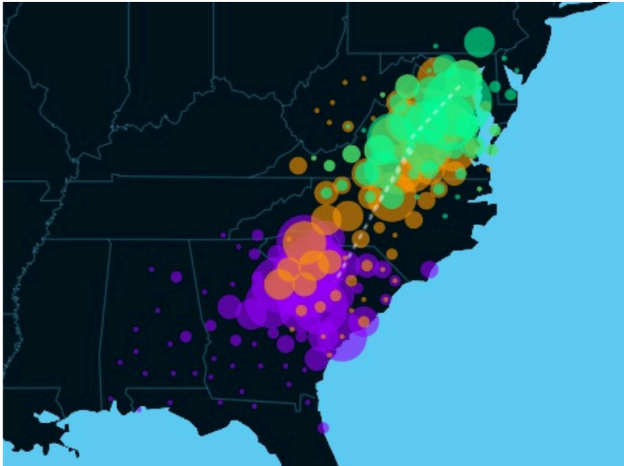


● Alabama, Georgia & South Carolina African Americans  
● Early Virginia African Americans  
● The Carolinas, Maryland & Virginia African Americans

# DNA Story for LaWann Sunita Patricia Pendleton

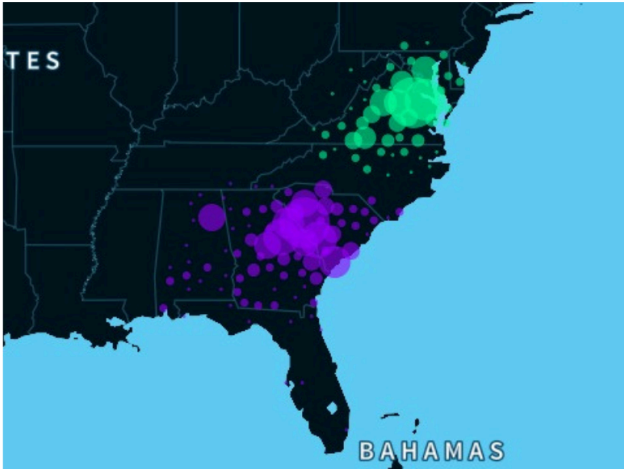
Results as of:  
27 Feb  
2023

1775 - 1800



- Alabama, Georgia & South Carolina African Americans
- Early Virginia African Americans
- The Carolinas, Maryland & Virginia African Americans

1800 - 1825



- Alabama, Georgia & South Carolina African Americans
- The Carolinas, Maryland & Virginia African Americans

In closing it is my opinion that every Descendant of Chattel Slavery is owed reparations. Addressing the foundations of why I am still living paycheck to paycheck after over 30 years of being employed is essential for reparative justice. I come from generations of brokenness and found myself homeless and alone on my 17th birthday. I had my 1st child at 18 years old, raised him in a single parent household with no community or family support. He is 27 now and asked me why didn't I set him up for his future? He is comparing his life to the lives of some of his peers who grew up in a nurturing, supportive and financially stable home environment. The effects of Chattel Slavery, Post Reconstruction, Jim Crow Laws, Redlining Communities, Marginalized Banking and Education and The War on Drugs have created generations of poverty, generational trauma, curses, ptsd and lost hope. Reparations will begin to repair the effects of over 400 years of unimaginable living conditions. Reparations would provide a way for families living in disenfranchised environments to afford a way to provide a better education, better living arrangements, better choices in food and health care as well as freedom in the class hungry society.

Happy Women's History Month!

## **Women Pioneers of Reparations**

**by LaWann Stribling**





TWENTY-EIGHT FUGITIVES ESCAPING FROM THE EASTERN SHORE OF MARYLAND.

## What is **REPARATIONS?**

Reparations is the making of amends for what a wrong one has done, by paying money to or otherwise helping those who have been wronged. The act of repairing something. **Reparations for Slavery:** The application of the concept of reparations to the victims of chattel slavery and their descendants.

