



Mr. **George Brown** was an enslaved person. As a young man in 1862, he was sold for \$1,450.

Mr. Brown fought in the Civil War. He had an unusual situation – he was in armies on both sides of the War. When he was a slave, he was forced to be a servant to a Confederate army officer. When he escaped slavery, he joined the Union Army, also known as the Grand Army of the Republic.

Mr. Brown lived in many places during his life, but he lived his last years here in Rochester, on Seward Street. When he died he was 97 years old, and the oldest surviving Civil War veteran in Rochester.

~~When you meet Mr. Brown, you will hear the exciting story of his escape from slavery, his adventures in Texas, and how he started family in this area.~~

Look at the photograph!

Mr. Brown is wearing his cap from the Civil War, with the initials “G.A.R.” on the front. What do you think “G.A.R.” stands for? (hint – the answer is on this page.)

The Civil War took place in the 19th century. But there is an object in the photo that tells you it was taken in the 20th century. What is the object (hint – it has something to do with music.)

Do you see any clues telling you he was a soldier?

Discuss with the class – how do you think Mr. Brown was feeling when this photograph was taken? Please explain your ideas about his feelings.

Photograph from the Stone Negative Collection, Rochester Museum and Science Center, Rochester, NY



Mrs Bessie Hamm!

This is a picture of Bessie Hamm, posing with her husband James.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamm loved Rochester. They loved children, but did not have any of their own. So they decided to help the children who lived in their neighborhood.

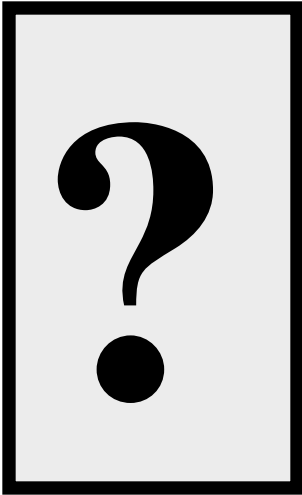
They wanted to see that all children had a chance to get a college education or get a very good job.

Mrs. Hamm found out that the African-American children in their neighborhood were not

getting the classes in school to help them get ready for college; she decided to do something about it. Mr. and Mrs. Hamm held special classes in their home so neighborhood children could learn more and be ready for college. They held special events to raise money for college scholarships. Scholarships would pay for college when the families could not afford it.

Mrs. Hamm was a “community activist.” That means someone who loves their community and works to make it better.

Look at the photo! Do you see any clues that tell you Mr. and Mrs. Hamm were getting ready for a special event? We think this photo was taken when they were having a special party to raise money for the college fund. It was called a “Green Tea” – but not because they drank green tea. It was called this because people came and had tea and food, and gave their “green” – their money- to the college fund.

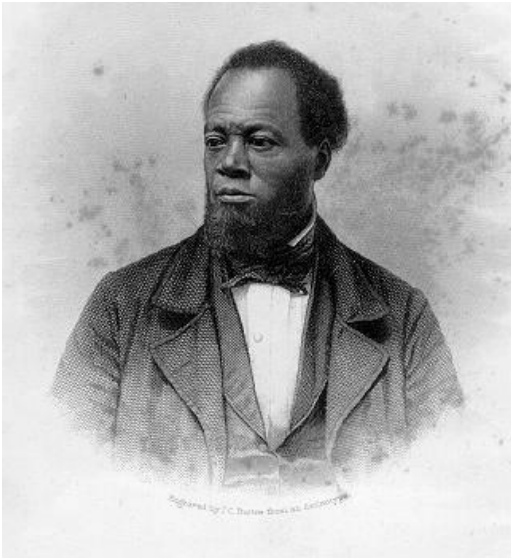


Captain Sunfish is an African-American ancestor that we don't know a lot about. He lived here over 200 years ago. That was before cameras were invented, so we don't have a photograph of him. No one studying history has ever found a painting of him, either – so how do we know what he looked like? We don't know exactly, but we know about his life because of letters and diaries people wrote where they mentioned him.

Captain Sunfish escaped slavery by moving to the area of Rochester, before there was a city or even a village. This was during the Revolutionary War. He made friends

with the Seneca Native Americans that lived here, and also with settlers as they first came here after the War. Captain Sunfish had excellent skills as a “Frontiersman” – he knew how to survive and have a good life in the wilderness.

What did Sunfish look like? Research in history books or on the internet what Seneca Indians wore in the late 18th century – around 1776. You might also look at how European Americans dressed at that time. Then, use your imagination based on your research, to draw a picture of Sunfish! When you meet him, you can see how our idea compares with yours.

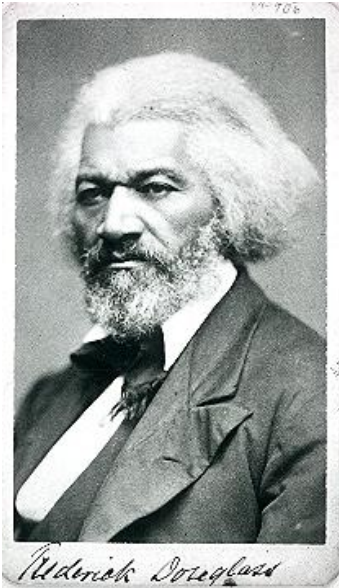


Austin Steward was Rochester's first successful African-American business man. He owned a very busy 2-story meat market and grocery store when our town was just a village, in 1818. The store was located near the Main Street bridge, across from where the Convention Center is today.

Mr. Steward started with a small meat market, and had some troubles with people who tried to stop his business. But he reported the troublemakers to the police – and kept working to make his business the best it could be. It was a big success.

When you meet Mr. Steward, he will tell you how he escaped slavery, and what he had to do to fight the bullies of the village. He may ask your help in making an important decision.

Look at the photo! This picture was taken to put in a book the Mr. Steward wrote. He called the book “Twenty-two Years a Slave, and Forty Years a Free Man.” How old do you think Mr. Steward was when he wrote the book?



Frederick Douglass was born a slave in Maryland in 1817. When he was a slave, he had to go by the name “Frederick Bailey” – because Bailey was the last name of the slave master, the man who owned him.

When Frederick grew up, he escaped slavery by running away to New York City. He chose the last name of “Douglass” as his name in freedom.

Mr. Douglass came to Rochester in 1842. He started publishing newspapers to spread the word that people called abolitionists were fighting to end slavery. His first newspaper, “The North Star” was so popular that other publishers also started calling their newspapers The North Star. Mr. Douglass then named his paper “Frederick Douglass’ Newspaper” so readers would know which one was his newspaper.

Look at the photo! When you meet Mr. Douglass, he will not look like this photograph. You will meet him when he is a young man, just starting to write his newspaper. What color do you think his hair will be?



Anna Murray Douglass. was never a slave – she was born a free black person. She met Frederick when he was enslaved, and helped him escape to New York City, where they got married.

Mrs. Douglass had important responsibilities in the fight to stop slavery in America. She made it possible for Mr. Douglass to travel and give speeches against slavery, by taking care of their home and 4 children during the many months he was out of town. She also welcomed important visitors to their home, who had come to learn about ways to help the enslaved people.

Look at the photo! It is pretty easy to find a lot of photos of Mr. Douglass, he was a very famous person. It is not easy to find photos of Mrs. Douglass. This is the only known photo, and it is not in very good shape. But, can you see any clues that tell you this is not a poor person? (Hint – look at what she is wearing near her neck)

Do you think Anna Murray Douglass should be studied in history, the way we study her famous husband? Please share with the class why or why not.