When did you first realize that your life was *marginalized*? For me it began in September 1985 when I entered the school St. Pius X in Bowie, MD. At 8 just before my 9th birthday in the 4th grade my classmates would not pass me anything the teachers handed out to be passed out to the class. At recess I sat by myself receiving endless amounts of stares and fingers pointed my way. I couldn't understand what I did to be treated this way except for the fact that I looked different. The difference being the kinkiness of my hair, the highly melanated skin I possessed and the NWDC dialect I spoke. This was my 1st experience of what hate felt like. This was just the beginning of 4 years of being called a Nigger and being told to go back to Africa almost every day. It really trips people up when I say I was witness to a cross being burned in a neighbor's yard off Mitchellville Road. I never really understood why these individuals who looked differently from me were filled with so much hate and anger. At that age I didn't understand the violent nature of chattel slavery or have the knowledge I have now of the truth about my ancestor's enslavement.

Now in high school I've had the opportunity to do many projects and write plenty essays dealing with American history. I was intrigued by the actions of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr and Rosa Parks because that's who we learned about during Black History Month every February. I did wonder who the other leaders for the plight of our culture were because how is their only 2. This curiosity had me pulling out our Britannica Encyclopedia sets and search for all the black people I could find. It was like my summer project every Summer. I read about Bob Marley which led me to learn about the Rastafarians. I learned about the [Black Panther Party of Self Defense](#) and the first mention of reparations. I was very intrigued by Huey Newton, Fred Hampton, Eldridge Cleaver, Assata Shakur, Bobby Seale and their willingness to uplift our community. Because I attended private school and lived in a nicer home with a pool in the back yard, I didn't see the inequalities, inequities or being marginalized until I became homeless at 17 years old. Having to repeat a 2nd year of 12th grade I signed up to take the elective African American Studies at Largo High School. This is the course that helped shape the Freedom Fighter I am today. I learned about Kemet, more detailed facts about chattel slavery and the activist that fought hard for the little bit of freedoms we currently lived with. From 18 years old to now at 46 I've been requesting and demanding reparations.



In 2011 I began the journey via [Ancestry.com](#) to trace my roots. I come from a broken family, broken home, no relationship with either of my grandfathers, barely saw my Paternal Grandmother, I remember seeing my Maternal Grandmother once, saw my mother 2 times before I turned 18 and didn't know much about anyone from her side of the family. It all came crashing down reading through the microfilm to see my ancestors amounted to an age, sex and skin tone- black or mulatto. I then began to ask myself why we have to pay for this service. This information was stolen from us by the individuals who stole, enslaved and imprisoned us. The demand for Reparations was spewing out at every turn. Still falling upon deaf ears.

In August 2019 The New York Times released a series of articles called the [1619 Project](#). It was intriguing to read about real stories of the past that have lead us to how we are living today. In 2020 after George Floyd and Breyanna Taylor were murdered I can feel a shift in the environment that I hoped would cause our residents to pause and really see what is going on

here in America. We are still living marginalized, enslaved, not respected and suffering emotionally, mentally, educationally and financially from the effects of Chattel Slavery. [Nikole Hannah Jones](#) I thank you whole heartedly for the work you put in on this project full of factual stories of our people that has been washed away by our enslavers.



## The case of Reparations:

Have you heard of [Henrietta Wood](#)? Henrietta Wood was born into slavery in Northern Tennessee approximately 1819. After 30 years of enslavement the wife of her enslaver Jane Cirode, registered Henrietta as a freed slave in 1848. After 9 years living free, the daughter and son in law of her former enslaver wanted to recapture her for profit. They hired Deputy Sheriff Zebulon Ward from Covington, Kentucky to kidnap Henrietta and sell her. Wood was captured by Ward conspiring with Wood's employer to bring her on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River. Henrietta spent 1 year imprisoned at slave pen in Lexington, Kentucky. Due to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 Woods could not defend herself by trial or by testimony on her behalf. An innkeeper who felt empathy for Henrietta filed on her behalf. After 2 years her claim was unsuccessful due to her freedom paperwork being burned in a fire on Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1855 Woods was sold to the son of the former Governor of Mississippi Gerard Brandon.

When the Union Army Arrived to free the slaves after the Civil War, Brandon took his slaves to Texas to escape. Henrietta remained enslaved to Gerard until she signed an employment contract with the Brandon family in 1869. Not too long after Henrietta returned to Ohio with her son Arthur. In 1870 Henrietta began the process to sue the Brandon Wood family. After 8 years Wood vs Ward was litigated, and Wood was awarded \$2,500 of the \$20,000 restitution requested by her attorney Harvey Myers in 1879. This is the largest award given for slavery reparations. Henrietta moved to Chicago to be with her son [Arthur Simms](#) and used the restitution money to help afford his enrollment to Union College of Law, now Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law. Arthur practiced law for approximately 62 years in Chicago.



Have you heard of [Belinda \(Royal\) Sutton](#)? I hadn't either until the 1619 Project introduced me to her. Belinda Royal was born in Ghana, Africa in 1712.

She recalls smelling spice and seeing mountains living a joyful life full of love with her parents prior to her captivity and enslavement. At 63 years old after being abandoned by her enslaver she filed a petition with the help of her attorney to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requesting an income from the estate of her former enslaver in 1783. Her testimony describing the happy times with family back home in Africa contradicted the assumption that slaves were happy in their captivity. With that realization she won her claim and was awarded 15 pounds and 12 shillings annually ~\$17.98. Through further research it was found that she had to fight continuously for that award to be honored and paid. After a decade of missed inconsistent payments and further petitions here is her petition in 1793:

## [Text of Belinda's 1793 Petition](#)

*The Petition of Belinda an Affrican, humbly shews: that seventy years have rolled away, since she on the banks of the Rio de Valta, received her existence – the mountains Covered with spicy forests, the valleys loaded with the richest fruits, spontaneously produced; joined to that happy temperature of air to exclude excess; would have yielded her the most compleat felicity, had not her mind received early impressions of the cruelty of men, whose faces were like the moon, and whose Bows and Arrows were like the thunder and lightning of the Clouds. – The idea of these, the most dreadful of all Enemeies, filled her infant slumbers with horror, and her noontide moments with evil apprehensions! – But her affrighted imagination, in its most alarming extension, never represented the distress equal to what she hath since really experienced – for before she had Twelve years enjoyed the fragrance of her native groves, and e'er she realized, that Europeans placed their happiness in the yellow dust which she carelessly marked with her infant footsteps. – even when she, in a sacred grove, with each hand in that of a tender Parent, was paying her devotions to the great Orisa who made all things – an armed band of white men, driving many of her Countrymen in Chains, ran into the hallowed shade! – could the Tears, the sighs and supplications, bursting from Tortured Parental affliction, have blunted the keen edge of Avarice, she might have been rescued from Agony, which many of her Country's Children have felt, but which none hath ever described, – in vain she lifted her supplicating voice to an insulted father, and her guiltless hands to a dishonored Deity! She was ravished from the bosom of her Country, from the arms of her friends – while the advanced age of her Parents, rendering them unfit for servitude, cruelly separated her from them forever!*

*Scenes which her imagination never conceived of, – a floating World – the sporting Monsters of the deep – and the familiar meetings of the Billows and the clouds, stove, but in vain to divert her melancholly attention, from three hundred Affricans in chains, suffering the most excruciating torments; and some of them rejoicing, that the pangs of death came like a balm to their wounds. Once more her eyes were blest with a Continent – but alas! How unlike the Land where she received her being! Here all things appeared unpropitious – she learned to catch the Ideas, marked by the sounds of language only to know that her doom was Slavery, from which death alone was to emancipate her – What did it avail her, that the walls of her Lord were hung with Splendor, and that the dust troden underfoot in her native Country, crowded his Gates with sordid worshipers – the Laws had rendered her incapable of receiving property – and though she was a free moral agent, accountable for her own actions, yet she never had a moment at her own disposal!*

*Fifty years her faithful hands have been compelled to ignoble servitude for the benefit of an Isaac Royall, until!, as if Nations must be agitated, and the world convulsed for the preservation of the freedom which the Almighty Father intended for all the human Race, the present war was Commenced – The terror of men armed in the Cause of freedom, compelled her master to fly –*

*and to breathe away his Life in a Land, where, Lawless domination sits enthroned – pouring bloody outrage and cruelty on all who dare to be free.*

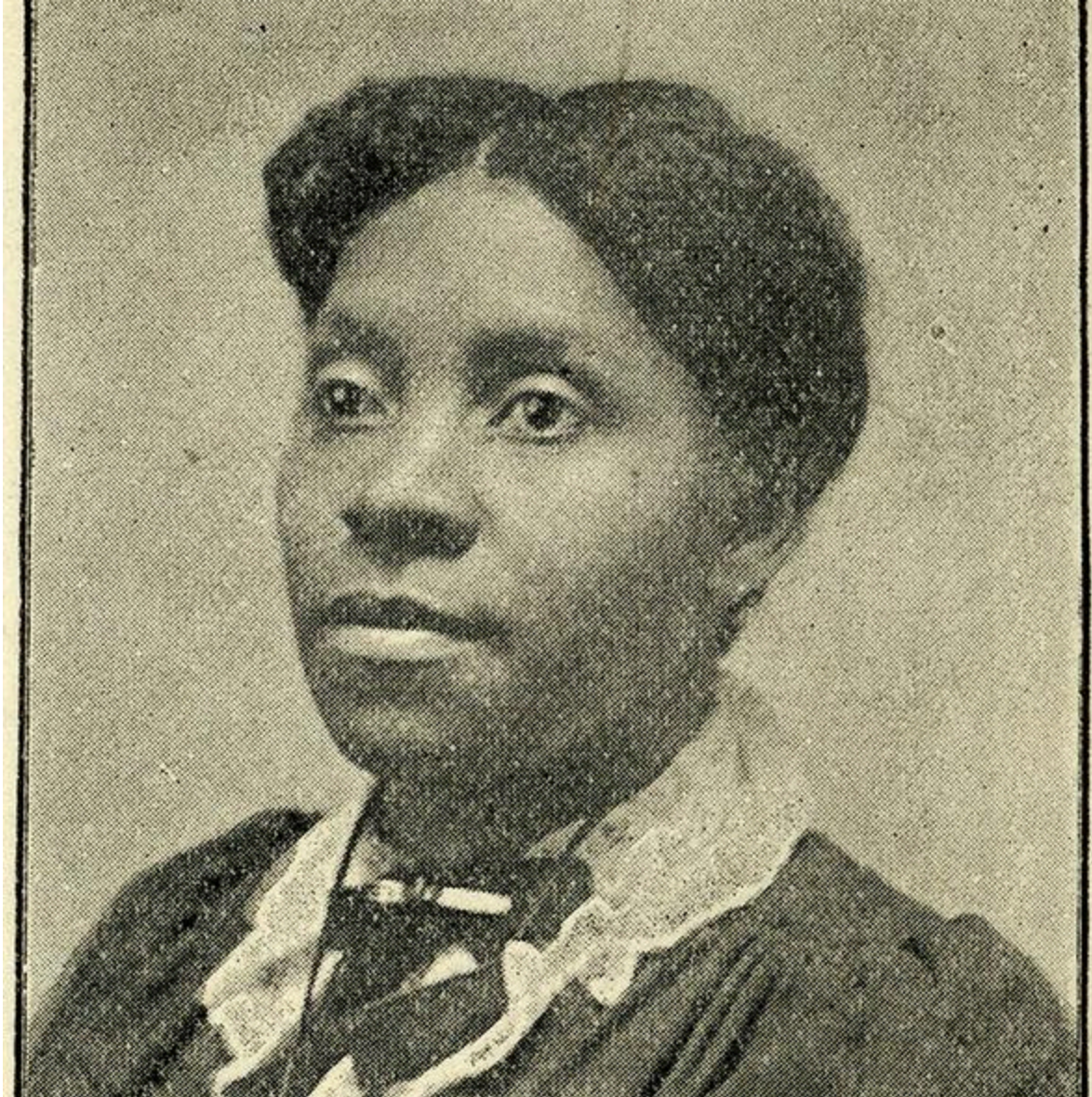
*The face of your Petitioner, is now marked with the furrows of time, and her frame bending under the oppression of years, while she, by the Laws of the Land, is denied the employment of one morsel of that immense wealth, apart whereof hath been accumulated by her own industry, and the whole augmented by her servitude.*

*WHEREFORE, casting herself at your feet in your honours, as to a body of men, formed for the extirpation of vassalage, for the reward of Virtue, and the just return of honest industry – she prays, that such allowance may be made her out of the Estate of Colonel Royall, as will prevent her, and her more infirm daughter, from misery in the greatest extreme, and scatter comfort over the short and downward path of their lives.*

## **Interpretations by Medford**

Two parts of Belinda's account need to be interpreted rather than read literally. First, she wrote that she was captured as a twelve-year-old girl by "an armed band of white men." In fact, although Europeans sometimes kidnapped Africans on the coast, they were unable to go inland to capture slaves. It was African raiders and warriors from other areas that captured slaves and sold them to European slave traders on the coast in exchange for weapons, ammunition, rum (including New England and Medford rum), and other commodities. By substituting white men as her captors, Belinda (or Prince Hall, the abolitionist who is thought to have helped her) may have been arguing a case by placing moral responsibility where it ultimately belonged: on white Europeans and North Americans who initiated the Atlantic slave trade and profited most from it. The second part of Belinda's account of her childhood home that requires interpretation is her statement that she was captured in the sacred grove of "the great Orisa who made all things." "Orisa" is the term for "deity" among Yoruba speakers far to the east, in present-day Nigeria. Although some Yoruba deities were adopted by people further west, including Ewe-speaking peoples, these people gave deities the name "vodun." Other Ewe deities are known as "tro" or "trowo." The term "orisa" did not travel with them, and is unknown in the Volta region. The origin of the name "orisa" is a mystery. It may be that either Belinda or Prince Hall knew people who had been taken from a Yoruba-speaking area. By describing a god "who made all things," Belinda or Prince Hall may have wished to emphasize that Africans have civilizations and religious ideas that are worthy of white Christian Americans' respect.

This petition to the court was a reminder to the Northern Colonies that slavery existed during the American Revolution. It challenged the stereotype of the submissive slave and represented a new strategy to end slavery.



How about [Callie House](#)? I honor Callie House who was born a slave in Ruthersford County, in 1812. At 36 years old she founded the National Ex-Slave Mutual Bounty and Pension Association in 1897. She along with Isiah Dickerson traveled to former slave states to encourage joining the organization. With many participants throughout the states the organization was eager to petition Congress for a bill that would grant payments (reparations), mutual aid for burial expenses. Their grass roots advocacy grew a membership to the hundreds of thousands formerly enslaved residents all over the country. This growth was unwanted by the government, and they used 3 agencies to find a way to stop this movement. The Federal Bureau of Pensions, The Department of Justice and the Post Office Department worked together to spy on the organization looking for anything they could find to end this uprising. On September 1899, The Post Office Department issued a fraud order, without evidence, making it illegal to send mail, cash or money orders. Callie resisted by invoking the 1st, 14th and 15th

amendment as well as hiring an attorney. Congress rejected the petition as if it were to not be taken seriously and postponed it indefinitely. House heard of the rejection and reminded the Commissioner that the Constitution granted residents the right to file grievances of redress.

When Dickerson passed in 1909 Callie became the leader of the MRB&PA and organizer. The restrictions from the Post Office Department placed constraints on the organization in the coming years. In 1915 House decided to take her petition to the courts. Johnson vs McAdoo was a class action lawsuit filed in US Federal Court requesting reparations for slavery in the amount of 68 million dollars. This amount was cotton tax money collected from 1862 to 1868 and held by the U.S. Treasury Department. A former slave H. N. Johnson led the charge as the Plaintiff against U.S. Secretary of the Treasury William G. McAdoo. The United States Supreme Court denied the claim agreeing with the decision of the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia. To date this was the 1st litigation hearing regarding reparations for American Chattel Slavery in US federal court documented.



Honoring a local champion in Maryland fighting to create a Reparations Commission is County Council Member [Wanika B. Fisher](#) esq. In 2020 [Delegate Wanika Fisher](#) along with 45 other Delegates sponsored [House Bill 1201 the Harriet Tubman Community Investment Act](#) to establish a Reparations Commission for African Descendants of Chattel Slavery in Maryland. The bill was referred to committee after 1st reading along with [HB0121](#) the previous year. In 2022 Delegate Fisher along with 27 other Delegates sponsored [House Bill 0594](#), this bill was also referred to committee after 1st reading. On Wednesday March 1st, 2023 [House Bill 0875](#) sponsored by Delegates McCaskill, Ruth, Addison, Charkoudian, Crutchfield, Kaiser, Lopez, Phillips, and White will be presented at 1pm. [House Bill 0409](#) sponsored by Delegate Acevero will also be heard. These bills, again, will establish a State of Maryland Reparations



Commission. I will submit this as my testimony on my family's behalf as a Descendant of Chattel Slavery in Maryland.

Form 28-100-3 (1880) Census schedule for Harris Dist. District No. 15, Charles County, Maryland, dated June 3rd, 1880. Includes handwritten entries for families like Smallwood, Barton, Williams, and others, with columns for name, relationship, occupation, health, and birthplace.

Sources:

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<https://nikolehannahjones.com/>